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Resurrection, Hell and the Afterlife

Body and Soul in Antiquity, Judaism
and Early Christianity

Mark T. Finney



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This book begins by arguing that early Greek reflection on the afterlife and immortality insisted on the importance of the physical body whereas a wealth of Jewish texts from the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple Judaism and early (Pauline) Christianity understood post-mortem existence to be that of the soul alone. Changes begin to appear in the later New Testament where the importance of the afterlife of the physical body became essential, and such thoughts continued into the period of the early Church where the significance of the physical body in post-mortem existence became a point of theological orthodoxy. This book will assert that the influx of Greco-Romans into the early Church changed the direction of Christian thought towards one which included the body. At the same time, the ideological and polemical thrust of an eternal tortuous afterlife for the wicked became essential.

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and Early Christianity

Mark T. Finney

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Contents

<i>Abbreviations</i>	vii
Introduction	1
1 Afterlife in Antiquity: Post-Mortem Existence in its Greco-Roman Context	6
2 Biblical Beginnings: Death and Afterlife in the Hebrew Bible	25
3 The Priority of the Soul: Constructions of Afterlife in Second Temple Judaism	49
4 Life after Death in Additional Jewish Literature: The Dead Sea Scrolls and Later Rabbinic Thought	78
5 New Testament Beginnings: Afterlife in the Thought of the Apostle Paul	100
6 The Priority of the Body: Post-Mortem Existence in the Later New Testament	123
7 The Rise of <i>Gehenna</i>: Afterlife in Early Christianity	144
8 <i>What the . . . ?</i> Developments of Hell in its Jewish and Christian Contexts	158
Conclusion	177
<i>Ancient Sources Index</i>	185
<i>Author Index</i>	201

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Abbreviations

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- | | |
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| Brenton, L.C.L. | (1851) <i>The Septuagint with Apocrypha</i> . Peabody: Hendrickson. |
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| Grimm-Thayer | (1879) <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . London: Forgotten Books. |
| Louw, J.P. & Nida, E.A. (eds) | (1988) <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains</i> . New York: American Bible Society. |
| UBS | (1971) United Bible Societies <i>A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. |
| TDNTW | Verbrugge, V.D. (ed.) (2000). <i>The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> . Grand Rapids: Zondervan. |

Ancient texts are taken from the *Loeb Classical Library* unless otherwise indicated and with the following additions:

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|-----------|--|
| Herodotus | Rawlinson, G. (1996) <i>Histories</i> . Ware: Wordsworth Classics. |
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Homer	Hammond, M. (1987) <i>Iliad</i> . London: Penguin. Lattimore, R. (1951) <i>Iliad</i> . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Lattimore, R. (1975) <i>Odyssey</i> . New York: HarperCollins. Shewring, W. (1980) <i>Odyssey</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Justin Martyr	Falls, T. (1948) <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i> . Washington: The Catholic University of America Press.
Juvenal	Rudd, N. (1992) <i>The Satires</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Livy	De Sélincourt, A. (1960) <i>The Early History of Rome</i> . London: Penguin.
Tacitus	Grant, M. (1989) <i>Annals</i> . London: Penguin.

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Introduction

My preliminary thoughts on this topic emerged during research on the apostle Paul and particularly on his various statements in 1 Corinthians 15. There—the longest chapter in the Pauline corpus—the apostle engages with a number of Corinthian interlocutors over what appears to be sharply differing opinions of the afterlife. The apostle insists that his prior teaching is of “first importance” (15.3), that Christ died and was buried, that he was raised and appeared to many people—including key figures of the nascent Christ-movement, and finally, that he appeared to Paul himself. Yet, the apostle is perplexed as to why, when Christ was preached as raised from the dead, some of the Corinthians now assert that there is no resurrection of the dead. Indeed, Paul affirms that if this is the case, then his ministry among them has been in vain and the faith of the Corinthians is actually worthless.

The narrative of 1 Corinthians 15 proceeds to questions surrounding the manner of the resurrection and the kind of body that will be involved, and this is answered by an extensive Pauline discourse on the very fabric of the resurrection. Here, the apostle turns the discussion to speak of seeds, grain, and wheat, and then the flesh of men, beasts, birds, and fish. He moves on to articulate the resurrection in terms of heavenly and earthly bodies, of the glory of the sun, moon, and stars, all of which are somehow linked to the resurrection of the dead (v. 42). His central argument begins here, and in a series of balanced antitheses, employs the language of perishable/imperishable, dishonour/glory, and weakness/power, before arriving at his point of focus, that the natural body is buried and from it is raised a spiritual body. The Adam/Christ typology makes this explicit: the first man, Adam, came from the earth; the last man, Christ, is from heaven, a life-giving spirit. Paul sees this as paradigmatic for Christ-believers in that those who have borne the image of the earthly will also bear the image of the heavenly (v. 49). How much of this was understood, or if understood actually accepted by Paul’s Corinthian conversation partners is uncertain; he himself concludes the discourse by describing it in terms of a “mystery” (v. 51).

If an attempt to explicate 1 Corinthians 15 was the starting point for this project, then the direction was quite clear: to ascertain firstly, the framework of afterlife belief from Paul’s Greco-Roman interlocutors at

2 Introduction

Corinth, and secondly, to probe the same framework of belief held by the apostle through exploring those texts which must have been most central and influential to him: the Hebrew Bible and the subsequent wealth of writings from the period of Second Temple Judaism. Once this was accomplished attention could then turn back to Paul himself and other writings of the New Testament, as well as a brief but hopefully concise analysis of some of the key relevant texts of the early church. In doing so, this would help to plot the direction of post-Biblical thought on the afterlife which is still very influential in the modern period. In what follows, terms such as soul, spirit, or shade, within both Greco-Roman and Jewish-Christian contexts, will refer to that aspect of post-mortem 'existence' which is non-physical.

Like many, my own initial perceptions on Greco-Roman and Jewish constructs of the afterlife may have been typical of most. The Greeks and Romans placed emphasis on the notion of the immortal soul which, on death, finally escaped the malevolent bonds of the physical body and ascended to be fixed eternally in the heavens. In sharp contrast, Jewish literature saw the importance of the physical body and held to an anthropology, including an eschatological anthropology, of holding the body and soul firmly together. Even contemporary modules taught at university level on Biblical anthropology will typically lay emphasis on the importance within the Biblical tradition of *both* body and soul and extend such importance to post-mortem existence. Hence, Jewish constructs of the afterlife are generally taught within a framework which *insists* on the presence of both body and soul. However, the argument will be made here that both of these hypotheses are in need of re-evaluation for, in some senses, the reverse is true: the Greeks placed emphasis on the afterlife, for the resurrected hero, of an immortal physical body, while texts from the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism focus their attention on the afterlife of the soul alone. Such an assertion immediately then raises questions and implications for readings of the afterlife in Paul, the later New Testament, and the early church.

This proposal will inform the framework for this book. Chapter 1 will begin with an analysis of the Greco-Roman context of afterlife with particular interest, as the title of this work makes clear, on the body and soul in antiquity. Within the traditions of the ancient Greeks, and despite the musings of Homer on the 'shades' of the underworld, modern perspectives of Greek constructs of the afterlife typically stem rather from Platonic thought which asserted belief in an eternal soul and an afterlife existence in some form of astral immortality. Hence, it is commonly believed that Greek post-mortem thought largely neglected the body. Yet, analysis of the central texts prior to Plato, together with a re-evaluation of the on-going influence of these by the time of the first century CE, will begin to overturn many of these assumptions and will assert the enduring importance in Greek thought of the afterlife of the physical body. The Greek belief in the necessity of an immortalized physical post-mortem existence, found in many key and

influential Greek myths, remained influential well into the early Christian period. The recent work of Dag Øistein Endsjø will also inform this chapter.

Chapter 2 will move on to an analysis of the Hebrew Bible and the key passages there, but will also include examination of some of the relevant texts from the apocrypha. While many note the emphasis in the Hebrew Bible on the afterlife of the post-mortem soul alone, it is also insisted upon that ancient Israelite thought did make room for afterlife scenarios which included the resurrection of the earthly physical body. For such scholars, special attention is given to the late texts of Isaiah 26, Daniel 12, and Ezekiel 37. These are frequently cited as the key Hebrew Bible passages which are unambiguous in their proclamation of a physically resurrected body. But as will be shown, such texts are open to multivalent readings and many traditional interpretations appear to be unsafe, while alternative ones may be more reasonable. The broader social context of these chapters is vital and will play an important part in the reading and evaluation of these texts.

Chapter 3 will proceed to an analysis of the literature of Second Temple Judaism and, as will be shown there, this is the point at which, for the first time in Jewish literature, there is a differentiation of the souls of the righteous and wicked after death. Those of the righteous proceed to a place of blessing while those of the wicked head to a place of torment. At the same time, it will be argued that, for the majority of these texts, there is little or no role in the existence of a post-mortem physical body. Even for those passages which purportedly assert the presence of some kind of ‘physical’ existence at a final eschatological reordering, there are also points of ambiguity and possibilities of alternative readings. Some of the central texts which purport to speak of the afterlife of the resurrected earthly body—for example, 2 Maccabees, Josephus, and 2 Baruch—will be given special attention.

Chapter 4 will remain within a broad framework of Jewish literature and will discuss the scrolls of the Dead Sea community and the later rabbinic literature. The community which produced the scrolls may have been somewhat sectarian in nature but their influence may not have been insignificant, especially around Jerusalem, and the scrolls themselves offer a vital window on Second Temple Jewish thought. The rabbinic literature is included to offer trajectories beyond Paul and the later New Testament, and will help to frame the broader Jewish and rabbinic context within which Paul and those later writers perhaps found themselves.

Chapter 5 presents an investigation of the key texts of the Pauline corpus, with particular attention given to 1 Corinthians 15. It will also include various analyses of the apostle himself from a number of social-scientific perspectives. Some of this chapter may be controversial, but it is written in the spirit of a simple desire not only to understand Pauline thought more clearly, but also to understand the personal conflicts and tensions which appear to have accompanied or indeed beset his ministry. In addition, of course, it is done in order to understand more perceptibly his relationship with the Corinthians and his conversation partners in 1 Corinthians 15. Having done so,

4 Introduction

reflection on what his writings can tell us about his thoughts on the afterlife will hopefully become clearer. This chapter will also include similar deliberation on the ‘pillars’ of the early Christ-movement, for Paul’s relationship with them informs a broader understanding of the apostle himself and his life and work. The chapter will argue that Paul is consistent within Second Temple Judaism of positing the afterlife as concerned essentially with the soul and not the body.

Chapter 6 will move from the Pauline corpus to the writings of the later New Testament, where it will be argued that these—especially the Gospels—present a very different picture on the post-mortem nature of Christ in their emphasis on the importance of the physical body. The role of Luke will be highlighted as having a key role in this regard and of setting a precedent within the early church for a model of Christ’s resurrection which insisted upon, in some form, his physical earthly body (replete with the scars related to his crucifixion). As such, Luke stands somewhat in tension with Pauline thought. This chapter will also outline the vital role that Gentile conversion and entry into the early Christ-movement played in the transformation of constructs of the afterlife. Here, neophyte Greeks and Romans, for whom both body and soul played an essential part in the resurrection and immortalization of the hero—for Luke, of course, this is Christ—brought a new perspective on the afterlife. It will be further argued that it was this Greco-Roman construct of afterlife, outlined in Chapter 1, which *re-directed* the emphasis of the importance of the soul alone, found in the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple Judaism, and the apostle Paul, into one more attuned to earlier Greek traditions on the importance of a resurrected physical body. Hence, it is the writing of Luke which is the pivotal turning point in afterlife constructs for the early church and which have persisted into the modern period.

Analysis of the literature of the Church Fathers is found in Chapter 7, where it will be argued that these illustrate an increasing determination to insist upon the post-mortem form of Christ’s soul *and* body. Indeed, this becomes a point of theological orthodoxy to the extent that alternative views, including those denying the resurrection of the body and insisting on the resurrection of the soul alone, are castigated to the point of being declared heretical. This chapter will also detail some of the literary and theological ‘battles’ which persisted through the first few centuries CE before the emergence of a theological orthodoxy which insisted upon Christ’s post-mortem form being both body and soul. This has now been the orthodox Christian view for some sixteen-hundred years.

Chapter 8 will take a slightly different perspective to what has gone before and focus specifically upon the category of ‘hell’ in Christian literature, from the period of the Old Testament up to the Medieval era. Obviously, in many senses, it overlaps what has gone before but it is a vital topic, one only briefly touched on here, which has pastoral as well as theological implications. The chapter will outline the ideological emergence of a tortuous afterlife from

its beginnings in Second Temple Judaism to its dominance in the medieval period. In this latter period, a singular truth bound together almost everyone alive in late medieval Europe: unconditional and total belief in Christianity, and with it, concepts of heaven and an eternal torment in hell.

It is hoped that new and fresh readings of many texts related to the afterlife will emerge in what follows and that the apologetic or polemical thrust of what has emerged as theologically orthodox, either in the nature of post-mortem existence or the category of 'hell' will be clear. As notions of afterlife and an eternal tortuous hell are, in some senses, ideological constructs, what follows will have pastoral implication which will be evaluated in the conclusion.

1 Afterlife in Antiquity

Post-Mortem Existence in its Greco-Roman Context

Average life expectancy in the ancient Greco-Roman world was very low. Statistics from tombstones show that death occurred around the age of twenty-three years for men and twenty years for women; just forty percent reached that age and only fifty percent of children survived to their tenth birthday (Horsley 1983; Wiedermann 1989: 15). General illness was the primary cause of this (Bolt 1998: 59). So, the average ancient Greek or Roman died young and ill, and death was a ubiquitous feature of Greco-Roman life. Walter Burkert notes that such a social environment led to considered reflection on the afterlife in all periods of antiquity and that there are three significant stages in the development of the afterlife amongst the ancient Greeks: the archaic period, the age of Homer, and the later Hellenistic period influenced by Plato (Bernstein 1993; Burkert 1985).¹

Firstly, in archaic Greek thought, the dead were considered to exist as wispy, smoke-like shadows either in their tombs or under their homes and were a force to be reckoned with for the living: positive if kept content, but destructive otherwise.² As such they had to be placated with offerings of food and drink for, on the one hand, they were thought to be able to take vengeance on others, and yet on the other, they had the ability to heal the sick or even resurrect the dead.³ The ancestor cult was particularly important in this regard, for a dead ancestor buried under a home remained part of the extended family and could protect both home and family, or one buried in a field was thought to have the power to guard that field during its fallow year (Hallote 2001: 29–35). The reason for their influence was their liminal ‘power’ as they existed, in some senses, between the worlds of the dead and the living. Yet, in archaic Greek thought the *ψυχή*⁴ (*psyche*), the soul or ‘life’ of a person, was also considered a form of material substance and may have been thought of in a comparable way to air or aether, but which was still in some way ‘material.’ As Gregory Riley notes, “No concept of immateriality yet existed in Greece, even the gods had bodies and could, for example, engage in sexual relations with humans or be wounded in battle” (Riley 1995: 28, citing Hom. *Il.* 5.330–62; and see Renehan 1979).

The second stage in the development of thoughts on the afterlife is that dominated by Homer who remained of supreme influence well into the

Roman period. His significance in later Greco-Roman life and culture is adequately summed up by Moses Finley (1977: 15):

No other poet, no other literary figure in all history for that matter, occupied a place in the life of his people such as Homer's. He was their pre-eminent symbol of nationhood, the unimpeachable authority on their earliest history, and a decisive figure in the creation of their pantheon, as well as their most beloved and most widely quoted poet. Plato (*Republic* 606E) tells us that there were Greeks who firmly believed that Homer 'educated Hellas and that he deserves to be taken up as an instructor in the management and culture of human affairs, and that a man ought to regulate the whole of his life by following this poet.'⁵

For Homer, the departed soul leaves the body sometimes from a mortal wound or more often simply by being breathed out of the mouth near death, whereupon it departs for the miserable and shadowy world of Hades. Here, it exists as an 'image' (εἰδωλον) and Hades is the destination for the souls of all people (almost without exception), and from which there is no return. Here, souls simply "flit about like shadows" (*Od.* 10.495). That said, in Homeric thought, and comparable with earlier reflection, it is the 'material' attributes of the soul that are of some import, for the ψυχή was an image of the person to the extent that it moved and spoke like the living being (Bremmer 1983: 73). It was also the life force of the body, for on the departure of the ψυχή the physical body died. Some key relevant Homeric texts include the statement of Achilles to his friends, "The soul of a man does not return again, neither by being carried off nor seized, after it has crossed the barrier of his teeth" (*Il.* 9.408–409); or when Achilles speaks to Priam after the death of his son Hector, "for there is nothing to be gained from grief for your son; you will never bring him back" (*Il.* 24.550).⁶ On Hector's own death, Homer confirms that his ψυχή had departed to Hades: "Even as he thus spake the end of death enfolded him and his soul fleeing from his limbs was gone to Hades, bewailing her fate, leaving manliness and youth" (*Il.* 22.362).⁷

In Hades, life of a sort persists, and memory too, much to the chagrin of the departed.⁸ In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is permitted to descend into Hades to speak with Achilles and attempts to encourage the departed hero: "Formerly, in your lifetime, we Argives used to honour you equally with the gods, and now that you are here you exercise great power over the dead. Do not grieve about it, Achilles, now that you are dead." The reply of Achilles is illuminating: "Do not make light of death to me, noble Odysseus. I would rather be on earth a serf to a landless man, with small enough living for himself, than act as king over all these dead men who have perished" (*Od.* 11.484–91).⁹ The Greeks may have at times employed the concept of the dead rising up, but for the vast majority this was only a rhetorical absurdity—the dead remained in Hades.¹⁰ Only for a very select few was there a place of peace and blessing after death in such places as the Elysium

fields or the Isles of the Blessed. The Greek king Menelaus was said to dwell in Elysium (*Od.* 4.565), and the heroes of Thebes and Troy dwelt on the Isles of the Blessed (Hesiod, *Opera et Dies* 166). And yet, there are some elements of ambiguity in Homeric thought, for while Odysseus can meet the shade (εἶδωλον) of Hercules on his journey to the underworld, the ‘real’ Hercules is at the same time feasting with the immortal gods (*Od.* 11.601–27).¹¹

Within a Homeric perspective the transition of the ψυχή to Hades takes place only after the proper funerary rites have taken place and the soul remains in a liminal state before this is completed, often near the body (Bremmer 1983: 123).¹² Patroclus, for example, begs Achilles to perform the burial ritual for him so that he can cross the boundary river into the underworld:

You sleep, Achilleus; you have forgotten me; but you were not careless of me when I lived, but only in death. Bury me quickly as may be, let me pass through the gates of Hades. The souls, the images of dead men, hold me at a distance, and will not let me cross the river and mingle among them, but I wander as I am by Hades’ house of the wide gates. And I call upon you in sorrow, give me your hand; no longer shall I come back from death, once you give me the rite of burning. [Achilles] with his own arms reached for him but could not take him, but the spirit went underground like vapour, with a thin cry. [Achilles laments] Oh, Wonder! Even in the house of Hades there is left something, a soul and an image, but there is no real heart of life in it.

(*Il.* 23.65–107)

On the death of Achilles, the bones of the two friends would share a common grave and the soul of Achilles, too, would descend into the dismal and murky darkness of Hades (*Il.* 23.83). On Odysseus’ descent to the underworld, the first person to speak with him is his friend Elpenor, whose body was still unburied at the time, due to which he still belonged to the special category of the abnormal dead (*Od.* 11.38–41). Elpenor urges Odysseus to bury his body for failure to do so could bode ill for Odysseus: “Leave me not behind thee unwept and unburied as thou goest thence, and turn not away from me, lest haply I bring the wrath of the gods upon thee” (*Il.* 11.71–74).

Yet, within the broader literature of the period there is another post-mortem scenario for a very select few: those superlative Greek heroes who became immortalized like the Olympians, and what is assumed in such cases is that the ψυχή never actually left the body (Collins 1997: 92). As Stephen Bedard notes, this elevation to immortal life among the gods after his/her death, “was an important theme in Greek literature,” and although the original earthly physical body need not itself be relocated to heaven, if not, the newly apotheosized individual dwelt in some form of a god-like body (2008: 181).¹³ Vigdis Songe-Møller articulates this well:

The Greeks were familiar with the conception that eternal existence includes bodily existence. Or perhaps rather: that there are bodies which

live forever [. . .] namely the bodies belonging to gods and to very special humans, whom the gods decided to give the status of immortals. A transformation of mortals into immortals actually *required* a bodily transformation, a transformation from a mortal human body to an immortal divine body.

(2009: 114, italics his)

He goes on to note that the philosophical or anthropological dualism between body and soul found in later Platonic thought is absent from earlier Greek mythological thinking, and rather, the only dualism that exists is the distinction of two kinds of bodies: human and divine. Likewise, Stanley Porter argues that the Greeks had a “significant tradition of bodily resurrection that has been neglected in discussion of the resurrection in the New Testament [. . .] there is a strong tradition of contemplation of the soul’s destiny in the afterlife, along with examples of bodily resurrection” (1999: 53, 68).

THE INFLUENCE OF PLATO

Burkert’s third and final stage in Greek thought on the afterlife is the period dominated by Plato which includes a progression towards astral immortality and a generally more positive experience of life after death for most. The changes in Greek reflection, towards a framework of thought that moderns are more familiar with, begin in the writings of Pythagoras (Davies 1999: 135),¹⁴ Pindar,¹⁵ Orphism,¹⁶ Socrates, and culminate in the work of Plato, in which the soul was considered to be both immaterial and in some senses the true vehicle for human identity (Riley 1995: 32).¹⁷ Platonic philosophy considered the soul to originate in the heavenly realm and to be trapped or imprisoned in an earthly body where the two were in tension to the point of being enemies. Plato writes:

When the soul and the body are joined together, nature directs the one to serve and be ruled, and the other to rule and be master. The divine is by nature fitted to rule and lead, and the mortal to obey and serve [. . .] the soul is most like the divine and immortal and intellectual and uniform and indissoluble and ever unchanging, and the body, on the contrary, most like the human and mortal and multiform and unintellectual and dissoluble and ever changing.

(*Phaedo* 79e-80b)

Plato argues that if the soul is left alone to inquire of its own accord (through the pursuit of wisdom or philosophy), then on death it departs to the realm of the pure, the everlasting and the immortal, but when it makes use of the body for inquiry (through the senses), it wanders about “confused and dizzy like a drunken man” (*Phaedo* 79c-d). Hence, on death, the good

soul departs pure, dragging with it nothing of the body, because it never willingly associated with the body in life, but avoided it and so proceeds to another place, like itself, noble, pure and invisible; i.e., to the realm of the gods (*Phaedo* 80c-e).¹⁸ Yet, if the soul is defiled and impure, because it cared for and loved the body and was fascinated by its desires and pleasures so that it thought nothing was true except the corporeal, after death such a soul is weighed down and dragged back into the visible world where it flits around tombs. (From the perspective of the living, this is why shadowy shapes of souls can be seen around graveyards.)¹⁹ These are the souls of the wicked, compelled to flutter about such places as a punishment for their former evil way of life. And they do so until through the desire of the corporeal which clings to them they are again imprisoned in a body which corresponds to their former life. So, the glutton, violent, and drunkard pass into the bodies of asses and other beasts, and those choosing injustice, tyranny, and robbery pass into the bodies of wolves, hawks, and kites.²⁰ Plato asserts that those who truly love wisdom refrain from all bodily desires and resist them firmly. The alternative is that the soul, fastened and welded to the body, regards reality through the body and wallows in utter ignorance and the lusts of the flesh. It can never depart in purity to the other world, but must always be contaminated by it, sinking quickly into another body and growing into it. So, it has no part in the communion with the divine (*Phaedo* 81b-84b).

In the work *Gorgias*, Plato provides a different perspective on the afterlife. The soul is judged, and proceeds one of two ways: the righteous depart to the Isles of the Blessed, while the wicked soul departs to Tartarus where it endures fitting punishment. Here, the wicked soul is given a mark to show whether it is deemed curable or not, and hence for some, such punishments are remedial, but for others who are incurable through extreme wrong, they suffer fearful torment in an infernal dungeon (*Gorg.* 526b-d). Plato also notes that the soul retains the scars of its former existence (*Gorg.* 524-25)—a theme which is found on vases of the period, where the dead are regularly shown with their wounds, sometimes still bandaged (Bremmer 1983: 83). Elsewhere, according to Plato's Myth of Er, recounted at the end of his *Republic*, on death all souls proceed to the underworld where they are rewarded or punished according to previous behaviour while on earth. Following judgement, the soul of the righteous gradually ascends to the heavenly realm to join the company of the gods, while that of the wicked is punished for a thousand years and then enters the body of an animal in its next reincarnation (Bedard 2008: 174-89; Dunderberg 2013: 250; Wright 2000: 114). In general then, Platonic thought on the afterlife is somewhat mixed. This is noted by Francis Glasson:

In the *Gorgias*, all souls are judged in the underworld, the evil remain there for punishment; the righteous go to the isles of the blessed. In the

Phaedo, the pure dwell on the upper parts of the earth. The *Republic* (book 10) gives the fullest account [. . . for] when the righteous are ready for their next incarnation they are described as descending pure ‘from heaven.’ Similarly in the *Phaedrus* a heavenly place is spoken of. If we examine Plato’s dialogues in order of writing, we observe a continual upward movement as far as his conceptions of the souls of the righteous are concerned; they spend the intermediate periods in the Isles of the blessed—then in later accounts on the upper parts of the earth—and in the latest of all in heaven. The evil are throughout thought of as spending these periods below.

(1961: 35–36)²¹

THE ROMAN PERIOD

In the Roman period, reflection on the afterlife was largely a continuation of that of the Greeks, but it also illustrates the increasing influence of Platonic thought as well as the rising influence of some of the newer philosophies (including various agnostic thoughts). Interestingly, there was also a sharp critique of Platonic philosophy. One of the major works of the period is Virgil’s *Aeneid* (written c. 29–19 BCE), which followed that of Homer’s *Odyssey* in narrating the hero’s descent into the underworld in order to speak with numerous lost relatives, friends, and various others.²² Here, like Homer, the dead bear the stigmata of their previous lives. Hector’s ghost, for instance, shows the horrendous disfiguration of his encounter with Achilles, and Ovid too recounts the tale of Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus, who is seen limping around Hades due to the snake bite to the ankle which killed her.²³ The wicked dead are also whipped to make atonement for their sins (*Aen.* 6.467–58). So, the underworld of Hades remains the dwelling place for most, even for many of the fallen heroes.

At the same time, the influence of Platonic thought is regularly observed. Cicero, for example, held to ideas of the immortal soul from both Pythagoras and Plato, and notes:

As long as we remain within these bodily frames of ours, we are undergoing a heavy labour imposed upon us by fate. For our human souls have come into our bodies from heaven: they have been sent down from their lofty abode and plunged, so to speak, into the earth, which is alien to their divine and eternal nature. As I believe, the reason why the immortal gods implanted souls in human beings was to provide the earth with guardians who should reflect their contemplation of the divine order in the orderly discipline of their own lives.²⁴

Cicero’s *Dream of Scipio* argues that the Romans of his day (first century BCE), imagined that those who lived a noble life would be rewarded with an

12 *Afterlife in Antiquity*

eternal home in the heavens (Wright 2000: 114). Yet, not all agreed. Seneca sees only two possible proposals for post-mortem existence: annihilation, or the disembodied existence of the Stoic Logos that lies at the heart of life. He proposes that no-one should wish to return to a bodily life since it is the source of all ills:

Behold, this clogging burden of a body to which nature has chained me! "I shall die," you say. You mean to say, "I shall cease to run the risk of sickness; I shall cease to run the risk of imprisonment; I shall cease to run the risk of death." [. . .] Death either annihilates us or strips us bare. If we are then released, what remains is the better part after the burden has been removed. If we are annihilated, nothing remains; good and bad alike are removed.

(*Ep.* 24.18)²⁵

However, the thoughts of both were ridiculed by other philosophers. Lucian of Samosata mocked general Greco-Roman beliefs about the gods and death and in Epicurean thought there was an outright repudiation of the concept of individual post-mortem survival. "Death" wrote the epicurean Lucretius in the first century BCE, "is nothing to us and no concern of ours, since the nature of the mind is now held to be mortal." He dismissed the Platonic concept of the immortal soul, insisting that it was impossible to separate the body from the "soul" or "vita spirit."²⁶

Yet, one must also recognize in the period that there were also tales of the dead being brought back to *bodily* life, and such ideas will play an important part in the rest of this chapter and the overall thesis. P.G. Bolt writes:

Pliny was aware of such reports but explained them as premature diagnoses of death (*Hist. Nat.* 7.51–52). He also knew of cases of persons appearing after burial. Mythology provided several examples of resuscitation and the eschatological myths of Plato (*Respublica* 10.614B) and Plutarch (*De Sera Numinis Vindicta* 563FF.) each had characters who underwent "resurrections" that enabled them to speak of their other worldly journeys.

(1998: 72)

Such accounts, which draw on traditions which are pre-Plato, remained influential and appear to have been not an insignificant part of Roman reflection on the afterlife (albeit that there were multivalent readings of various afterlife scenarios). Romulus, for example, apparently ascended to heaven and was deified, the evidence for which is the assertion by the senator Julius Proculus that the physically glorified Romulus had appeared to him (Ovid, *Metam.* 14.805–51; *Fast.* 2.481–509). Yet, Livy writes of varying accounts that Romulus disappeared in a storm and was later declared a god, or in others that he was killed by senators (*Hist.* 1.16). Hercules, too,

was said to have died and burned on a funeral pyre and afterwards taken to heaven and glorified (Bullfinch 1959: 122–23). But other tales narrate that after donning an enchanted robe he died and his soul ascended to heaven (Rouse 1957: 70). Aeneas also, having disappeared following a battle, was said to have joined the gods (Habermas 1989: 168). Finally, Asclepius was apparently killed by Zeus but was brought back to life and placed among the stars, or in other tales, joined the gods (Bullfinch 1959: 106; Rouse 1957: 87). This is also the case with tales of the heroes who return from the dead (cf. the apotheoses of Romulus, Julius Caesar, and Augustus).

RESURRECTION AND THE ROLE OF THE BODY IN GRECO-ROMAN THOUGHT

What remains of this chapter will detail the recent work of Dag Øistein Endsjø (2008, 2009) whose studies on the afterlife within a Greco-Roman context have highlighted some interesting perspectives on the broader literature of the period, particularly with relevance to the body.²⁷ He notes that in early Greek reflection, the celebration of the body was a key aspect of Greek culture and is well documented through healing cults, athletics, and general religious activity (Endsjø, 2009: 22, 24). Death for the Greeks, in all periods, was construed as the soul's separation from the body and is evident in Homer, Plato, and elsewhere.²⁸ Endsjø notes, as highlighted above, that the disembodied soul seen in Homer was never identified with the whole person but only one's shadow (εἴδωλον), and that the "eternal existence of the soul without the body was nothing to look forward to" (2009: 26).²⁹ Further, as noted, the condition of the body at death would foreshadow the state of one's bodiless existence in Hades.³⁰ However, of vital importance for Endsjø is that immortality was the "continuous union of body and soul [. . .] a fundamentally *physical* state [. . .] a continued physical existence" (2009: 39, italics his). The immortal gods, for instance, had physical bodies, to the extent that they could be physically wounded. Yet, this flesh was not only incorruptible but apparently impossible to annihilate.³¹

Endsjø also argues that in Greek thought the mortal children of the gods were not novel, and that the notion of an immortalized body was not unknown to the Greeks. Hence, a son of the gods may walk the earth, die (and so in some sense disappear from the mortal world), and then be made immortal in the body. An example of this is observed following the death of Achilles when his mother (the goddess Thetis) snatched his body from the funeral pyre and took it to the ends of the earth.³² Here, Achilles was brought back to life and achieved immortal life in the body. Importantly, Endsjø notes:

The oldest version of this story was found in the *Aethiopis*, the lost work of the eighth-century BCE epic poet Arctinus, of which today we only

have a late antique summary (Proclus, *Chrest.* 2). One must be aware that this version does not harmonize with Homer, where Odysseus met the dead and disembodied soul of Achilles in Hades (*Od.* 11.465–540). There were, however, few who followed Homer’s version of Achilles’ eternal fate, in spite of his usually absolute authority [. . .] Important classical authors like Simonides, Pindar and Euripides all repeated Arctinus’s tale of how Achilles was translated to the end of the earth to live an eternal life there.

(2008: 423³³)

In this sense the disappearance of a body may imply that such a person had become an immortal god (2008: 425). Endsjø notes that “Everyone who achieved immortality was at the same time transferred away from the ordinary geographic realm of mortals” (2009: 78).

The concept of immortal flesh is a vital point. Certainly, there are numerous tales in Greek literature describing how it was possible to return to mortal life after death, but such people were brought back to *mortal* life, either returning to their previous existence or dying again soon after being resurrected; they were not permanently altered after being raised, nor did they gain physical immortality (Endsjø 2009: 49–51). What particularly interests Endsjø are those Greek myths where some were resurrected and immortalized to be with the gods forever, and what is important in these instances is that it is specifically the *body* which is immortalized, allowing such mortals to exist in an “eternal union of body and soul” (2009: 57). Examples of mortals dying and being resurrected to immortal bodily life include Asclepius, Hercules, Memnon, Alcmeme, Melicertes, Castor, Menelaus, Dionysus, Rhesus, Hector, and others (2008: 424–25). Alexander the Great and even Nero, in popular belief, were in some senses, thought to have been ‘resurrected.’ Some of these examples may repay closer examination. Asclepius, for instance, was originally mortal, the offspring of Apollo and a mortal woman (the identity of whom varies),³⁴ and who was such a proficient healer that he began to upset the numerical balance between the number of mortals and gods. After apparently bringing Hippolytus back from the dead for a fee of gold and thus demonstrating that death could be reversed, Hades, the god of the underworld, complained to his brother Zeus, who struck and killed Asclepius with a thunderbolt of lightning.³⁵ Asclepius then ascended to heaven and was immortalized to become a god, henceforth having an incorruptible body of flesh and bones. Understandably, he was then a very popular deity of the classical and Hellenistic periods with the numbers of pilgrims visiting his shrine outnumbering those of any other place in antiquity (Endsjø 2009: 57).

In the case of Heracles, as noted above, Homer writes that while his εἴδωλον is in Hades, he himself is feasting among the immortal gods (*Od.* 11.601). In Sophocles, we find Heracles throwing himself on a funeral pyre after being poisoned by a cloak containing the venom of the hydra, and

Pseudo-Apollodorus tells us that when he was about to die on the pyre, “a cloud passed under Hercules and with a peal of thunder wafted him up to heaven [. . .] therefore he obtained immortality” (*Bibliotheca* 2.7.7). For the writer Euripides, the mother of Heracles was consoled by the fact that “your son has taken his place in heaven, old woman,” for he had “departed from the earth” and now “dwells in heaven,” living “in the company of the gods.”³⁶ Many other writers of antiquity assert both that he was born a man and yet that he was resurrected and turned into a god.³⁷ A number of vase paintings of antiquity provide further artistic detail of the immortalization of Heracles. Some depict the hero mounting a chariot led by a goddess. Others depict Athena taking Heracles to dwell with the gods, while still others show him as a “deified mortal in the company of other gods.”³⁸ Endsjø writes:

The late fifth-century B.C. Cadmus Painter gives us one of the most detailed depictions of this deification. Here we see the funeral pyre still burning with nothing among the firewood but the empty armor of Heracles. Heracles himself, his body of flesh and bones, is instead being translated away in the chariot of Athena. The empty armor along with the unscathed Heracles together with Athena emphasize that no part of the body of Heracles is to be found in the fire, that he is really departing for Olympus with both body and soul.

(2009: 59)

The tale is similar to that of Achilles, son of the mortal Peleus and the goddess Thetis, whose body was snatched away from the funeral pyre by Thetis and carried away to the ends of the earth (variously, Leuce, the Elysian Plain, or the Islands of the Blessed). Ancient writers asserted that Achilles now lived forever, by which they mean that his dead body was resurrected and physically immortalized. A further parallel is seen in the tale of Memnon, son of the mortal Trojan prince Tithonus and Eos, the goddess of dawn. Slain outside the gates of Troy by Achilles, Eos beseeched Zeus who then bestowed immortality on her son (*Aethiopsis* in Proclus *Chrestomathia* 4.2.188–90). Vase reliefs depict Eos carrying the body of Memnon over the seas to some remote place (perhaps Leuce or Elysium).³⁹ The necessity of the physical body in both myths is thus of crucial importance in such scenarios.⁴⁰ Pausanias noted that he could enumerate other humans born at the time of the wars at Thebes and Troy, “who are worshipped among the Greeks as gods [. . .] in those days humans were changed to gods, who still have honors paid to them” (*Descr.* 1.34.2; 8.2.4). Plutarch said the same: Dionysus and Heracles were among “those deities who were born in a mortal state and later changed into an immortal state [. . .] who through their virtues were enabled to cast off mortality and suffering” (*Pel.* 16.5).

For Endsjø, “The idea that the soul could be immortal independently of the body appears to have been completely unknown to most ancient Greeks”

(2009: 105). Rather, the dominant traditional thought was that immortality *always* equated to a continuity of the psychosomatic unity of body and soul. Such perspectives are rarely considered in Biblical scholarship (and thus how this may reflect on Biblical purviews of the afterlife), and yet are not unknown amongst classicists. Jan Bremmer, for example, notes that the idea of an ‘independent’ immortal soul was a “relative latecomer” in the ancient world (2002: 1). For Werner Jaeger, it was “a later product of the Greek mind” (1958: 98) and for Simon Tugwell, something “which the Greeks themselves regarded as foreign or at least esoteric” (1990: 14). Endsjø writes:

[Without] the body, the soul was quite simply dead. That most souls were considered to have some form of eternal existence did not change this. The soul was dead no matter where it was found and no matter what degree of consciousness it was considered to have [. . .] Although the idea of the immortal soul came to play a significant part in Greek philosophy, one must realize just how much this idea was in contradiction with traditional Greek beliefs. The very notion of immortality was originally inseparably tied to the continued existence of the flesh [. . .] disembodied souls that existed forever were generally considered *dead* souls.

(2009: 106, italics his)

He cites Herodotus who regarded the notion of the soul’s immortality as absurd and “intrinsically un-Greek,” claiming (incorrectly) that “the Egyptians were the first to teach that the human soul is immortal, and at the death of the body it enters into some other living thing then coming to birth” (2008: 430; Hdt. 2.123). For Herodotus, such thoughts derived from the Orphics whom he regarded as Egyptian or Pythagorean, and whom he considered to be not really Greek at all (Hdt. 2.81). In the second century CE, Pausanias maintained that the doctrine derived from Chaldean and Indian sages, arguing that these were the first to defend the notion that the soul is immortal and that this had been followed by “*some of the Greeks, and not least Plato*” (*Descr.* 4.32.4, italics mine). In the third century CE the philosopher Philostratus, who adhered to the doctrine of the soul’s immortality, considered that it had reached the Greeks through the Egyptians and Indians (*Philostr. Vit. Apoll.* 8.7.4). In this sense, those who advocated the immortality of the soul “had to counter incredulity” (so, Endsjø 2009: 106 citing, for example, *Pl. Resp.* 608d).

Interestingly, the *origins* of the concept of an immortal soul appear to have been linked to that of a continued physical existence, even if this was undertaken by the soul in a body which was not the original (in the sense of metempsychosis or reincarnation, evidenced, for example, in Plato).⁴¹ Once this connection was made, ideas of the soul’s inherent immortality independent of the body began to be made. At the same time, the physical body gradually came to be seen negatively, as something of which the immortal soul

was striving to be free. In the writings of the Orphics, for example: “the body is an enclosure or prison in which the soul is incarcerated until [a] penalty is paid” (Pl. *Crat.* 400c). For Socrates, the body is “a tomb” (*Gorg.* 493a), and Plato argued that the soul is imprisoned by the body, and that enlightened souls could look forward to the time of a bodiless existence (*Phaedo* 81d; *Phaedr.* 250c). In this respect, Greek reflection on a soul which could achieve divine nature by itself was “contrary to everything traditional Greek religion had ever taught” and largely remained a minority perspective: “These new ideas never penetrated to the masses. Pythagoras, Plato and the Orphics all remained marginal figures” (Endsjø 2009: 109, citing *Phaedo* 82b-c). This minority reflection also generated other changes, for the Olympians were now considered to be bereft of bodies and the Isles of the Blessed, originally reserved for those few who became physically immortal, became the home for the soul alone (with other souls heading for Tartarus). Endsjø writes:

Although these more novel ideas moved the Greeks in the direction of seeing the bodiless existence of the soul more positively, the conviction that immortality must include the eternal union of soul *and* body remained strong. That the soul existed forever in Hades did still not mean it was immortal. That the disembodied soul according to some could go to places like Elysium or the Isles of the Blessed was similarly not necessarily connected with the immortality of the soul. While some believed in the primacy of the soul, the majority apparently still considered the immortality of the disembodied soul a foreign import.

(2009: 114)

In terms of Platonic thought, as noted above, Endsjø recognizes that Plato construes the soul as being held prisoner by the body (citing *Crat.* 400C; *Phaedo* 81d-e, 82d-83d), and held to a metaphysic on the soul that became influential in antiquity. Yet, Plato was neither widely read nor understood. Plutarch, for example, wrote:

Plato wrote a book on the One Ideal Constitution, but because of its forbidding character he could not persuade anyone to adopt it; but Alexander [the Great] established more than seventy cities among savage tribes, and sowed all Asia with Grecian magistracies, and thus overcame its uncivilized and brutish manner of living. Although few of us read Plato’s *Laws*, yet hundreds of thousands have made use of Alexander’s laws, and continue to use them.

(*Mor.* 328e)

Such thoughts persisted even down to the third century CE, with Origen noting:

Few have been benefited (if they have indeed been benefited at all) by the beautiful and polished style of Plato, and those who have written like

him; while, on the contrary, many have received advantage from those who wrote and taught in a simple and practical manner, and with a view to the wants of the multitude [. . .] It is easy, indeed, to observe that Plato is found only in the hands of those who profess to be literary men.

(*C. Cels.* 6.2)

Hence, for centuries before and after the Common Era, the dominance of Plato was not as assured as moderns like, or hope, to believe. Henry Chadwick observed that “Platonic metaphysics were the peculiar study of the few, of an intellectual aristocracy” (1953: xi), and C.K. Barrett notes that “Platonic ideas were probably unknown and without direct influence upon a majority of the Greeks in the Hellenistic world” (1979: 95). In this sense, Endsjø argues that both pre-Platonic Greek traditions and later traditions which rejected Plato saw immortality to have been inseparably tied to an incorruptible body:

Immortality was originally never used to describe the everlasting fate of the soul. With their eternal bodiless existence the Homeric souls in Hades were always defined as *dead* . . . the Greeks equated immortality only with a continuous physical existence [. . .] The eternal existence of the bodiless soul was not the same as immortality nor did it mean an eternal *life* of the soul. It equalled an everlasting existence as a dead soul. Originally, immortality and eternal life always meant an endless existence of both body and soul. As immortality originally implied a continued physical existence, the ‘immortal gods’ [. . .] were also considered to have physical bodies.

(2008: 428)

In summary, Greek reflection on the afterlife demonstrates distinct changes from the Homeric period onwards. Within Homeric literature there were a number of options for post-mortem existence: for the majority, eternity was spent as a disembodied yet conscious soul in Hades (or possibly elsewhere for some of the heroes); for those unfortunate enough to have no proper funerary rites, the discontented soul existed in a liminal state (perhaps flitting around graveyards); and for the very few, one could be physically immortalized and transformed into a deity. Later Greek reflection added supplementary options: the disembodied soul may find rest at the end of the world (originally reserved for those who were immortalized, body and soul); or the soul would be eternally reincarnated into a new body; or the immortal soul would find rest in the heavens in what later became known as astral immortality.⁴² Yet, as Endsjø notes, “the ancient notion of immortal flesh still held strong attraction, and despite the frustration of pagan philosophers like Plutarch and Christian apologists like Athenagoras over the continued superstition of ‘the masses,’ these basic beliefs were still strong when Christianity made its entrance” (2009: 120). Plutarch is of particular

interest as he held to the Platonic idea of the immortality of the soul and appears to exhibit increasing frustration as to how the masses continued to hold on to the principle that resurrection and subsequent immortalization involved the flesh. Insisting that one “must not against nature send the bodies of good people with their souls to heaven” and asserting that a fleshless post-mortem existence was the ideal, he rejected all of the popular tales of physical resurrection and immortalization. For him, only the soul has any hope of reaching the divine sphere, “when it is most completely separated and set free from the body, and becomes altogether pure, fleshless and undefiled.” Nevertheless, Plutarch also noted that the masses cared nothing for such a philosophy (Plut. *Rom.* 27.8; 28.7–8).

During the early Christian period, the average Greek reflecting upon the nature of Christ may well have located him within a conventional Greek tradition: he walked the earth as a son of a god; he was originally mortal (evidenced by the fact that he died on a cross); and the Christian tradition itself that he was resurrected was evidence that he was made immortal by the gods. Endsjø writes:

That Jesus died, was resurrected and became immortal, after which he disappeared from the ordinary world, was in complete agreement with a pattern we find repeatedly in the more general Greek tradition [. . .] The Christian dogma that Christ had gained bodily incorruptibility and immortality could therefore be seen by the Greek contemporaries not only as a repetition of what many mythical and historical men and women had already gone through, but also as a fate that was definitely preferable to a future existence only involving the soul.

(2008: 423, 431)

In this sense, bodily continuity within this tradition was important, and became central to Christian thought: Christ’s body was not left to rot and decompose on either the cross, a common grave, or in a tomb; rather, the immortalization of the body happened quickly, soon after death. The disappearance of the body from the tomb is consistent within a Greek tradition of the body being made incorruptible and transferred somewhere else for a time. In the case of Christ, this bodily disappearance lasted for just a short time before the risen Christ returned to earth on the third day with an immortalized body. Within Greek reflection this is also consistent with the fact that the legs of Christ were not broken, for his immortalized body would have to suffer such an ailment forever. Yet, the fact of bodily continuity before and after immortalization is evidenced by the wounds in his flesh and the stigmata which would persist always. Hence, for Endsjø: “What happened to Christ could seem not only strangely familiar but even plausible to a Hellenistic audience” (2009: 63). From this perspective, one then fully understands Justin Martyr when he writes: “[when we say] that he, Jesus Christ, our teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended

into heaven, we propose *nothing new* from what you believe about those you consider sons of Zeus” (1 *Apol.* 21.1, italics mine).

Some of the above reflections will be important later in this work when we begin to examine the post-resurrection scenarios of Christ from the perspectives of Paul, the Gospel writers, and later Christian traditions.

NOTES

1. Bernstein (1993), details the afterlife in Babylonia and ancient Egypt (pp. 1–18) and, extensively, in Greek and Roman thought (pp. 21–129).
2. On the cult of the dead, see Yamuachi (1998) who notes that the dead were sometimes buried underneath their own houses in a special section called the “wing of the house” where they would be provided with food and drink and where fresh water would be poured into a pipe that led down into the tomb (p. 30).
3. The pouring of libations into a grave was an important feature in antiquity. The Babylonians named the nether world “the field of thirst” (cf. Isa 5.13–14) and see Tromp (1969: 192).
4. Cf. LSJ *sv* II: *the departed soul, spirit, ghost*.
5. The statistical evidence researched by Finley lends support to his claim and is worth quoting in full (1977: 21), “The papyri of Egypt also make it abundantly clear that, in the struggle for literary survival, Homer was without a rival. Of all the scraps and fragments of literary works found in Egypt that had been published by 1963, there are a total of 1,596 books by or about authors whose names are identifiable. This figure represents individual copies, not separate titles. Of the 1,596, nearly one-half were copies of the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, or commentaries upon them. The *Iliad* outnumbered the *Odyssey* by about three to one. The next most ‘popular’ author was the orator Demosthenes, with 83 papyri (again including commentaries), followed by Euripides with 77, and Hesiod with 72. Plato is represented by but 42 papyri, Aristotle by 8. These are figures of book copying among the Greeks in Egypt after Alexander to be sure, but all the evidence indicated that they may be taken as fairly typical of the Greek world generally. If a Greek owned any books—that is, papyrus rolls—he was almost as likely to own the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as anything from the rest of Greek literature.” See also Marrou (1977: 162–63), who writes, “The gigantic figure of Homer loomed on the horizon from primary-school days. ‘Homer was not a man but a god’ was one of the first sentences that children copied down in their handwriting lessons.”
6. Cf. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1360, “I know no way to bring the dead back to life by mere words;” Sophocles, *Electra* 137, “But never by weeping nor by prayer will you resurrect your father from the pool of Hades which receives all men.”
7. For a detailed analysis of the Homeric concept of the soul, see Bremmer (1983).
8. See further, Ferguson (1993: 228–34).
9. Cf. *Il.* 23.65–76, 99–107; 24.549–551; 24.756; *Od.* 24.5ff.
10. Hdt. 3.62; likewise see, Arist. *De an.* 1.406b.3–5; Ar. *Eccl.* 1073f.; Aesch. *Ag.* 565–9, 1019–24, 1360f.; *Eum.* 647f. (“Once a man has died, and the dust has soaked up his blood, there is no resurrection”); Soph. *El.* 137ff.; Eur. *Hel.* 1285–7. Even in myth the dead were rarely allowed to rise—Apollo’s attempt to bring a child back from the dead resulted in punishment of both by Zeus (Pind. *Pyth.* 3.1–60).

11. More broadly on Homer's *Odyssey* see Bernstein (1993: 23–33).
12. The soul of Patroclus is pictured close to his dead body on Greek vases of the end of the sixth century BCE.
13. Here, Bedard cites Cotter (2001: 131). This theme also appears in the Roman traditions, including the apotheosis of Romulus, Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar (see Cotter 2001: 133–46).
14. Bolt (1998: 69) notes that for Pythagoras the soul is released from the body at death, with good souls flying to the upper realms and others being purged and/or reincarnated, or simply hovering around the bodily realms (see, *Diogenes Laertius* 8.31; Plato *Phaedo* 108A–C; *Resp.* 517B; 114B–C; Plutarch, *De Sea Numinis Vindicta* 564Aff.).
15. *Ol.* 2.56–80; *Frag. Dirg.* 131 (96); and see Burkert (1985: 298f). (with notes).
16. The key texts remain Burkert (1985: ch. 6, 1987); Glasson (1961: 29–33); Graf & Johnston (2013); and Guthrie (1950: 323–30); see also, Koester (1982: 176–83); Riley (1995: 30).
17. There were also other perspectives in the period; Democritus (c. 460–370 BCE) spoke of the soul as perishing along with the body, so death, in a sense became nothingness. Cf. Epicurus (342–271 BCE), *Ad Menoeceum* 124; Plutarch *Moralia* 1103D, 1105A; *Diogenes Laertius* 10.139.
18. On Plato and the notion of astral immortality, see Bedard (2008: 181).
19. See, Plato, *Phaedrus* 81 C, D.
20. *Phaedo* 81E; *Phaedrus* 248–249; 265b–266a; and see Dunderberg (2013: 247–67). Perkins (1984: 38), notes that Plato's use of *anabiosis* (come to life again) in *Phaedo* 71c, refers to the soul's entry into a new body.
21. He goes on to note that after Plato's time the underworld is largely dismissed altogether, yet recognizes that the old view of the righteous descending beneath the ground after death still persisted. In Virgil both Tartarus and Elysium are underground realms (*Aeneid* 6).
22. Riley (1995: 56), notes that Virgil employs the term *corpora* (bodies) in *Aeneid* 6, “to describe the souls; the prevailing philosophic outlook of the time held that the soul was a kind of finely particled material ‘body.’”
23. *Aeneid* 2.272–73, 277–79; cf. Aeneas description of his comrade Deiphobus, whose body had been mutilated by Menelaus and the Greeks, “A mass of wounds, most horribly mangled about the face, the face and both the hands, head mutilated with ears torn off, and the nose lopped—a barbarous disfigurement” (*Aeneid* 6.494–508; cf. v. 340–62); cf. Ovid, *Metam.* 10.48–49.
24. *On Old Age* 21, cited in Davies 1999: 135.
25. Cf. *Ep.* 36.10–11.
26. See Davies (1999: 132–35). Davis writes (129), “The late Republic and early Empire were rather diffident about post-mortem survival, let alone post-mortem flourishing.”
27. Segal (2004: 205) provides an excellent bibliography on the Greco-Roman context of afterlife.
28. *Od.* 11.541; 10.521, 536; 11.29, 49; *Gorg.* 524b; cf. *Phaedo* 64c.
29. Also, Clarke (1999: 157, 115); Rohde (1966: 5).
30. Endsjø (2009: 31–2) provides abundant texts demonstrating how the state of the body before death affects the shape of the soul in Hades. Similarly, Vermeule (1979: 49) points out that the form of the disembodied soul would forever reflect how the body was at the time of passing or at the time of the obsequies. See also, Bremmer (1983: 83).
31. Note the statement by Apollo in *Iliad* 5.441–42, “never the same is the race of gods, who are immortal, and men who walk on the earth.” See further, Endsjø (2009: 39–40); Neil (2006).
32. Variouslly, Leuce, the Isles of the Blessed or to the Elysian Fields.

22 Afterlife in Antiquity

33. Citing Simonides, *Scholiast to Apollonius of Rhodes*, *Argon.* 4.811–14; Pindar, *Ol.* 2.68–80; Pindar, *Nem.* 4.49–50; Euripides, *Iph. Taur.* 421–38; Euripides, *Andr.* 1259–62.
34. Ps-Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.3.
35. Theoph. Ant. *Autol.* 1.13; Just. Mart. *1 Apol.* 21.1; Origen, *C. Cels.* 3.22.
36. Soph. *Trach.* 1255–78; Eurip. *Heraclid.* 9–12, 871–72, 910–14.
37. Theocritus, 24.83–84; Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 16.5; Pseudo-Lucian, *Charidemus* 6; Origen, *C. Cels.* 3.22; Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autol.* 1.13.
38. Endsjø (2009: 59) (and see there for the details of various vase paintings).
39. See the sixth-century BCE Attic Amphora by the Painter of the Vatican Mourner (Vatican Museum 350, ABV 140.1); a cup by Douris, c. 500 BCE (Louvre G 115, ARV 434.74); and see details of other vases in Endsjø (2009: 227, n. 59).
40. *Aethiopis* in Procl. *Chrest.* 4.2.198–200; Eurip. *Andr.* 1259–62; *IT.* 435–38; Pind. *Nem.* 4.49–50; *Ol.* 2.68–80; see Endsjø (2009: 55 (and notes)).
41. *Phaedo* 113a; *Phaedr.* 249b; *Resp.* 620a–d; *Ti.* 90e–92b. Further on metempsychosis see Porter (1999: 70–71).
42. In 421 BCE, Aristophanes referred to a belief “that when we die we turn into stars in the sky” (*Ar. Pax.* 832–33).

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24 *Afterlife in Antiquity*

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2 Biblical Beginnings

Death and Afterlife in the Hebrew Bible¹

Early Israelite thought on death appears to assume that it marked, for all people, the end of worth-while existence.² From a *physical* perspective, death led both to the destruction of the flesh, e.g., by decomposition, fire, or being ravaged,³ together with the dissipation of the blood, by draining away, drying up, or by less delicate means.⁴ The bones, being more resilient, might remain for some time.⁵ Typically, texts in the Hebrew Bible reiterate that the body is formed from dust (עָפָר; LXX, χοῦς)⁶ and will return to dust.⁷ And as the body returns to dust, in the words of Job, hope and youthful vigour are dragged down also (17.16; 20.11; cf. 21.26). Similar expressions are found in the Apocrypha. Sirach notes that “the Lord created human beings out of earth, and makes them return to it again (17.1), while the Wisdom of Solomon declares simply, “When it is extinguished, the body will turn to ashes” (2.3).

From a *non-physical* perspective, however, things look very different. The soul (ψυχή), or sometimes spirit (πνεῦμα), is considered the essence of man.⁸ This is articulated in Genesis 2 where the divine breath breathed into the body brings life; its removal brings death.⁹ For the Psalmist, “when you take away their breath [πνεῦμα], they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit [πνεῦμα], they are created” (104.29–30).¹⁰ So, too, Tobit laments, “my spirit is taken from me so that I may be released from the face of the earth and become dust” (3.6). Interestingly, as the decomposing flesh can be said to return to the dust, the same is also said of the soul, although the meaning of ‘dust’ is quite distinct and is contiguous with the underworld realm of Sheol (שְׁאוֹל; LXX ᾗδης), also known as the Pit (בֹּרַי; λάκκος)¹¹ and synonymous with ‘death’ (θάνατος),¹² and with the ‘grave’¹³ or the ‘places of the dead’ (such as the ‘earth,’ or Abaddon).¹⁴

Job for instance employs ‘dust’ and ‘Sheol’ in literary parallelism when he asks, “Will [my hope] go down to the bars of Sheol? Shall we descend together into the dust?” (17.16), where his hope is related to his spirit in v.1. The Psalmist, too, notes that his enemy may “trample my life to the ground, and lay my soul in the dust” (7.5), or that his “soul has sunk down into the dust” where he laments, “What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you?” (30.9; 44.25; cf. 119. 25). Elsewhere, the

author of 4 Ezra writes: "The earth shall give up those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who rest there in silence; and the chambers shall give up the souls that have been committed to them" (7.32; cf. Isa 29.4). Significantly, S.G.F. Brandon notes that in Mesopotamian thought the underworld was called the "House of Dust" (1967: 51; see also, Tromp 1969). Hence, death brings not only the physical decomposition of the body into the dust of the earth, but the descent of the soul into the 'dust' of the underworld.

So, the soul survives the death of the body and departs to Sheol, "an undesirable abode of wretched shades" (Barrett 1979: 70), where it knows nothing and sees nothing.¹⁵ In Hebrew thought, this was an extensive underground area: dark, gloomy, barren and burnt,¹⁶ to be found in the deepest extremities of creation.¹⁷ Elsewhere the imagery may be of a watery territory, alluding to the anti-cosmic chaos of the early verses of Genesis (Tromp 1969: 132). It was also a place of no return, a vast prison with its own gates, bars, and guards.¹⁸ However, in Hebrew thought, Sheol was not a place of punishment for the wicked; it was the place where the souls of *all* the dead reside and from which none return.¹⁹ Here, all hope is gone (Ps 143:3; cf. Wis 13.10), and God has no more dealings with the departed, who are forgotten forever (Ps 88:10 ff.; Eccl 2:16).

THE SOUL IN SHEOL

In Sheol, souls exist as shades, *rephaim*, in a dark world,²⁰ and although existence there is only sketchily drawn in the Hebrew Bible, it is a place of general silence and inactivity, e.g., Ps 94.17: "If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence."²¹ Ezekiel 32 presents an extensive list of the Gentile nations killed in battle and who have descended to Sheol: "They have come down, they lie still, the uncircumcised, killed by the sword" (32.21). Elsewhere, Isaiah makes a taunt against the king of Babylon:

Sheol is stirred up to meet you when you come; it rouses the shades to greet you, all who were leaders of the earth; it raises from their thrones all who were kings of the nations. All of them will speak and say to you: "You too have become as weak as we! You have become like us! Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the sound of our harps; maggots are the bed beneath you, and worms are your covering.

(14.9–11)

Here, Isaiah distinguishes between the soul which has descended into Sheol and the body which lies decomposing on the earth. The imagery of worms and maggots in the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint is related to the flesh, never to the soul.²² Isaiah goes on to note that the living "stare at you, they ponder your fate" (14.16), for the king does not lie in state in a fine tomb, but is killed in battle, pierced by the sword and covered with the slain. The king's

body is trampled underfoot and will not receive a proper burial, while his soul and that of his army will descend to Sheol (14.18–20).²³ These verses will be important in the exegetical discussion of Isaiah 26.19 below.

So, although the souls in Sheol have some kind of ‘existence,’ and could even be ‘conscious’ enough to speak, e.g., Samuel to Saul (1 Sam 28), they are certainly considered the *dead*.²⁴ This is affirmed in a number of texts. Deuteronomy 18.11 speaks of “a medium, or a spiritist, or one who enquires of the dead (ἐπερωτῶν τοὺς νεκρούς).”²⁵ For Isaiah too, “The *dead* do not live; shades do not rise because you have punished and destroyed them, and wiped out all memory of them (οἱ δὲ νεκροὶ ζῶνι οὐ μὴ ἴδωσιν οὐδὲ ἰατροὶ οὐ μὴ ἀναστήσωσιν διὰ τοῦτο ἐπήγαγες καὶ ἀπώλεσας καὶ ἦρας πᾶν ἄρσεν αὐτῶν), where, again, the dead are the νεκροί (Isa 26.14; cf. 8.19). In a text to which we will return (Isa 26.19), Isaiah also notes, “The dead will rise, those in the grave will be raised” (ἀναστήσονται οἱ νεκροὶ καὶ ἐγερθήσονται οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις). Hence, the common term for the ψυχή in Sheol is νεκρός (Ps 88.10). Similar sentiments are found in a wide range of texts from the Hebrew Bible and Apocrypha, e.g., Pss, Prov, Job, Isa, Dan, Hos, Sir, Bar.²⁶

The Hebrew Bible and Septuagint repeatedly stress the notion of going *down* into Sheol, as a place under the earth,²⁷ and what goes down, is the soul alone.²⁸ Here, all hope is gone (Ps 143:3; cf. Wis 13.10), and God has no more dealings with the departed, who are forgotten forever (Ps 88:10ff.; Eccl 2:16). As noted, the dead are shut in by gates and bars and on the rare occasion that a soul is said to leave Sheol, it is said to *rise up*. So, Saul’s enquiry of the Witch of Endor was that the spirit or soul of Samuel be brought *up* out of Sheol (ἀνάγω, v. 11; ἀναβαίνω, vv. 13, 15).²⁹ The Psalmist praises God that he has extended his life, in metaphorical terms related to ‘delivery’ from Sheol: “You have brought up my soul from Sheol; You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit (κύριε ἀνήγαγες ἐξ ᾧδου τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἔσωσάς με ἀπὸ τῶν καταβαινόντων εἰς λάκκον, 30.3 [29.4, LXX]), and elsewhere asks, “Do you work wonders for the dead? Do the shades rise up to praise you?” (μὴ τοῖς νεκροῖς ποιήσεις θαυμάσια ἢ ἰατροὶ ἀναστήσουσιν καὶ ἐξομολογήσονται σοι, 88.10 [87.11, LXX]).³⁰ Interestingly, the early Church, in recognizing the assertion of the Hebrew Bible that everyone, righteous and wicked, goes to Sheol,³¹ taught that the Old Testament saints existed in an ‘upper’ level of Sheol from which Christ would later deliver them (Lunde 1992: 309).

In the Apocrypha, Sirach has much to say on Sheol and the state of the dead. The author asks: “Who will sing praises to the Most High in Hades, in place of the living who gives thanks? From the dead, as from one who does not exist, thanksgiving has ceased” (ἀπὸ νεκροῦ ὥς μηδὲ ὄντος ἀπόλυτα). So, those in ᾧδης are the νεκροί as opposed to the ζῶντες, and the answer to the question is, of course, no-one (17.27–28). In Sirach 51.6, we see the collocation of a number of terms discussed above: “My soul (ψυχή) drew near to death, and my life was on the brink of Hades below (ᾧδου κάτω).” Sirach

38.23 speaks of the departure of the spirit at death, i.e., the end of life: “When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance rest too, and be comforted for him when his spirit has departed” (ἐν ἐξόδῳ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ). Especially noteworthy is Sirach 48.5, which speaks of the νεκρός being raised from Sheol: “You raised a νεκρός from death and from Hades,” where the Greek expression is similar to that found of Jesus in the New Testament (Rom 6.4, 9, ὁ ἐγείρας νεκρὸν ἐκ θανάτου καὶ ἐξ ᾧδου). The common verbs employed to describe the *raising* of the ψυχή, i.e., the νεκρός from Sheol are, as seen above, ἀναγῶ, ἀναβαίνω, ἐγείρω, and ἀνίστημι.

Interestingly, there is ambiguity within the Hebrew Bible on whether a dead corpse is unclean and polluting. There are texts which explicitly maintain that touching a corpse leads to uncleanness for seven days with clear stipulations on how purity is then re-established (Num 19.11–22). The defiled Israelite, for instance, is put out of the camp for a time (Num 5.2–4; 31.19–20). The priestly elite are only allowed to defile themselves following the death of a close relative (Lev 21.1–3), but even this is forbidden to the High Priest (Lev 21.11). Conversely, other texts suggest that bodies could be interred in the home after death (1 Sam 25.1; 1 Kgs 2.34),³² and according to Ezekiel, departed kings were buried close to the temple until the exile (Ezek 43.7; see Hallote 2001; Tromp 1969: 207). The differing traditions may point to attempts by later redactors to combat an interest in the cult of the dead with stark prohibitions on contact with dead bodies (Hallote 2001: 54–68; Johnston 2002: 43–45). Hence, the sphere of death, as demarcated ‘unclean,’ either socially or legally, may not have been an ancient concept for the early Israelite community.

Most writers of the Hebrew Bible appear to deliberately avoid any discussion of the afterlife (Segal 2004: 123–24), but some do reflect upon it and the apparent injustice of death for the righteous, for it was assumed that both the righteous and the wicked were destined for this same place of misery and desolation.³³ Such was the anticipated horror of Sheol that, in the words of Qohelet, “a living dog is better than a dead lion” (Eccl 9.4), that is, the poorest living wretch was considered better even than the king who abides in Sheol. However, some claim that there are a small number of texts in the Hebrew Bible which appear to progress from this position and show evidence for the possible concept of some form of new *physical* life after death.³⁴ These include 1 Sam 2:6–8,³⁵ Isa 26.19, Dan 12.2–3 and the rich metaphorical picture of Ezek 37:1–14. These will be addressed in turn.

1 SAMUEL

Hans Cavallin, for instance, sees in 1 Sam 2:6–8, a clear expression of life after death, citing the translation of the NEB:

Yahweh kills and he gives life, he sends down to Sheol, he can bring the dead up again.

(1974: 23)

The LXX is, κύριος θανατοῖ καὶ ζωογονεῖ κατάγει εἰς ᾧδου καὶ ἀνάγει. It appears that translating ἀνάγει (literally, “he raises up”), as *he can bring the dead up again* imposes upon the verb a particular concept of ‘resurrection,’ implying, for Cavallin, a “personal life beyond death [. . .] the belief in the resurrection of the dead,” which the verb in this context does not presume. Cavallin is specific neither on what ‘the dead’ constitutes, nor what he defines as ‘resurrection.’ In light of the above texts, the understanding of the clause, if it is speaking of ‘resurrection’ at all, would be that what is raised up is the ψυχή. Cavallin sees a parallel in Deut 32.39: “I kill and make alive; I wound and heal,” but, again, does not specify what is made “alive.” His attempt to draw further parallels with the miraculous resurrections reported by the Elijah and Elisha traditions (1 Kgs 17.17–24; 2 Kgs 4.31–37; 13.21) are insecure as these are not resurrections to eternal life, only a return to a temporal life on earth (1974: 23).

As noted above, the verb ἀνάγω employed here, is also used in 1 Sam 28.3–25 where Saul entreats the Witch of Endor: “Consult a spirit for me, and bring up [ἀνάγω] for me the one whom I name to you.” Here we have the language of ‘raising up’ within the context of Sheol, without the need for notions of a physical resurrection. The *spirit* of Samuel is ‘brought up’ from the depths of Sheol to speak with Saul and then presumably returns.³⁶

Two key texts when examining the resurrection narratives of the Hebrew Bible are Isa 26.19 and Dan 12.1–3.³⁷

ISAIAH 26

The Isaianic text is:

ἀναστήσονται οἱ νεκροί	יחיו מתים
καὶ ἐγερθήσονται οἱ ἐν τοῖς	נבלתי יקומו
μνημείοις	
καὶ εὐφρανθήσονται οἱ ἐν τῇ γῇ	הקיצו ורגנו שכניע פר
ἡ γὰρ δρόσος ἡ παρὰ σοῦ ἴαμα αὐτοῖς	כי טל אורת טלך
ἔστιν	
ἡ δὲ γῆ τῶν ἄσεβων πεσεῖτα	וארץ רפאים תפיל

The NRSV translates the MT:

Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise;
O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!
For your dew is a radiant dew,
and the earth will give birth to those long dead.

This translation is employed by N.T. Wright who claims: “The original Hebrew refers literally to bodily resurrection [. . . which] is intended to denote actual concrete events.”³⁸ Yet, the sense of the Hebrew is uncertain and has

led to differing translations, each with different nuances of the form, or not, of any supposed ‘resurrection.’ The LXX, for example, can be translated:

The dead will rise, those in the graves will be raised/roused;
those in the land will rejoice,
for your dew is healing for them,
and the land of the ungodly will fall.³⁹

As noted above, the νεκροί (the dead), are those who currently abide in Sheol/ the grave, i.e., the souls of both righteous and wicked. The likely sense here is that these are raised or roused (ἐγείρω) to see what will occur, in the sense of Isa 14.9–11, cited above, where those in Sheol are roused (συνεγείρω) in order to greet the newcomer to the underworld.

The final clause is of interest. נפל has many shades of meaning (see BDB; Motyer 1993: 218, n. 1), but in Isaiah it is used almost exclusively to denote either the action of (spatial) falling, in the sense of physical buildings, e.g., bricks, walls, or towers, men in battle, or (metaphorically) of cities, nations, or of God’s word.⁴⁰ In Isaiah it is never used of ‘giving birth;’ yet, strangely it is employed as such in the translations of, for example, the NRSV, NASU, NIV, and NKJV.⁴¹ Such translations appear simply to be derived from the metaphor of giving birth (MT, ילד) in 26.18, itself, an obscure verse. The context of the section here is that despite God’s blessing of enlarged territorial borders (v. 15), there is a chastening upon the land due to idolatry (vv. 13–14). The righteous lament that despite their supplication (writhing as in labour, vv. 16–17), it came to nothing and they gave birth only to wind (v. 18). Salvation/deliverance/victories were not achieved and the (wicked) inhabitants of the land have not fallen (v. 18).⁴² The LXX is more optimistic in claiming that the wicked who dwell in the land *will* fall (ἀλλὰ πεσούντοι οἱ ἐνοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). Such a reading then makes sense of the metaphor of v. 19. The (righteous) ‘dead,’ those in their graves, will ‘rise’ and those in the land will rejoice, for the land of the ungodly *will* certainly fall! The NRSV translation of v.18d (“and no one is born to inhabit the world”) like many others, makes little sense in the context.

There are additional points of exegetical interest in 26.19. If an attempt is made to translate רפאים (*rephaim*, the shades dwelling in Sheol) non-metaphorically, then the sense of this clause is problematic; how and in what way can those in the land (of Sheol) be said to ‘fall’? The LXX clarifies the ambiguity by translating רפאים as the ἄσεβεις, the ungodly. The construction ἐν τῇ γῇ (occurring nearly 250 times in the LXX), almost exclusively takes the sense of ‘in the land.’ In Isaiah it also refers to ‘on’ or ‘over the earth.’ Hence the LXX explains the inherent difficulty of the MT: the *metaphorical* ‘dead’ in the land, i.e., the Israelites, will be raised, rejoicing in the radiant and healing dew of Yahweh. The *metaphorical rephaim* in the land, the ungodly, will fall. This allows both Hebrew and Greek clauses to retain a sense of logic within the passage and allows the verbs to retain

their natural meaning. Such a reading also coheres with the wider context of Isa 26.7–21 which discusses the antipathetical nature of Yahweh's blessing of the righteous and judgement of the wicked in the land, often using the language of life, death, soul, spirit, and shades (vv. 8–10, 14). Indeed, it is of interest that vv. 16–19 stand out within the chapter as a largely metaphorical section, employing vivid language to express what has just been described in non-metaphorical terms in verses 1–15. And that the author has switched into dramatic metaphor also mitigates the inherent contradiction between vv. 14 and 19 (where, in v. 14, the dead do not live or rise).⁴³

The tensions and ambiguities of the Hebrew are noted by various commentators who often struggle to align the verse with a non-metaphorical meaning. Joseph Blenkinsopp, for example, in the *Anchor Bible* commentary on Isaiah (2000), translates the final clause of verse 19 as “[the] earth will bring forth the shades of the dead.” Yet, he notes elsewhere that “Sheol [is] the land of no return, of oblivion” (2000: 370). He claims that it is “fairly obvious” that the verse has suffered in transmission and posits that the idea of individual resurrection is not clearly attested before the persecution launched by Antiochus IV (Dan 12.2; 2000: 371). However, he does suggest that the assurance that *your* dead will live (v. 19) but that *their* dead will not (v. 14) points towards the idea of the people returning from the dead to be intended metaphorically.

In a recent linguistic analysis of these verses, Philip Schmitz asserts: “The passage envisions a political revival of the battered Judahite realm metaphorically [. . .] The moribund nation, like the deceased at the end of days, will be reconstituted (v. 19a), at first insensate and life-less (v. 19b), but then revived, active and joyful (v. 19c)” (2003: 148).⁴⁴ He goes on to note that verse 19c, “expresses the dawning awareness of the revived dead (representing the nation),” and also observes the conceptual parallels with Ezek 37.1–14.⁴⁵ Cavallin's attempt to read the third clause of v. 19 as denoting the dead ‘under’ the earth has no warrant in either the MT or the LXX.⁴⁶ The recent discussion and translation of the text by Roger Aus coheres with the conceptual sense discussed above:

The dead shall rise
And those in the tombs shall be raised
And those in the earth shall rejoice
For the dew from You is healing for them.
But the land of the ungodly will fall/die.⁴⁷

In his analysis of the passage, John J. Collins, like Schmitz, notes the parallels with Ezekiel 37 and asserts the language of metaphor, in that both passages speak of the “restoration of the people of Israel” (2000: 119). He also claims that Isa 26.19 is informed by 26.15 which speaks of the enlargement of the borders of Israel, a divine act following the punishment of Israel in v. 14.⁴⁸ There is also the question of the dating of this passage, with Craig A. Evans

noting that the section of Isaiah 24–27 probably represents “relatively late material” and that 26.19 “could be an even later gloss” (1999: 93). In summary, the passage is to be understood metaphorically: the oppressed people of Judah, the ‘dead’ in the land, will be re-invigorated by the dew of Yahweh in order to dwell safely in the land, at which time they will ‘arise’ from their metaphorical graves to see the demise of their enemies. As such, a reading into these verses of physical bodily resurrection by Wright and others is insecure and to be rejected.

DANIEL 12

The Isaianic text is often seen as a precursor to Dan 12.1–3,⁴⁹ which, for many, is the *crux interpretum*; the first explicit reference to resurrection in the Hebrew Bible:

At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise [ἀναστήσεται] . . . at that time your people shall be delivered [מלך;⁵⁰ σωζω; ὑψωω], everyone who is found written in the book.⁵¹ Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake [γῆ; ἐξεγείρω], some to everlasting life,⁵² and some to shame and everlasting contempt [διασποράν καὶ αἰσχύνην αἰώνιον]. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.⁵³

Cavallin states confidently that this is “the formulation of the only universally accepted statement of an eschatological resurrection from the dead within the Hebrew Bible [. . .] Hardly anyone doubts that this passage does describe a real resurrection of the dead (1974: 26). George Brooke argues that it is the “only explicit non-metaphorical reference to bodily resurrection in the Hebrew Bible” (2006: 16–17), and for N.T. Wright, this is the cornerstone of his resurrection framework, noting that there is little doubt that this refers to concrete bodily resurrection.⁵⁴

Yet, as argued above (pp. 2–3), what exists in the dust is the soul. John J. Collins notes that it is not apparent that the Danielic text “implies a resurrected body of flesh and blood, or bones in the manner of Ezekiel. The ‘land of dust’ (אֶרֶץ טָפָל) from which the dead are raised in Daniel is probably Sheol rather than the grave” (2009: 292). Dag Endsjø concurs, noting that Daniel’s statement that the dead will be resurrected after sleeping ‘in the dust’ is nevertheless not proof of a bodily resurrection: “The prophecy of *Daniel* could just as well mean that only the souls, not the bodies, would awake from an unconscious existence as dead” (2008: 124). Similarly, Adela Yabro Collins argues that Daniel 12.2 is best translated not as “those who sleep in the *dust of the earth*,” but “those who sleep in a *land of dust*,” a traditional reference to Sheol, the land of the dead (1993: 113). Such a reading

excludes the bodies from any resurrection scenario as only souls lingered in Sheol. Indeed, she maintains that what happened to the dead bodies could actually have been irrelevant to the writer of Daniel.⁵⁵

This then coheres with the reference in 12.3 towards ancient understandings of astral immortality, in which it was believed that on death the soul ascended into the heavens to reside eternally as a star in the night sky (see the Greco-Roman context in Chapter 1). Collins claims that Daniel expresses a “notion of resurrection in terms of astral immortality,” not physical immortality in the ordinary sense (1993: 113) and Segal agrees, maintaining that this “can only mean to the Jews that they shall become angels, something that did not exclude astral immortality. For stars had been identified as angelic creatures from earliest times.”⁵⁶ This seems at the same time to rule out any possible future of the flesh, as angels were usually considered fleshless.⁵⁷

So, too, the text is also problematic in that it is only the *many* [πολλοί], not *all*, who shall awake.⁵⁸ The author gives no criteria for who stays and who goes. Alexander DiLella claims that the *many* are the Jews (as opposed to non-Jews), and those receiving everlasting life are “the stalwart men, women, and children who suffered martyrdom rather than obey the wicked decrees of Antiochus IV” (1978: 307; so, too, Nickelsburg 1992: 686). Wright concurs, maintaining that the righteous are those raised after suffering martyrdom (with De Boer 1988: 49). Yet, neither DiLella nor Wright comments upon the apparent tripartite afterlife scenario that this understanding of Daniel must drive them too: some do not awake at all (for DiLella, the non-Jew), some awake to everlasting life, and some awake to everlasting contempt. This is noted by John Goldingay who writes: “The threefold division suggested by the metaphor must not be pressed to yield a coherent total doctrine of the afterlife” (1989: 308).

At the same time, neither DiLella nor Wright, nor the text itself, concede the presence of righteous Gentiles, despite the references of such in Dan 4.34–37 and 6.25–27. To read into the text a resurrection of the physical body (so, Wright) is to retroject back into it a particular view of what ‘resurrection’ must mean from the New Testament and beyond. And in this regard, it must be of profound interest that neither Isa 26 nor Dan 12.2 is employed by *any* New Testament writer as explication or proof texts of the resurrection of Christ. Nor is this tripartite afterlife scenario like anything envisaged elsewhere.⁵⁹

For both Cavallin and Wright, alternative explanations of Dan 12.2 are excluded, e.g., that of Walter Brueggemann, who claims that since ‘dust’ is associated with kingship as its negative counterpart, what is really meant is not departure from the grave but the enthronement of Israel among the nations, a great reversal of history (1972, esp. pp. 11–12). Others see ‘resurrection of the dead’ here, and in the text in Isaiah, to be figurative for national restoration.⁶⁰ Goldingay asserts that one must avoid treating Dan 12.2 “as a piece of theological ‘teaching’: it is a vision or a flight of the imagination, not a fully developed belief in resurrection [. . . and] should not necessarily be taken as an attempt at literal prediction” (1989: 306–307). He sees the text

as “promising revival of the nation after the Antiochene persecution” (1989: 307). Likewise, George Nickelsburg writes: “the literal understanding of this language is not *a priori* certain, for such imagery occurs in pre-exilic and exilic literature not as a description of a resurrection of people who were literally dead, but as a picture of the restoration of Israel” (1972: 17–18).

So, Wright’s cornerstone begins to crumble, and Cavallin surprisingly concedes, after his initial confidence in the text: “So, the meaning of Dan 12.2 is not at all clear, and there is no consent among the scholars as to its interpretation in detail” and that Dan 12.4 (“at the end”), “shows the resurrection to be one of those events which accompany the change of the ages in Jewish apocalyptic” (1974: 26–27). Nickelsburg asserts that the construct of resurrection outlined in Daniel answers a profound need within the Jewish community in which the book arose, for the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes saw the righteous Jew put to death for refusing to disobey the Torah, while the Hellenizing apostate Jew was saved from death by denying the Torah. Nickelsburg notes: “Clearly this confounded the standard Israelite canons of justice and retribution. Resurrection to life, on the one hand, and to punishment, on the other, was an answer to this problem [. . .] Resurrection is asserted in Daniel because it is an answer to a problem that was of serious and existential concern to the readers of this book” (2006: 32).

Nickelsburg is correct in this general assessment, although his reflection upon the afterlife scenario of those who do not achieve everlasting life needs to be nuanced. The text does not state that there will be any form of ‘punishment’ at all. Afterlife scenarios of eternal retribution of the soul of the wicked will later become explicit in other Second Temple Jewish texts. Rather, here, those whose names are not found in the book will simply awaken to shame and everlasting contempt (עוֹלָם לְדַרְאוֹן לְחַרְפוֹת; διασπορὰν καὶ αἰσχύνην αἰῶνος) in that their souls will remain in Sheol, which stands in contradistinction to the souls of the righteous which are granted everlasting life in some form of astral immortality. Elsewhere in Daniel חַרְפוֹה has the sense of ‘scorn’ or ‘disgrace’ (Dan 9.16; 11.18).⁶¹

To be sure, Daniel does not conceive of a general resurrection for all, only for those whose unjust treatment in this life presents a moral problem for the writer. In this sense, Daniel belongs within the same broad category of other texts written in the Maccabean period and beyond, many of which are examined in the following chapter, which draw similar conclusions to a perceived ‘existential’ threat to Judaism and seek to ameliorate this by proposing a blessed afterlife for the righteous. As such, and like many of the narratives of 1–4 Maccabees, as well as most of the Old Testament pseudopigrapha, one must remember that these texts are steeped in the literary and historical imagination of their authors. In respect to Daniel, for example, can one progress from the myths of Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream, the Fiery Furnace, Belshazzar’s Feast, the lion’s den, and Daniel’s vivid apocalyptic dream, to then assert the literal fact of a supposed resurrection narrative from a concluding text? Such an approach is surely insecure.⁶²

EZEKIEL 37

Finally, in the Hebrew Bible, there is the rich metaphorical picture of Ezekiel 37.⁶³ The context draws from Ezekiel's long lament in chapter 36 of national idolatry and the hope of renewal. Chapter 36 is itself pre-empted by the idolatry noted in 33.23–33 and by the failure of Israel's leaders outlined in chapter 34. Ezekiel speaks of the defilement of the land (36.16–18), the subsequent outpouring of divine wrath and expulsion of the people (36.19–21), and the hope of a future return and cleansing (36.22–25). The narrative also holds the promise of a new covenant, outlined more thoroughly in Jeremiah 37 (cf. Ezek 36.26–32). As part of this restoration, the nation would be re-built, to be “like the garden of Eden” (36.33–36). The purpose of Ezekiel 37 is to provide a dramatic descriptive account, using two striking metaphors of what has gone before and the hope of what will be: the valley of the dry bones, i.e., the re-constitution of the ‘dead’ (vv. 1–14), and the moulding together of two sticks, representing Judah and Israel, to become one (vv. 15–23).⁶⁴ The narrative concludes by asserting the re-appointment of David as prince and shepherd and the establishment of an everlasting covenant of peace (vv. 24–28).⁶⁵

It is the metaphor of the valley of dry bones which has become central to many theses on physical resurrection. The narrative is typically related to the time of exile (Eichrodt 1970: 512; Zimmerli 1983: 258, 265). Yet, at the outset, one must remember that it is a *metaphor*, a vivid picture whose purpose is to articulate a future hope of national restoration:

Then he [Yahweh] said to me, “Mortal, *these bones are the whole house of Israel*. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, I my people; and *I will bring you back to the land of Israel*. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and *I will place you on your own soil*; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act,” says the Lord.

(37.11–14, italics mine)

The metaphor works because within the conceptual framework of the author and implied readers, national restoration was not only impossible but inconceivable, and the only illustrative metaphor to adequately express such impossibility was to speak of the re-enfleshment of bones. The exposure of dead bodies in this context aligns with other Biblical texts and Near Eastern sources which depict such action as a response to broken covenants.⁶⁶ Here, the only possible hope, for Ezekiel, must be a dramatic divine act, and the only metaphorical equivalence in the author's mind for the possibility of *national restoration* is to be brought *up from the grave* (vv. 12–13). Whether

the language and conceptual framework of Ezekiel 37 may inform a reading of supposed literal physical resurrection in Isa 26, Dan 12 and elsewhere is largely ignored amongst scholarly discussion of resurrection in the Hebrew Bible.⁶⁷ Yet, for Ezekiel it is perfectly clear: resurrection language *means* national restoration.⁶⁸ Walther Zimmerli writes:

In contrast to all those later interpretations of Ezek 37 it must now once more be finally and unambiguously stated that Ezek 37:1–14, with the two different images of the revival of unburied dead bones and of the opening of graves and the leading out of those buried there to new life, expresses the event of the restoration and the regathering of the politically defeated all-Israel. There is no thought of a resurrection of individuals from the dead.

(1983: 264)

Block, too, asserts: “The primary concern of this vision is obviously the revival of the nation of Israel [. . .] What Ezekiel sees in the bones is a graphic portrayal of the effects of the covenant curse on his people” (1998: 383, 385). Likewise, Martinus C. de Boer notes that “The idea of resurrection seems to be purely metaphorical, symbolizing the miracle of national revival by God after the annihilation of His people by foreign power” (1988: 44). As noted above with the two previous texts, allusions to Ezekiel’s vision are rare in the New Testament.⁶⁹ For Cavallin, while the passage “is a parable about the future restoration of the people of Israel in its chosen land” it is also clear that such the text would lend itself to later concepts of the resurrection of the dead (1974: 107).

Strangely, on these and other texts from the Hebrew Bible, N.T. Wright maintains: “It would be wrong to give the impression that the early Israelites were particularly gloomy about all this” (2003: 90). He suggests that behind such texts is an affirmation of “the goodness and vital importance of the present created order, which is to be renewed by Yahweh, not abandoned” (2003: 86). But the natural reading of the texts—and there are many of them—appear to say precisely the opposite. The authors *are* gloomy because they clearly recognize that at certain times there is great injustice in the present created order and they are perplexed as to the precise workings of Yahweh in it all. Equally, as noted, many of the texts are explicit in their fear that there is no hope for any kind of post-mortem existence. On the *later* Israelite hope of Yahweh’s faithfulness extending to life beyond the grave, Wright confirms: “It is impossible now to tell when this idea first made its appearance,” and that this belief, “does indeed appear to be a late arrival in its explicit form” (2003: 103). Even of some later passages which *appear* to offer divine deliverance from Sheol, Wright has to concede that “The problem with these passages is to know whether this refers to a deliverance that lies *beyond* Sheol” (p. 103, italics his), and that “The

main hope [. . .] seems to be that of rescue from violent death, rather than a deliverance the other side of the grave" (p. 104). Finally, Wright admits that the Hebrew Bible "mostly denies or at least ignores the possibility of a future life" (2003: 129).

SUMMARY

To summarize. The ancient Israelites were no great soldier class, no fearsome battle-hardened warriors, no great empire builders. They were nomadic, and later sedentary farmers and herders who attempted to secure an existence in Canaan alongside other disparate groups. There were clashes to be sure; some they won, others they lost. And along with such groups, they were tossed and turned by the vicissitudes of regional politics and the clashes between the mighty empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and finally that of the Greeks.⁷⁰ Often, of course, this meant persecution, sometimes destruction, and occasionally enforced exile. What the Israelites were, however, were imaginative story-tellers. Combined with a move from henotheism to some form of Yahweh-alone monotheism by the time of the Persian period, their stories and myths provided a vivid framework for explaining the working of their tribal god through a series of crises and of explicating a future hope. Repeated subjugation, persecution, and suffering from other tribes within the land or the vast empires without, was repeatedly seen as the result of disloyalty, idolatry, and national sin and so construed as divine punishment. Nevertheless, the myths told stories of future national restitution of future glory and honour, when the Israelites would occupy as much of the Promised Land as they desired, when they would flourish and live in peace, and when nations would come streaming to Jerusalem to pay them tribute. Yet, at the time of Deutero-Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others, national restoration was both practically impossible and, without a supreme divine act by the national god, conceptually inconceivable. In this way, the most suitable metaphor for such hope was the use of another conceptually inconceivable category: the language of 'resurrection.'

The crises of the Maccabean period generated further ideological reflection upon concepts of an afterlife which, to the lament of the Hebrew Bible, saw no distinction between the righteous and the wicked.⁷¹ As Cavallin notes: "Resurrection emerges during a period of intense Hellenization under Antiochus IV" (1974: 15–17, 23–24). How could the righteous heroic Jew, put to death for refusal to compromise Torah, comport with those who were all too willing to Hellenize and forsake the traditions of Israel?⁷² The texts of this period (of which Daniel is a part), demonstrate a conceptual shift to take cognisance of these righteous martyrs and, henceforth, for the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature, the souls of the righteous would head in a very different direction to those of the wicked. Some trajectories from

the Hebrew Bible did remain: on death the soul/spirit was released from the body to Hades, a place in the lowest regions of the earth, the place of the dead,⁷³ where it remained forever.⁷⁴ Yet, beginning in the writings of the Apocrapha, profound differences also begin to emerge.

In the words of Sirach: “It is easy for the Lord on the day of death to reward individuals according to their conduct” (11.26), and for 2 Esdras, the souls of the righteous cry out continually prompting the divine call: “I will avenge them, says the Lord” (7.80–99). For Tobit too, the spirit is released to an eternal home (in a positive sense, 3.6). This is made explicit in the Wisdom of Solomon: “The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God [. . .] they are at peace [. . .] their hope is full of immortality [. . .] they will govern nations and rule over peoples [. . .] the Lord will reign over them forever [. . .] they will stand with confidence [and] will receive a glorious crown (3.1, 7; 5.1, 15). For the wicked, however, their spirits will wonder about in torments (2 Esdras 7.80–99). For them: “there will be no resurrection to life [ἀνάστασις εἰς ζωὴν]!”⁷⁵ Sentiments such as this exhibit a conceptual framework which is alien to the Hebrew Bible and which will be further developed within the pseudepigraphal and apocalyptic writings.

Hence, for the Hebrew Bible, those texts written about or by those who claim to be near Sheol, or in Sheol, or needing deliverance from Sheol, concern those who are simply near death, or suffering persecution or harm, or—often in the case of the Psalmist—poignantly reflective of difficult circumstances, or, in the case of Ezekiel, longing for national restoration.⁷⁶ As Richard Bauckham notes:

Ancient Israel shared the conviction of the Mesopotamian peoples that ‘he who goes down to Sheol does not come up’ [. . .] No exceptions were known. There is no Old Testament instance of a true descent to and return from the underworld by a living human, though Samuel is called up as a shade [. . .] The picture of descent and return is more poetic fancy. To be in the region of death means to be in death’s power.⁷⁷

Overall, the conceptual framework of resurrection occurs only on the fringes of ancient Israelite and Jewish thought, and the discussion above perhaps places a question mark over the anthropological understanding of the Hebrew Bible and the extent to which ancient Israelites and Jews affirmed the unity of body and soul. Isaiah says nothing of the body being resurrected, neither does Daniel. The only clear instance of any form of ‘rising up’ is that of Samuel, whose soul rose to converse with Saul. Surely, the ancients recognized that the physical body decomposed to nothingness. Gerd Lüdemann argues that the “stereotypical assumption that resurrection in a Jewish context was *always* bodily is in need of considerable qualification” (2012: 546, noting Collins 1993: 398). The challenge of Lüdemann will be taken up further in the following chapter.⁷⁸

Excursus on the Thesis of Philip S. Johnston (2002)

The monograph of Johnston is the most detailed and systematic treatment of Sheol currently available. Yet, it appears that his confessional stance has unduly influenced his overall thesis.⁷⁹ He seeks to argue that while, on the one hand, Sheol is certainly the destiny for the wicked, on the other, the Hebrew Bible is ambiguous enough to suggest that it may not also be the place for the righteous. His statistical analyses of the 66 references to Sheol in the Hebrew Bible are placed under a number of specific categories ('cosmological extremity,' 'avoidance,' 'place of confinement' etc.), for which he provides a chart of his conclusions (p. 80). His category of Sheol as 'destiny,' suggests that there are only seven references to the righteous going to Sheol, yet 25 for the ungodly,⁸⁰ a conclusion which leads him to assert: "Scholars often portray Sheol as the destiny of all, without qualification. But the analysis above shows that it is portrayed predominantly as the fate of the wicked."⁸¹

Yet, the format of his analysis and chart skews the statistical evidence. If one asks a simple question of the 66 references, namely, who in the text is going to Sheol, the conclusion would be that in 25 texts the reference is to the wicked yet in 22 it is to the righteous (assuming that the psalmists, Job, and others, would naturally consider themselves to be 'righteous'). Texts referring to the righteous include David (2 Sam 22.6), the (righteous) king, Hezekiah (Isa 38.10, 18) as well as Job (17.13, 16), and the psalmist(s) (Pss 16.10; 18.6; 88.4; 139.8). Johnston also has to grapple with numerous texts which are unambiguous in their assertion that Sheol is the destiny for all (e.g., Job 3.11–19; 14.10–14a; Pss 49.7–11; 89.46–48; 90.10–12; Eccl 9.7–10; Isa 14; Ezek 32). On some of these he offers rather brief and unconvincing analyses to suggest that what appears to be their obvious sense has been misconstrued.⁸²

So, too, he does not allow the narrative of Saul and the Witch of Endor to inform his overall thesis, commenting upon it only within the context of conversing with the dead and necromancy. Yet, here, we have the natural death of one of the profound figures of Israelite history (certainly, one of the 'righteous'), whose soul now dwells in Sheol, and who is brought up by the Witch to converse with Saul.⁸³ Within the context of *who* resides in Sheol, this is one of the clearest and most pertinent narratives of afterlife in the Hebrew Bible, yet is largely ignored by Johnston. If the death and afterlife of Samuel is in any way paradigmatic of ancient Israelite thought, then his thesis is largely undermined. There is also the significant question of where do the righteous go, if not to Sheol? Surely, if ancient Israelite thought believed that the righteous go to a place of blessing, wherever that may be, there would be evidence for this *somewhere* in the Hebrew Bible. Its lack speaks volumes.⁸⁴

The same statistical analysis is true of בֹּרַי, and שְׁחַת, which are typically translated 'pit,' and which stand as synonyms for שְׁאֵל (explicitly so in

Ps 30.4; Prov 1.12; Isa. 14.15; Ezek 31.16 and elsewhere; Johnston 2002: 83–85). The psalmist (hence, the righteous) often speaks of descending to the pit (Pss 28.1; 88.5–7; 143.7), and the murdered *innocent* is said to descend there also (Prov 1.12). For Ezekiel, all creation is handed over to death “along with all mortals, with those who go down to the Pit” (31.14), and Job’s lament is that he, too, will end up there (17.14; 33). Psalm 48.7–9 simply assumes that everyone will go there. Johnston’s argument that the pit is for the wicked alone and that Job’s lament is due to extreme circumstances is unconvincing (2002: 84).

It appears that Johnston wants to envisage a growing yet subtle belief in resurrection, especially in the Psalms, Proverbs, Job 19 and the Enoch and Elijah traditions, but has to confess that evidence is scant and ambiguous (2002: 216–17). On Ezekiel 37, he also has to admit that while it may be a “dazzling parable of return from exile [. . .] it says nothing about personal resurrection, even if it was later interpreted in that way.”⁸⁵ While I would agree with Johnston that Daniel 12 is a text which speaks unmistakably and unambiguously of some form of personal resurrection, there are various issues to be resolved (noted above), and I would place the text firmly within the Maccabean period. Interestingly, Johnston himself claims that the context and focus of the Danielic text may be “of just one generation” (2002: 26). Hence, on many levels I would reject Johnston’s basic thesis, especially given the utter silence of the Hebrew Bible that the afterlife of the righteous may be somewhere other than Sheol.⁸⁶ The sharp distinction and demarcation of differing afterlife scenarios of the righteous and wicked, which are hinted at in Daniel, only clearly emerge in Second Temple Jewish texts, to which we now turn.

NOTES

1. On the following section see esp. Schürer 2.539–546 (and bibliog. 2.539, n. 90) Bauckham (1998a); Cavallin (1974); De Boer (1988); Longenecker (1998); Meier (2000); Segal (1997); Wedderburn (1987); Wright (2003).
2. Here, I am in some disagreement with the thesis of Johnston (2002) (for which see the excursus at the end of this chapter).
3. Gen 40.19; Lev 26.29; 2 Macc 9.9; 4 Macc 9.17; Ps 26.2; Prov 5.11; Job 33.21; 34.15; Lam 3.4; Jer 7.33; Isa 34.3.
4. Gen 4.10; Zeph 1.17; Ezek 32.5–6; 1 Macc 7.17; 4 Macc 10.8; Isa 49.26 (where the blood is, hopefully metaphorically, drunk).
5. Ezek 37, of course, details the procedure in reverse.
6. E.g., Gen 2.7; Ps 103.14; Eccl 3.20.
7. Pss 22.29; 30.9; 104.29; Eccl 3.20; 12.7; 4 Kgdms 13.7; 1 Macc 2.63. Cf. Ps 22.15, the “dust of death.” The NRSV rendition of Ps 7.6 (“ . . . then let the enemy pursue me and overtake me, trample my life to the ground, and lay my soul in the dust”), is misleading. Δοξά may have a wide semantic range, but is never translated “soul” (LSJ, BAGD *sv*); better is “glory” (so, NASU), or “honour” (so, NKJV). See Brueggemann (1972). Moore (1927: 2.287) sees such ideas as “common notions . . . which are found among various peoples on comparable planes of civilization.” On ‘dust’ see also, Tromp (1969: 85–91).

8. For Sirach (51.6), “My soul drew near to death, and my life was on the brink of Hades below” (where, in Hebrew parallelism, ‘soul’ is contiguous with ‘life’).
9. Moore (1927: 2.287) “Death is the departure from the body of the life, or, as we say, souls, concretely imagined as the vital breath (Gen 2.7) or as the blood, or *in* the blood (Lev 17.14).” Cf. Lev 17.11; Gen 9.4.
10. Such texts stand in opposition to Joel B. Green’s assumption that, “. . . there is general agreement that, in the Hebrew Bible, human beings are depicted as body and soul—that is, humans do not possess a body and soul, but are human only as body and soul” (1998: 154). Green cites no primary literature to support such a statement.
11. Job 33.18–30; Pss 16.10; 30.3, 9; 49.9–14; 88.4–5; Ezek 31.16; and Yamuachi (1998: 43–45).
12. Nearly 30 times throughout the LXX (e.g., Job 17.13–14; Pss 6.6; 17.5–6; 88.5–10; 89.48; Prov 7.27; Isa 28.15, 18; Hos 13.14; Dan 3.88; Sir 51.6; Wis 1.12–16; 16.13; Pss. Sol. 16.2; Rev. 6.8; 20.13).
13. Job 10.19–22; 17.1–7; Ps 88.5–6, 11; Ezek 32.23.
14. 1 En. 51.3; 4 Ezra 7.32; Ps-Philo 3.10; 2 Bar. 42.8; 50.2. On Abaddon see Job 26.6; 28.22; 31.12; Ps 88.11; Prov 15.11; 27.20. The most thorough treatment of Sheol is Johnston (2002).
15. Eccl 9.5; Ps 88.3–7, 10–12; Isa 26.14; see also Gen 3.5; Ps 6.5; 16.10; 30.9; 115.17; Isa 38.10f., 18f.; 2 Sam 14.14; Job 3.13f., 17–19.
16. Gen 37.35; 42.38; 44.29, 31; 1 Sam 2.6; 1 Kgs 2.6, 9; Tob 3.10; 4.19; 13.2; Ps 54.16; 63.2; 87.5 [LXX]/88.4; 143.6; Odes 3.6; Prov 2.18; 5.5; 7.27; 15.24; Job 7.9; 17.16; 21.13; Wis 16.13; Isa 14.11, 15; 38.18; 57.9; Bar 3.19; Ezek 31.15–17; 32.27; Pss. Sol. 15.10. Num 16.30, 33 notes a descent alive into Sheol, which, in the context, is considered extraordinary. See Tromp (1969: 91, 145–47).
17. Ps 95.4; 139.8; Isa 7.11; 44.23; Amos 9.2; Prov 25.3; Sirach 24.5.
18. Isa 38.10; Job 38.17; Pss 9.14; 107.18; Eccl 9.10. See Bauckham (1992: 14–5); Martin-Achard (1992: 680–84); Moore (1927: 2.289). Sheol is imagined as a monster with gaping jaws that greedily swallows men down and is never sated (Isa 5.14; Hab 2.5; Prov 27.20; 30.15f.).
19. 2 Sam 12.23; 2 Macc 6.23; 12.43; Job 7.8; 10.22; 14.12; 16.22; Prov 2.19; Jer 51.39; 1 En. 102.5; 103.7; Sib. Or. 1.81–84; Ps.-Phoc. 112–113; 2 Bar. 23.4; T. Ab. resc. A 8.9; 19.7. Tromp (1969: ch. 5).
20. See 1 Sam 28; Ps 88.10; Prov 2.18; 5.5; 7.27; 9.18; Isa 14.9; 26.14, 19; Longenecker (1998: 8).
21. Cf. Ps 115.17, “The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any that go down into silence.”
22. E.g., Job 7.5; 21.26; 25.6; Prov 12.4; Isa 66.24; Judith 16.17; and 2 Macc 9.9. Job 17.14 distinguishes Sheol (the Pit) from the worm within a context of the total end of both the body and soul. Sirach also appears to link the decomposition of the physical body by worms when he notes, “the punishment of the ungodly is fire and worms . . . For when one is dead he inherits maggots and vermin . . . Decay and worms will take possession of him” (7.17; 10.11; 19.3). Tromp (1969: 191) claims that Isa 66.24, “illustrates the new significance of Sheol: it has become Hell, the instrument of God’s wrath, where the wicked are punished for their sins.” Yet, uncharacteristically, Tromp fails to distinguish afterlife scenarios of the body and soul. Isa 66.24 *clearly* refers to the decomposition of the body, while it is the soul that is held, not punished, in Sheol.
23. Compare the similar scenarios for the nations in Ezek 32.17–34; 1 Macc 2.62–63.
24. As noted in the previous chapter, for Homer too, souls in Hades are always defined as *dead*. See Endsjø (2008: 428).

25. Νεκρός is also used of the dead physical body as in Gen 23.6, 9.
26. Ps 17.6 (the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me); Pss 48.14; 54.15; 88.48; 116.3; Prov 2.18; 5.5; 7.27; 9.18; Job 33.22; 38.17; Sir 14.12; Hos 13.14 (Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from Death?); Isa 14.19; 28.15–18; 38.18; Bar 2.17 (open your eyes, O Lord, and see, for the dead who are in Hades, whose spirit has been taken from their bodies, will not ascribe glory or justice to the Lord); Dan 3.88.
27. Gen 37.35; 42.38; 44.29, 31; 1 Sam 2.6; 1 Kings 2.6, 9; Tobit 3.10; 4.19; 13.2; Ps 54.16; 87.5 [LXX]/88.4; Ode 3.6; Prov 2.18; 5.5; 7.27; 15.24; Job 7.9; 17.16; 21.13; Wis 16.13; Isa 14.11, 15; 38.18; 57.9; Bar 3.19; Ezek 31.15–17; 32.27; Ps Sol 15.10. Num 16.30, 33 notes a descent alive into Sheol, which, in the context, is considered extraordinary. See Tromp (1969: 91, 145–47).
28. Pss 29.4; 48.15–16; 85.13; 88.49; 93.17; 116.3–7; Job 33.22; Wis 16.13–14; PsSol 16.2; Isa 14.9; Bar 2.17; Sir 51.6.
29. Cf. Ps 30.3 [29.4 LXX]; 88.10 [87.11 LXX]; Isa 26.19).
30. Moore (1927: 2.289), “From Sheol there is no exit; compare the Babylonian Aralu, the Land Without Return.”
31. Gen 37.35; Isa 38.10; Ps 30.3, 9; Num 16.30, 33.
32. Theoretically, ‘house’ could stand for ‘grave,’ but archaeological evidence has established the practice of interring in the home.
33. Eccl 3.16–21; 9.2–3, 9–10; 12.7; Job 7.9–10; 14.7–22; 30.23; Ps 6.5; 90.3, 10–12; Prov 5.11; Isa 26.14.
34. Yet, see Bauckham (1998a: 80–1), who writes that the dead, in Hebrew thought, “. . . were cut off from God, the source of all life. It is this view, which is not peculiar to Israel but was common to many ancient peoples that most of the Hebrew Scriptures take for granted.” He concludes that, “evidence for a belief in life after death in the Old Testament is, at best, minimal” (p. 81). See also, Longenecker (1998: 10–1).
35. The dating of the work is typically placed at the time of the Babylonian exile or later. On this later Israelite hope see also, Deut 32.39; Ps 16.10; 49.15; 73.24; TDNTW 118–119.
36. Josephus refers to the soul, spirit, or shade of Samuel, *Ant.* 6.329–34, 340–50.
37. A third text often cited is Job 19.26, although, as many English translations note, the text is uncertain. Cox (2009) in the recent online *New English Translation of the Septuagint* translates the Greek as, “May my skin, which patiently endures these things, rise up; for these things have been accomplished on me by the Lord—.” Moore (1927: 2.291) writes of this verse, “The expectation of a resurrection of the flesh in the common English version, and more uncompromisingly in the Latin Bible, is read *into* the text, not *in* it” (italics, his).
38. 2003: 116–17. On the notion of dew see Sawyer (1973). The later Rabbis took the reference to God’s dew as reviving the *souls* of the righteous, see Aus (2005: 191) citing *Pesiq. Rab.* 20.4.
39. My translation. Brenton (1851) translates the final clause of the LXX, “the land of the ungodly shall perish.” Silva (2009) has a translation almost identical to mine, “The dead shall rise, and those who are in the tombs shall be raised, and those who are in the earth shall rejoice; for the dew from you is healing to them, but the land of the impious shall fall.” Evans (1999: 93) translates the final clause, “but the land of the impious shall fall.” See Barrett (1979); Cavallin (1974); De Boer (1988: 42–7); Segal (1997). Cavallin sees here a resurrection to judgement (1974: 107). De Boer’s translation of the final line (“and on the land of the shades You will let it [dew] fall.”), is a strained translation and makes little sense in the context. See Pearson (1999: 33) who translates the MT, “on the land of the shades you will cause it to fall,” and the

LXX, “but the land of the unholy/ungodly/profane ones will fall.” The Babylonian Talmud (*b. Sanh* 90b) translates the verse as,

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust:
for thy dew is as the dew of herbs,
and the earth shall cast out its dead.

40. E.g., Jerusalem, Judah, Lebanon, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, or the earth.
41. The RSV translates the clause, “on the land of the shades thou wilt let it fall.” The LB omits the clause altogether.
42. Cf. Motyer’s translation of 18d: “The inhabitants of the world have not fallen” (1993: 218).
43. Cf. Davies (1985: 116), who writes that the verse is “a poetical text which can hardly be taken as a literal description of resurrection.”
44. Those who see here a metaphorical national ‘resurrection’ include Johnson (1988); Kissane (1960); Wade (1929); Wilderberger (1972).
45. “In the process of resurrection as explained to Ezekiel in a vision (37.1–3), the bodies of the dead are first reconstituted . . . then spirit (Hebrew רוּחַ) is infused in them, and they live again (v. 6). After Ezekiel’s first prophetic utterance (v. 7), the dry bones reassemble and become enfolded; the newly reconstituted corpses are not yet alive, however, because “spirit [רוּחַ] is not in them” (v. 8). A second divine commissioning (v. 9) and a second prophetic utterance (v. 10) are necessary to revive and revitalize the corpses. Oral tradition (*b. Sanh*. 92b) completes the parallel: the dead revived by Ezekiel’s intervention chanted a song of praise to God as soon as they came to life” (148).
46. See also, Motyer (1993: 212), “resurrection from the dust of the earth.”
47. Aus (2005: 190) recognizes a similar translation as mine. He notes the overlap here with 2 *Bar*. 73.1–2 (for the righteous, health will descend as dew).
48. Here, Collins rejects those who maintain that the passage reflects a belief in actual resurrection, e.g., Hasel (1980); Nickelsburg (1972: 18); Puech (1993): 66–73.
49. DiLella claims that Dan 12.2 is an “inspired midrash” on the Isaiah text (1978: 307).
50. BDB, “Slip away; escape; be delivered.” See the striking parallels (thematic and linguistic) with Isa 49.24–25 and also Ps 89.48.
51. The ‘Book of Life,’ cf. Exod 32.32–33; Ps 69.28.
52. Wedderburn claims that this is most likely *physical* life (1987: 169); although see Cavallin (1974: 28, n. 1).
53. On this text, see esp. Cavallin (1974: 26–7); Collins (1977: 191–218); Davies (1985: 109–20); Nickelsburg (1972); Wright (2003: 109–15). Davies notes (1985: 113), “The description in these verses is extremely sketchy . . . a series of brief statements which hardly amount to a coherent description.”
54. 2003: 109, 110, 116. Also in agreement is Schmidt (2000: 96). See also, Doukhan (2012).
55. Such a reading is thus contra that of Davies (2000: 195), who claims that Dan 12 speaks of resurrection of bodies, not reviving of spirits.
56. Segal (2004: 265) referring to Judg 5.20 and Job 38.7.
57. See Ps 48.15; Wis 3.4 (God created man to be immortal . . . the hope of the soul alone is full of immortality). Endsjø (2009:125); Lona (1993).
58. On the ‘many,’ Davies (1985: 116–7), who notes, “A universal resurrection is probably not envisaged, not even a universal Jewish resurrection.” Also, DiLella (1978: 307–08); Goldingay (1989: 281, 308).
59. The Rabbinic tripartite schema of *t. Sanh* 13.3, RH 16b-17a is quite different. There the house of Shammai notes that there are the righteous destined for

- eternal life; the wicked destined for “reproach, for everlasting abhorrence;” but also those who are refined. These descend to Sheol but are then raised and healed. The school drew upon Zech 13.9 and 1 Sam 2.6 for this assumption. See further, Cavallin (1974: 173–75); Montefiore and Lowe (1938: 600–03).
60. See sources cited in Cavallin (1974: 28).
 61. Physical injury can certainly *lead* to shame and contempt (e.g., 1 Sam 11.2; Job 16.10; Jer 29.18; 44.12; Ezek 5.15), but the opposite is never true in the Hebrew Bible: that being put to shame *means* undergoing some form of injury.
 62. This appears to be Wright’s approach, who claims that Dan 10–12 “provide a different lens” through which to view earlier events (2003: 115).
 63. On the imagery of Ezek 37 see De Boer (1988: 44), “The idea of resurrection seems to be purely metaphorical, symbolizing the miracle of national revival by God after the annihilation of His people by foreign powers.” On additional, albeit more ambiguous texts from the Hebrew Bible see Johnston (2002).
 64. Cf. also the parallels between 37.14 and 36.27–28 noted by Allen (1990: 187); and see Block (1998).
 65. Goldingay notes that the chapter is “characteristically prophetic” (1989: 307).
 66. Cf. Deut 28.25–26; 2 Sam 21; Jer 34.17–20; Block (1998: 377–78).
 67. Overlooked in commentaries such as Allen (1990) and Eichrodt (1970). The Church Fathers saw in Ezekiel’s imagery the final resurrection of the dead (see Zimmerli 1983: 264).
 68. Cf. Eichrodt: “the reader may have been thinking that this is a presentation of the belief in the resurrection of the dead. This, however, is not the case . . .” (1970: 509).
 69. Rev 11.11 possibly echoes Ezek 37.5, and 1 Thess 4.8 may be based on Ezek 37.14. Cf. Block (1998: 389–90).
 70. In this context Moore (1927: 2.331) notes, “. . . under the empires that succeeded one another in the dominion of their world, the Jews were made keenly aware of the impotence of little Judaea and its scattered sons over against the gigantic power of those vast empires.”
 71. On the importance of the Maccabean struggle see, Bauckham (1998a: 83).
 72. Cf., Mal 3.14–15, “It is vain to serve god. What is the good of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? Henceforth we deem the arrogant blessed; evildoers not only prosper but when they put God to the test they escape.”
 73. Tobit 3.6, 10; 5.12; 13.2; Wis 1.14.
 74. Wis 12.1; Sirach 38.16–23; Bar 2.17; 2 Esdras 2.45; 4 Macc 17.2; 18.23.
 75. Cf., 2 Macc 7.14.
 76. See Tromp (1969: 129), who writes, “the psalmists often claim to be in Sheol when, in our view, they are still alive; and to be delivered from the abode of the dead, while to our way of thinking they have not been there at all.”
 77. Bauckham (1998: 16); Pss 6; 7; 13; 30; 33.18–22; 86; 88.
 78. See further, Perkins (1984: 37), who writes, “Many popular treatments of resurrection often presume that it reflects a “Jewish” view of the unity of the human person over against a Greek dualism of soul and body . . . [But] the so-called unitary person reflects a metaphoric stage of language and consciousness over against the development of philosophical conceptualization. Further studies of textual and archaeological evidence have shown that there is no peculiarly Jewish view of the person in the period under discussion.”
 79. For further critiques of Johnston see Hays (2011: 143–44); Lewis (2002: 189).
 80. Some of which one may argue are questionable (e.g., Isa 5.14; 14.11, 15; 28.15).
 81. Johnston (2002: 81). Cf. further: “Sheol is used almost exclusively reserved for those under divine judgment, whether the wicked, the afflicted righteous, or all

sinner. It seldom occurs of all humanity, and only in contexts which portray human sinfulness and life's absurdity. Thus Sheol is not used indiscriminately to describe human destiny at death" (83).

82. See, for example, his studies on Ps 89.48–49 (pp. 82–83) and Eccl 9.7–10 (p. 83).
83. The natural, peaceful death of Samuel is pertinent in this context as Johnston (2002: 81) claims that the righteous may comment upon or descend unnaturally to Sheol if death occurs, "in the context of trial or divine judgement, or unhappy and untimely death."
84. Cf. Segal's comment (2004: 135) that "there are not any notions of hell and heaven that we can identify in the Hebrew Bible."
85. 2002: 223. He notes that its visionary nature is confirmed by similar introductory language in Ezekiel's other visions, cf. 1.3; 3.14; 8.1–3; 11.1. Some rabbis took the event as literal and debated the later history of those 'resurrected', cf. Block (1998: 388).
86. The worry for some appears to be that the admission of a consistent afterlife scenario in Sheol for both righteous and wicked places the Hebrew Bible in tension with the general thrust of the New Testament, especially the various sayings placed upon the lips of Jesus in the Gospels. However, there is also tension between the Hebrew Bible and New Testament over the very nature of Sheol: a place of containment in the Hebrew Bible, yet a place of eternal torment in the New Testament. On this, see Finney (2013).

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3 The Priority of the Soul

Constructions of Afterlife in Second Temple Judaism

The aim of this chapter is to present an examination of the relevant texts on the afterlife from the period of Second Temple Judaism, the importance of which cannot be overstated, for it is here that, for many scholars, the Jewish concept of the resurrection of the body finally becomes unmistakably clear.¹ However, this chapter will argue against such a proposition and suggest, rather, that the majority of Second Temple Judaism texts are actually consistent in presenting various afterlife scenarios for the soul and not the body.

AFTERLIFE IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM

It will be fruitful to identify various aspects of the afterlife from a range of Second Temple Jewish sources, and this will be made under a number of key themes. Firstly, in terms of death, and the advent of death, the Wisdom of Solomon (2nd–1st BCE) notes that God neither ‘made’ death nor does he delight in the death of the living, for, “It is through both the ungodly by their words and deeds that death was summoned and through the devil’s envy that death entered the world” (Wis 1.12–16; 2.1, 5, 24). The dominion of Hades is said to lie beneath the earth, and, according to the author there is no return from death (Wis 2.1, 5; Collins 1981: 186; De Boer 1988: 59–60).

Secondly, as is well documented within ancient Judaism, the physical flesh was considered corrupt and evil while the soul was virtuous and noble. Many texts denigrate the flesh while maintaining the goodness of the soul which is construed to be ‘borrowed’ from God. Again, the Wisdom of Solomon asserts that the soul is created in the image of God’s own nature and is incorruptible. It is weighed down and imprisoned in the body, in which the earthly tent burdens the thoughtful mind (cf. 2 Cor 5).² Josephus, too, affirms that the bodies of all men are created out of corruptible matter and so are mortal, but the soul is a portion of divinity that inhabits the body (*War* 3.372);³ as such, the soul “suffers when being implanted in bodies” (*C. Ap.* 2.203). He notes that the Essenes held to a similar doctrine ascribing to them the thought that, “bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but the soul is united to the body as a prison,

into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they are released as from a long bondage” (*War* 2.154–55; 7.337–55).

The death of the body, the point at which “the mortal goes to the earth” according to the Wisdom of Solomon, means that the soul can return to its source (*Wis* 15.8).⁴ At this point, asserts Josephus, “People who depart from this life repay what God had lent them, when the giver wants to claim it back again” (*War* 3.374). In a long soliloquy placed on the lips of Eleazar, leader of the Sicarii, at their last stand on Masada, Josephus writes of the soul’s divine nature, and of its immortality:

death gives liberty to the soul and permits it to depart to its own pure abode, there to be free from all calamity; but [being] imprisoned in a mortal body and tainted with all its miseries [. . .] ill befits that which is divine [. . .] it is not until, freed from the weight that drags it down to earth and clings about it, the soul is restored to its proper sphere [. . .] remaining, like God himself [. . .] abundant in a wealth of immortality.
(*War* 7.343–48)⁵

In a similar way, the author of 2 Baruch asks the ‘Mighty One:’ “In which shape will the living live in your day? Or how will remain their splendor which will be after that? Will they, perhaps, take again this present form, and will they put on the chained members which are in evil and by which evils are accomplished? Or will you perhaps change these things which have been in the world, as also the world itself?” (2 *Bar.* 49.2–3).⁶ The writer’s hope is obviously for change—that the splendour of the soul will remain and that there will be no *physical* aspect to post-mortem existence. So, too, in the Ascension of Isaiah, the author describes a glorious vision of the seventh heaven at the end times, glorious because all there, including Enoch, are “stripped of (their) robes of the flesh; and I saw them in their robes of above, and they were like the angels who stand there in great glory” (9.7–8). The same sentiments are found in 2 Enoch, too, when the author (supposedly the patriarch Enoch) notes: “The Lord said to Michael, ‘Take Enoch and extract (him) from his earthly clothing [. . .] and put (him) into the clothes of glory [. . .] And I gazed at myself, and I had become like one of the glorious ones” (2 *En.* 22.8, 10).⁷

The above quotes by Josephus point to the third key theme, which is the concept of the immortality of the soul and the place of its departure after death. Josephus repeatedly notes that the soul is immortal and is a portion of the divine inhabiting the body. The souls of the righteous are said to attain immortality and an everlasting sense of bliss (*War* 1.650; 3.372), a doctrine held by both Essenes and Pharisees (*Ant.* 18.14, 18). The writer of Pseudo-Phocylides tells the same: “For the spirit is a loan of God to mortals; our soul is immortal and lives ageless forever” (103–15).⁸

But, following the death of the body, where do souls go? Second Temple Jewish texts note that they depart to certain ‘abodes,’ although the precise

locations of these differ amongst the various texts. As the soul is spoken of as belonging to, and being borrowed from God, on its release from the body, it is naturally said to return to God and in many texts there is a strong emphasis on the security of the righteous soul after death (4 Ezra 7.75–101).⁹ The Wisdom of Solomon declares that such souls are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them, they are at peace (3.1); and for 1 Enoch: “You, souls of the righteous [. . .] Be not sad that your souls have gone down into Sheol in sorrow” for there is the promise of restoration (102.4–6).¹⁰ The author of Pseudo-Philo even quotes God himself, to confirm the same: “At the end of the lot of each one of you will be life eternal, for you and your seed, and I will take your souls and store them in peace until the time allotted the world be complete” (22.13).¹¹ 4 Ezra speaks of souls (of the righteous at least), being stored in Hades, in what the author calls ‘chambers.’ Here, they are guarded by angels, and rejoice that they have now escaped what is mortal and are to be made like the stars (4 Ezra 4.35, 41; 7.95–96).¹² So, all souls are said to return to God until the day of judgement.

If 1 Enoch (above) notes that the soul of the righteous goes *down* into Sheol, other texts speak of the righteous soul rising *up* into heaven. The doctrine of the Essenes (articulated by Josephus), affirms that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh they then rejoice and mount upward (*War* 2.155). In the Apocalypse of Moses the soul of Adam is taken *up* to heaven (13.3–6; 37ff., and see further below). The same is said of Abraham in the Testament of Abraham, a text which is illuminating: “And they buried [Abraham] in the promised land [. . .] while the angels escorted his precious soul and ascended into heaven singing [. . .] and when Abraham had worshipped¹³ [. . .] God spoke: ‘Take my friend Abraham into Paradise where there are the tents of my righteous ones and the mansions of my holy ones [. . .] where there is endless life’” (20.9–11).¹⁴ In similar terms, the Testament of Job recounts Job’s death:

Job fell ill [. . .] after three days he saw those who had come for his soul. Gleaming chariots came for his soul [. . .] the one who sat on the chariot got off and greeted Job [. . .] And taking the soul he flew up, embracing it, and mounted the chariot and set off for the east. But his body, prepared for burial, was borne to the tomb [. . .] After three days they laid him in the tomb in a beautiful sleep.

(52.1–53.5)¹⁵

For the wicked however, 4 Ezra notes that “bad spirits shall not enter into habitations, but shall wander about in torments” (7.95), and Josephus writes that the wicked are to be detained in an everlasting prison where their souls are subject to eternal punishment (*War* 2.163; *Ant.* 18.14). 2 Baruch even confirms that “After the appointed day, the wicked will be changed into startling visions and horrible shapes; and they will waste away even more. Then they will go away to be tormented” (51.1–6, and see further below).

In this respect there is a sharp level of discontinuity between Second Temple Jewish texts and the Hebrew Bible. Certainly, the concept of an (immortal) soul descending into Sheol is consistent, yet there is a marked difference in what follows. While the Hebrew Bible (excepting Daniel 12) asserts that the souls of both wicked and righteous remain eternally as shades in Sheol, Second Temple texts distinguish between the wicked souls which do remain there (and are eternally tormented), and the righteous souls which are taken to a better place.¹⁶ Further, some texts omit entirely the descent into Sheol, and assert that the righteous soul ascends immediately into a heavenly paradise (although whether such a purview is simply temporal compression, that is, omitting *mention* of the intermediate stage of a descent into Sheol, or actually rejecting it altogether, is difficult to ascertain). As noted in the summary to the previous chapter, these changes are likely to be a result of reflection on the afterlife through the Maccabean period.

THE PRIORITY OF THE SOUL IN DISCUSSION ON THE AFTERLIFE

The fourth key theme is a discussion of the end times, and this is where most variety purportedly exists in Second Temple Jewish texts. At this point, as the Wisdom of Solomon succinctly explains, “God examines souls” (3.13), and the author of 1 Enoch writes:

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 [the Elect One] shall choose the righteous and the holy ones from among (the risen dead), for the day when they shall be selected and saved has arrived. [They shall] wear garments of glory.

(1 En. 51.1–2)¹⁷

1 Enoch is replete with similar sentiments and what is emphasized throughout the composite text is that the authors are thinking of afterlife scenarios for the soul or spirit, not the body. Chapter 22, for example, provides explicit details of the abode of the dead reiterating that it is for the *souls* or *spirits* of the dead (twelve times in 14 verses), which are gathered until the day of judgement. Enoch sees here the spirit of Abel and is informed that the souls of the righteous are separated from those of the wicked (which will suffer eternal retribution).¹⁸ In his detailed analysis of 1 Enoch 22, George Nickelsburg reminds the reader that the disembodied shades of all the dead being taken to the gloomy regions of Sheol was a “widespread idea in the Hebrew Bible,” and, in dating this section to the third century BCE, notes the “influence of Greek rather than ancient Near Eastern ideas” (2001: 300–309). He recognizes here the emphasis of the afterlife of the soul alone. The text is prefaced in 1 Enoch 21 by the first appearance of eternal punishment

by fire in Second Temple Jewish texts: “a great fire that was burning and flaming [. . .] pouring out great pillars of fire,” whose extent nor magnitude could be seen nor estimated. This is the place of eternal destruction for the fallen angels who are detained forever. (The precedent here is likely to be the worm of fire of Isa. 66 although it is not suggested there that the dead are in any way ‘alive’ to experience such eternal torment.)¹⁹

Likewise in 1 Enoch 102–103, the emphasis is also on the afterlife of the soul. Enoch delights that:

you souls of the righteous, fear not; and be hopeful, you souls that died in righteousness! Be not sad because your souls have gone down into Sheol in sorrow [. . .] For all good things, and joy and honor are prepared for and written down for the souls of those who died in righteousness [. . .] The spirits of those who died in righteousness shall live and rejoice; their spirits shall not perish.

(102.4–103.3)²⁰

Yet, for the souls of the wicked, Enoch issues a stark warning: “they shall experience evil and great tribulation—in darkness, nets, and burning flame. Your souls shall enter into the great judgement” (103.5–8; and more generally, *1 En.* 38–40). As Nickelsburg argues: “Nowhere do these chapters indicate that their authors anticipated a resurrection of the body and hence that they constructed the human being as a totality of body and soul. It is the soul [. . .] that receives reward and punishment [. . .] For this author eschatological blessing and curse will be granted to the soul or spirit and not the body” (2001: 519, 523). Stuckenbruck concurs, noting: “Here, then, the human is not spoken of as a single being that consists of both body and soul; rather, the soul (and not the body) is made responsible for actions and hence receives rewards or punishments. It is therefore difficult to envision how the writer could have believed in a “resurrection of the body” (2007: 497). So, too, on these chapters, J.J. Collins writes:

The Epistle of Enoch predicts resurrection at the end of history; elsewhere however it asserts future vindication of the righteous in terms that do not suggest the bodily resurrection but the transformation of the spirit after death (103–104). The reward of the righteous is to share the eternal, spiritual life of the angels in heaven. This is not the Greek idea of immortality of the soul, but neither is it the resurrection of the body. Rather it is the resurrection, or exaltation, of the spirit from Sheol to heaven. The bodies of the righteous will presumably continue to rest in the earth.

(2000: 124)

Collins correctly recognizes that the text of 1 Enoch exhibits the social tensions and ‘cultural trauma’ of the period (cf. *1 En.* 104.7–8), the response to

which is the manifest hope for some kind of afterlife and of grand visions of life beyond death (see also, Nickelsburg 1977).

Similar sentiments are found in a range of other Second Temple Jewish texts. The author of Jubilees envisages a separation of body and soul in the last days:

There will be no Satan and no evil (one) who will destroy,
Because all of their days will be days of blessing and healing
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 their bones will rest in the earth,
And their spirits will increase in joy.

(23.29–30)²¹

In similar fashion the author of the Psalms of Solomon writes:

[The sinner] adds sin upon sin in his life;
He falls—and he will not rise [ἀναστήσεται]
The destruction of the sinner is forever,
But those who fear the lord shall rise up [ἀναστήσονται] to eternal life
And their life shall be in the Lord's light, and it shall never end.

(*Pss. Sol.* 3.10–12; and also 2.16; 14.2)

Although the righteous are said to rise to eternal life, at this point the text provides no detail on the form or nature of that rising. Fortunately, however, the wider context repeatedly notes that the sinner will be taken away to Hades and to ruin, the righteous to paradise: “For the life of the righteous (goes on) forever, but sinners shall be taken away to destruction, and no memory of them will ever be found” (13.11; 14.3, 9–10). And what heads for Hades for the sinner or to paradise for the righteous, is the soul:

For a moment my soul was poured out to death;
(I was) near the gates of Hades with the sinner
Thus my soul was drawn away from the Lord god of Israel,
Unless the Lord had come to my aid with his everlasting mercy.

(*Pss. Sol.* 16.2–3; cf. 16.12; 17.1)

The Psalm here has parallels, in part, with those of the Hebrew Bible, but with the additional distinction of positing differing afterlife abodes for the souls of the righteous and the wicked. In this way, there is continuity with the apocryphal texts such as the Wisdom of Solomon noted above which confirms: “the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and no torment will ever touch them [. . .] their hope is full of immortality” (3.1, 4), but that “the ungodly will be punished [. . .] when God examines souls” (3.10, 13).

In the first-century CE, Josephus writes that the Essenes held the same doctrine: “For it is a fixed belief of theirs that the body is corruptible and its constituent matter impermanent, but that the soul is immortal and imperishable” (*War* 2.154; cf. *Ant.* 18.18).²² Philo notes the same of the Therapeutae (*Contempl.* 13); indeed, Philo would probably reject the concept of a resurrection of the body himself, for although he does not mention it specifically, he does state that a ‘corpse’ cannot come into the sight of God (*Fug.* 10–11; cf. 55–59).²³ Other texts which affirm the resurrection of the soul alone are the Testament of Asher (6.5–6), the Testament of Dan (5.11–12), and Pseudo-Philo (3.10; 19.12).²⁴ At the end of the first-century CE, the author of 2 Baruch appears to claim the same:

And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance of the Anointed One has been fulfilled and he returns with glory, that then all who sleep in hope of him will rise. And it will happen at that time that those treasures will be opened in which the number of the souls of the righteous were kept, and they will go out and the multitudes of the souls will appear together, in one assemblage, of one mind. And the souls of the wicked will know that their torment has come and that perditions have arrived.

(30.1–5, and note 49.2–3 above)

In dramatic apocalyptic imagery, a number of texts describe in detail the conflagration of the end times. The author of 4 Ezra, for example, writes:

The Messiah will rule 400 yrs, then, along with all who draw human breath, will die. The world will turn back to primeval silence for seven days, as it was at the beginnings; so that no one shall be left. After this the world shall be roused, “and that which is corruptible shall perish. And the earth shall give up those who are asleep in it; and the chambers shall give up the souls which have been committed to them. And the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of judgement [. . .] Then the pit of torment shall appear, and opposite it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of Hell shall be disclosed, and opposite it the Paradise of delight.

(7.28–36)

Here, it is the soul which survives the end time conflagration and is led into judgement. Although this appears clear enough, some claim that the text is ambiguous on the point of whether it describes a spiritual or physical afterlife, yet within the wider context of 4 Ezra the work is consistent in speaking of a *spiritual* afterlife. For example, the author writes: “Did not the souls of the righteous in their chambers ask about these matters [of when the end would come], saying, How long are we to remain here? In Hades the chambers of the soul are like the womb [. . .] these places hasten to give

back those things that were committed to them from the beginning” (4.35, 41); and later, “on death, the spirit leaves the body and returns to God [. . .] good spirits are gathered into chambers and guarded by angels, the righteous souls rejoice that they have now escaped what is mortal, they are to be made like the stars” (7.78, 95–96).²⁵

Pseudo-Philo also envisages a new or re-creation:

When the years appointed for the world have been fulfilled [. . .] I will bring the dead to life and raise up those sleeping from the earth [. . .] so that I may render to each according to his works. And the world will cease and death will be abolished [. . .] And there will be another earth and another heaven, an everlasting dwelling place.

(3.10)²⁶

The bringing of the dead to life and the raising up of those sleeping in the earth is best construed as the spiritual dimensions of an afterlife. Pseudo-Philo speaks elsewhere that only the soul will be stored in peace, awaiting the end days (23.13; 32.13; 62.9). In light of the above passages, the most likely sense is that they speak of the raising up and eternal life for the soul. However, other post-Biblical Jewish texts are ambiguous. The Testament of Judah notes that at the end times Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be resurrected to life, but says nothing of their form (*T. Jud.* 25.1), the Testament of Benjamin does likewise commenting upon the deaths of Enoch, Seth, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (10.6–8), and in Pseudo-Philo, too (above), the bringing of the dead to life and the raising up of those sleeping in the earth is best understood as the spiritual dimensions of an afterlife.

A third view in this section is those Second Temple texts which, for some, make reference to a new physical body.²⁷ Yet, these are fewer than traditionally assumed and, I would suggest, are miscategorised, belonging, in fact, to the category above (i.e., speaking of the resurrection of the immortal righteous soul, not the physical body). These texts include sections of 1 Enoch, the Testament of Job, Pseudo-Phocylides, the Sibylline Oracles, the Apocalypse of Adam and Eve, and most commonly, 2 Maccabees, Josephus, and 2 Baruch.²⁸ These will be dealt with in turn.

1 Enoch

Much has been said of 1 Enoch thus far which is clearly a composite text drawn from a number of authors and periods.²⁹ However, the majority of it can be dated to the second and first centuries BCE and, as such, it is of great interest for analyzing the various authorial musings on the afterlife. Claudia Setzer claims that there are apparently “Fairly explicit claims of bodily resurrection [. . .] in texts like *1 Enoch* 51,” and claims the same for 1 Enoch 91 (2004: 18).³⁰ However, 1 Enoch 51 simply notes: “In those days the earth will give back what has been entrusted to it, and Sheol will return all

the deposits which she had received" (51.1), which is more ambiguous than Setzer allows. Certainly, the latter clause appears to be consistent within Second Temple Judaism as a reference to the soul which has been received by Sheol and 'stored' for a later day, but debate remains over the first clause and how to take the two together. This could simply be an example of Hebrew parallelism, or of the soul taking on 'bodily' form.³¹ Her second text (91.10) is even more ambiguous: "then the righteous one will arise from his sleep and the wise one [or wisdom] will arise." The language employed here is similar to both the Testament of Job (above) and Pseudo-Phocylides (below) and need not refer to a physical resurrection at all.³²

Setzer goes on to suggest that: "Ambiguity prevails in works that nevertheless imply resurrection such as 'The Book of the Watchers'" (1 En. 1–36), by which Setzer means resurrection of the body (2004: 18). Yet, the clearest texts on the afterlife in this section (9.3, 10; 22.3, 8–14) are *unambiguous* in speaking of the afterlife of the soul alone. Indeed, as noted, 1 Enoch 22 contains twelve references to the soul/spirit of the departed, by which the author means the spirit(s) of the dead (22.5), which left the body (22.7) after it died and was buried (22.10). This is entirely consistent with 1 Enoch 103 which claims: "For all good things are prepared for the souls of those who died in righteousness [. . .] Their spirits shall live and rejoice [. . .] their spirits shall not perish" (103.3–4). Hence, the general emphases of the numerous sections of 1 Enoch, and of the work as a whole, locate an afterlife experience in terms of the soul and not the body.

Like Setzer, Puech also reads physical resurrection into 1 Enoch. Yet, his cited texts (90.33; 91.10/92.3–4; 100.5; 102.4–5; 103.3–7; 104.2–5) demonstrate nothing of the sort. Some of these speak of the righteous arising from sleep, but as noted above, in a number of works this is a reference to the soul (e.g., Pseudo-Phocylides, Pseudo-Philo, 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra). In some of the other texts (such as 102.4–5 and 103.3–7), the emphasis is *specifically* upon the afterlife of the soul; e.g., 103.3, "For all good things and joy and honour are prepared for and written down for the souls of those who died in righteousness." Nevertheless, despite the fact that Puech struggles to find explicit references to physical resurrection, he can still apparently affirm: "the resurrection of a glorified body must be implied—and not the existence of the spirit or soul, as some have supposed" (1994: 249).

The single verse in 1 Enoch 1–36 from which a persistent claim is made for evidence of a physical afterlife is 25.6. Here, Enoch enquires of the archangel Michael about a beautiful fragrant tree which is to be given to the righteous and the pious. Michael responds in poetical form:

Then they [the righteous] shall be glad and rejoice in gladness
And they shall enter into the holy (place);
Its fragrance shall (penetrate) their bones,
Long life will they live on earth,
Such as your fathers lived in their days.

This follows the rich poetical picture-language of 25.1–5 which describes the descent of the “Holy and Great Lord of Glory, the Eternal King” to the earth where he takes his throne upon the summit of a great mountain in order to bring judgement, vengeance, and the conclusion of all things. The scene is obviously of the end times, following judgement, when the righteous will live on earth. The connotation of “bones” in this text has assured some of a context of physical resurrection, yet this is only one interpretation.³³ R.K. Harrison contends that in Semitic usage, “bones” may denote the seat of one’s sensations, and in certain texts simply refers to the “self.”³⁴ Nickelsburg notes: “The precise connotation of “bones” here is uncertain,” and that it may simply have been used in place of “their souls” to “avoid the duplication of synonyms” (2001: 315). To be sure, if this was a reference to physical resurrection then it stands in tension with the extensive afterlife catalogue of ch. 22 with its clear emphasis upon the soul/spirit, and precisely how much weight can be placed upon a single phrase in a poetical text is uncertain. If one seeks to find consistency in the text, it is best construed either as a reference to the ‘self,’ or, within an eschatological context, seen within a framework of an afterlife experience of the soul to be followed at the eschaton by the soul entering some kind of ‘physical entity’ (so, Josephus; see below).

Testament of Job

The Testament of Job (1st BCE–1st CE) is frequently asserted to speak of the resurrection of the physical body, yet the text is more elusive than traditionally supposed. Following the collapse of Job’s house which killed his children, his wife Setis pleads that the ruins be searched for their bones so that they might be preserved as a memorial. But Job forbids it, declaring: “Do not trouble yourself in vain. For you will not find my children, since they were taken up into heaven by the Creator their King [. . .] Look up with your eyes to the east and see my children crowned with the splendour of the heavenly one” (39.11–12; 40.3).³⁵

Any assumptions that this text speaks of a bodily resurrection must stand in tension with the later and more detailed account of Job’s own death in vv. 52.1–53.5 (cited above, but repeated here for reference), in which his soul ascends to heaven and his body buried on earth, “Job fell ill [. . .] after three days he saw the gleaming chariots which had come for his soul [. . .] the one who sat in the great chariot got off and greeted Job [. . .] and taking the soul he flew up, embracing it, and mounted the chariot and set off for the east. But his body, prepared for burial, was borne to the tomb” (52.1, 7–11).

There is no ambiguity here. Job’s soul is removed to ‘the east’ (i.e., the place where his glorified children are seen), and his dead body is taken to a tomb. With regard to the children, the text appears to compress the temporal trajectories seen in other works in which death is followed by the taking of the soul to another undisclosed place, and a final end-time glorification of the soul. Hence, from the author’s perspective (on the lips of Job), if what

was “taken up to heaven” and glorified is the soul, i.e., that part of a person which defines ‘existence,’ then, naturally, Job’s children (or what constitutes the children—their souls) would not be ‘found.’ So, one could assume that the author is placing onto the lips of Job a simple ‘spiritual’ assessment of the tragedy (see Allison 2005: 243–44; Nickelsburg 2000: 155). If we assume that the text is internally consistent, then the clarity of the later text must inform the ambiguity of the former. If we make no such assumption, then one may concur with R.P. Spittler who, noting the inconsistency, suggests that the earlier verses may “betray a Christian hand somewhere in the editorial history of TJob” (1983: 859, n. e).

Pseudo-Phocylides

Pseudo-Phocylides (30 BCE–40 CE), is another example of a text frequently taken to speak of physical resurrection.³⁶ The author writes: “for we hope that the remains of the departed will soon come to the light (again), out of the earth; and afterward they will become gods” (103–104).³⁷ For Van der Horst, the text shows the “idea of bodily resurrection [which is . . .] typically Jewish [and . . .] foreshadowed in the OT (Isa 26.19; Dan 12.2) but fully developed only in post-Biblical Judaism” (1985: 578).³⁸ Yet, the remnant (λείψαν, singular) of what has perished (ἀποικομένων), coming out of the earth towards the light (καὶ τάχα δ’ ἐκ γαίης ἐλπίζομεν εἰς φάος ἐλθεῖν), is a reference to the soul/spirit and this is clearly identified in what follows:

And afterwards they become gods.³⁹ For the souls remain unharmed in the deceased. For the spirit is a loan from God to mortals, and his image. For we have a body out of earth, and when afterwards we are resolved again into earth we are but dust; but the air has received our spirit [. . .] All alike are corpses, but god rules over the souls [which are] immortal and live ageless forever.

(104–15)

Consistent with other texts notes above, on death, the body returns to the earth, while the soul emerges out of the earth towards the light. Collins, like most, appears to misrepresent the text when he suggests: “This passage seems to be a confused combination of ideas of immortality of the soul and resurrection of the body [and . . .] predicts resurrection in very physical terms” (2002: 369–70). Yet, the text shows no confusion and is consistent with many others seen thus far in depicting the demise of the body and the afterlife of the soul alone.

Sibylline Oracles

The fourth text, from Book 4 of the Sibylline Oracles, presents us with a dramatic visualization of the aftermath of a great end-time conflagration (see Collins 1985, 2000). Unusually, within the literature, the text speaks of the

total destruction of the whole earth and the entirety of humankind by fire which is described as divine judgement for sin. After the fire is quenched, the author asserts: “God himself will again fashion the bones and ashes of men and he will raise up mortals again as they were before” (4.181–82).⁴⁰ The ambiguity of the text is evident in a number of points: do these verses speak of a re-creation of mankind similar to that of Ezekiel 37, or is it an entirely new creation; and does the raising up of mortals “as they were before,” imply any continuity with what existed before the conflagration, or does the author assert that this is an entirely new creation in some senses *parallel* to what existed before?

The text appears to confirm the latter—this is a wholly *new* creation, similar but discontinuous to what went before.

The whole world will hear a bellowing noise and mighty sound. He will burn the whole earth, and will destroy the whole race of men and all cities and rivers at once, and the sea. He will destroy everything by fire, and it will be smoking dust. But when everything is already dusty ashes, and God puts to sleep the unspeakable fire . . . he will raise up mortals again as they were before. And then there will be a judgement over which God himself will preside, judging the world again.

(4.175–84)

In this vision, God’s original creation suffered an all-encompassing destruction due to the fact that the *whole* of the created order was found to be wicked (4.152–78), but in this newly created world, God finds that there are *some* who are righteous. These will live on earth in a state of blessing while sinners will go to Tartarus and Gehenna (4.185–86).⁴¹ The picture is less like that of Ezekiel 37 and more like the destruction of the world in the flood of Genesis 6 (although unlike the Biblical account, in this narrative there are none found righteous amongst the original creation and hence the destruction of the entire created order). Hence, to see here in the Sibylline Oracles an example of physical resurrection is to misunderstand the text (as Collins 2002: 369; Setzer 2004: 15).

Life of Adam and Eve

The fifth text often purported to speak of physical resurrection is the Greek text of the Life of Adam and Eve (1st–early 2nd CE).⁴² In writing of God speaking to Seth (lamenting his dead father, Adam), the author writes: “At the end of times, all [righteous] flesh from Adam up to that great day shall be raised [. . .] to them shall be given every joy of Paradise (13.3–6). Cavallin rightly notes that the use of ‘all flesh’ (πᾶσα σὰρξ) could simply be a reference to “mankind” (1974: 73), and this is the exclusive sense throughout the LXX where it is found nearly ninety times (e.g., Gen 6.12; Ps 64.3; Zech

2.17; Isa 40.5; Sir 44.18), none of which refer to actual physical flesh. Further, the author goes on to specify that what is raised is Adam's *soul*:

But you, Seth, go to your father Adam, for the span of his life is completed. Six days from now his soul shall leave the body⁴³ [and later . . .] go again to your father, since the measure of his life is fulfilled, that is, in three days. And as his soul departs, you are sure to witness its fearful upward journey. (13.6)

Describing in detail the death and burial of Adam and Eve, the writer notes that, lying ill, Adam had "one more day before going out of the body," at which point he would "give back [the] spirit into the hands of the one who has given it" (31.1, 4). As Eve prayed for her husband, an angel appeared, declaring, "Behold, Adam your husband has gone out of his body. Rise and see his spirit borne up to meet its maker" (32.4). So, Adam's soul is taken up to heaven/paradise to await the "great and fearful day" (38.5), while his body is prepared for burial. The text provides an extensive narrative of the burial of Adam's body (chs 38–43), which is anointed and laid in the earthly paradise of Eden. What follows is of interest, for God's announcement to the buried body ("I told you that you are dust and to dust you shall return," 41.2), is followed by a promise of resurrection. This is consistent with what comes both before and after this passage in the assertion that what is raised up at the last day is the soul alone. Thus, resurrection (ἀνάστασιν), on the "last day" means, for the author, "the migration from the earth of a righteous *soul*" (41.3; 43.3, *italics mine*), and attempts to see in the work a resurrection after death involving the physical body are misguided.

2 Maccabees

Out of the seven texts under discussion, 2 Maccabees 7.9–11 is one of three texts (alongside the works of Josephus and 2 Baruch) which are most commonly asserted to speak of a physical resurrection.⁴⁴ In 2 Maccabees, the author details Antiochus Epiphanes' graphic torture of seven Jewish brothers and their mother for their refusal to eat pork, and it is the verbal responses of the second and third brothers which have drawn particular attention:

And when [the second brother] was at his last breath, he said, "You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws." After him, the third was the victim of their sport. When it was demanded, he quickly put out his tongue and courageously stretched forth his hands, and said nobly, "I got these from Heaven, and because of his laws I disdain them, and from him I hope to get them back again".

(7.9–11)⁴⁵

There are a number of intriguing questions to be asked. Why does the third son only “hope” to get the hands and tongue back; why no certainty?⁴⁶ The ambiguity may well stem from an intriguing and developing concept in antiquity on the continuity, or not, of the physical body and, after death, of the soul. In Biblical Judaism the soul is seen to be anthropomorphic, i.e., taking the form of the body. As Samuel ascends from Sheol, he is clearly recognizable both to the Witch of Endor and to Saul—there is no doubt that the ascending spirit is that of the dead prophet. So, too, the identification of the resurrected souls of the patriarchs would be clearly made.⁴⁷ This is equally true of Greek and Roman literature. In his descent into Hades, Odysseus clearly identifies all of the souls of his comrades, including those slain in battle. Of interest is his recognition of the soul of his friend Elpenor who describes how his fall from the roof of Circe’s palace left his neck “wrenched away from the spine,” a physical injury which, it seems, had no correlative influence on the shape of the soul (*Od.* 11.51–65).

Yet, interestingly, by the time of Virgil’s *Aeneid* (c. 29–19 BCE), the wounds or dismemberment of the physical body *do* now show such a correlative effect on the soul. On his journey to the underworld, Aeneas describes the disfigured shade of his comrade Deiphobus whose earthly body had been mutilated by Menelaus and the Greeks:

A mass of wounds, most horribly mangled about the face—
The face and both the hands, head mutilated with ears
Torn off, and the nose lopped—a barbarous disfigurement.
(6.494–508; cf. 340–62)

2 Maccabees (dated late second-century BCE) stands between these different traditions. So, does a mutilated physical body have a corresponding effect on the soul? The author of 2 Maccabees can only place onto the lips of the third brother the *hope* that the ‘hands’ and ‘tongue’ would be returned, and in this sense the text need not be making any reference to a bodily resurrection and the return of limbs in any physical sense.⁴⁸ As such, the Maccabean literature simply displays a measure of Hellenistic influence wherein the form of one’s existence in Sheol reflects the form of the body at death (as noted in Chapter 1 and see Bremmer 1983: 83; Endsjø 2009: 31–32; Vermeule 1979: 49). Such reflection is seen in the New Testament period when the resurrected Christ still has the wounds of his crucifixion (John 20.27) and where he can assert statements such as, “If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell” (Mark 9.43 and //s).⁴⁹ There is also the intriguing text in the Apocalypse of Zephaniah which, while asserting the afterlife of the soul alone, describes it in terms which have certain ‘physical’ aspects such as hands, feet, hair, and ‘bodies’ (*Ap. Zeph.* 10).⁵⁰

Other questions to be asked in this regard concern the “everlasting renewal of life” (2 Macc 7.9). Is the author thinking of physical attributes of a resurrected physical body or characteristics of the soul? Within the

framework of Second Temple Jewish texts noted above, one would construe these as references to the latter. What is received from God, and has an immortal existence is the soul. The fourth son, when he nears death (7.14), claims: “One cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being raised again by him. But for you there will be no resurrection to life! [ἀναστήσεσθαι ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἀνάστασις εἰς ζωὴν οὐκ ἔσται].” The resurrection to life presumed by the wealth of texts above is that of the soul. And, if doubt remains, the mother of the martyred boys clarifies exactly what receiving back life (ζωή) will entail, it is the return of the spirit (πνεῦμα⁵¹), highlighted in 7.23.⁵² Finally, the reflection of 4 Maccabees on the incident points towards the final outcome:

But the sons of Abraham with their victorious mother are gathered together into the chorus of the fathers, and have received pure and immortal *souls* from God.⁵³

Here, there is no concept that what is returned includes the physical body; it is the soul alone (Endsjø 2009: 132; cf. *Jub.* 23.31). Hence, the various ambiguities with 7.9–11 are most satisfactorily explained by envisioning a resurrection of the soul and to assert that the work maintains a resurrection of the physical body is very doubtful.⁵⁴

Josephus

Our penultimate analysis is of the writings of Josephus, in which there appears to be a scholarly consensus that his works offer a clear indication of resurrection involving a physical body (Grabbe 2000; Porter 1999; Sievers 1998).⁵⁵ Yet, in *Antiquities*, he simply notes the Pharisaic view that the *soul* survives death and that “there are rewards and punishments under the earth for those who have led lives of virtue or vice.” The latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, “while the good souls receive an easy passage to a new life” (*Ant.* 18.14).⁵⁶ In *Against Apion*, the righteous who willingly meet death through adherence to the law are “granted a renewed existence and in the revolution of the ages [περιτροπῆς] the gift of a better life” (2.218). These scenarios are identical to many texts noted above and indicate no concept of a physical resurrection.

The *Jewish War* does, however, present us with number of relevant perspectives. In the narration of Eleazor’s Masada speech on the immortality of the soul we see a framework of thought made in similar terms to that seen in many other Second Temple texts above:

For it is death which gives liberty to the soul and permits it to depart to its own pure abode, there to be free from all calamity; but so long as it is imprisoned in a mortal body and tainted with its miseries, it is, in sober truth, dead [. . .] But it is not until, freed from the weight that drags it down to earth and clings about it, the soul is restored to its proper sphere, that it enjoys a blessed energy.

(7.340–57)

Sadly, Josephus provides us with no further detail on this “pure abode.” More usefully, he writes of the Essene perspective on the afterlife in which he goes on to recognize the overlap with that of Hellenistic reflection on the final abode of the soul:

For it is a fixed belief of theirs that the body is corruptible [. . .] but that the soul is immortal and imperishable. Emanating from the finest ether, these souls become entangled, as it were, in the prison-house of the body, to which they are dragged down by a sort of natural spell; but when they are released from the bonds of the flesh, then, as though liberated from a long servitude, they rejoice and are borne aloft. Sharing the belief of the sons of Greece, they maintain that for the virtuous souls there is reserved [a blessed] place abode beyond the ocean [. . .] while they relegate base souls to a murky and tempestuous dungeon, big with never-ending punishments.

(2.154–57)

Here, he specifically notes that the resting place for the virtuous soul is akin to the Isles of the Blessed, while the wicked souls depart to a place similar to the Greek concept of Hades.

What is of greater interest for our purposes here is when Josephus writes of Pharisaic thought, that “the soul of the good alone passes into *another* body” [μεταβαίνειν δὲ εἰς ἕτερον σῶμα τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν μόνην] (2.163), and later, that righteous souls 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” [ἐνθεν ἐκ περιτροπῆς αἰώνων ἀγνοῖς πάλιν ἀντενοικίζονται σώμασιν] (3.374).⁵⁷ It is important to note that nowhere in Josephus’ concept of ‘another body’ or ‘a new habitation’ is this body said to be the original body now *resurrected*, nor does it appear to stand in any continuity with the original body (ἕτερος points towards a different type of ‘other’ body).⁵⁸ In other words, this is an entirely new and different body/habitation and whatever Josephus means by this, it is not *resurrection* of the original body. Rather, this appears to be some form of metempsychosis or even reincarnation.⁵⁹ It is important to note, too, that Josephus provides no further explication of what he means by this new and chaste body.

2 Baruch

Our final text is that of 2 Baruch, typically dated to the late first-century CE, or, more probably, early second century.⁶⁰ It is frequently assumed to speak of a physical resurrection, especially the text 48.49–51.5:⁶¹

I ask you, O Mighty One [. . .] in which shape will the living live in your day? [. . .] will they perhaps take again this present form, and will they put on the chained members which are in evil and by which evils are

accomplished? [. . .] Or will you perhaps change these things? And he answered and said to me: For the earth will surely give back the dead at that time [. . .] those who have proved to be righteous will be changed [. . .] their splendour will then be glorified by transformations [. . .] into the splendour of angels [. . .] and be equal to the stars. And I answered and said: concerning the righteous ones [. . .] Prepare your souls for that which is kept for you, and make ready your souls for the reward which is preserved for you.

Yet, as has already been noted of 2 Baruch above, after death the soul is held in a treasury to be restored at a later time (21.23), after which, “all who sleep in hope of him will rise. And it will happen at that time that those treasures will be opened in which the number of the souls of the righteous were kept, and they will go out and the multitudes of the souls will appear together.”⁶²

The souls held within the treasures are also known as the dead who sleep in the earth (21.23–24; 23.4–5; 50.2), a place elsewhere in 2 Baruch called the ‘dust’ (42.8). The treasures also hold a store of the good works of the righteous (14.12). *At that time* is further elucidated in 50.2 as the point at which the earth gives back the dead. It had received them in order to keep them, ‘not changing anything in their form.’ The argument here is that this is a reference, not to the physical body, which even the ancients realized underwent a process of decomposition, but to the soul. Perhaps 50.2 read out of context could be taken to suggest the resurrection of a physical body, but read within the wider purview of the work as a whole (certainly chapters 20–52), the passage more readily refers to the afterlife of the soul.

Without doubt, the summary statement of chapters 49–52, which occurs in 52.7, is perfectly clear in that the entire section is making a reference to the soul. As Richard Bauckham notes: “In this context ‘souls’ *need* mean no more than the dead in Sheol, the shades. It need not imply the distinction of body and soul in death and resurrection as the reunion of the two” (1998: 281, *italics his*). And Stanley Porter asserts:

there is little here regarding a bodily resurrection. Even 2 Baruch 50.2 [. . .] does not ‘appeal to the notion of resurrection as resuscitation of the corpse’, but asserts a raising in the exact form, not necessarily to be read as ‘concerned with the material identity of the body’.⁶³ Note further, however, that both 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch are now dated by most scholars to around AD 100, certainly post AD 70, making it difficult to know what bearing they may have on reflecting or establishing the pre-Christian milieu regarding resurrection.

(1999: 65)

Once released from the treasury, the righteous soul then undergoes transformation into the glorified splendour of angels (51.1–5), while the wicked soul is transformed into horrible shapes and taken away to be tormented

(51.5–6). That this section of 2 Baruch speaks of the afterlife of the soul comports with 49.1–3 where the author looks forward to the soul's release from its evil chained members (that is, the body). At this point in the resurrection scenario the righteous souls are glorified and are made manifest to the *living*. Typically, there is no overlap between the present order and that of the end-time, but (as has been seen elsewhere), the text demonstrates temporal compression: the death of the wicked is omitted and the narrative moves directly to a scenario of the judgement of the souls of the wicked and their sending to a place of torment. Here, it is as if the author cannot resist articulating a grand display of divine one-upmanship when the wicked, *whilst still alive* will recognize the error of their ways!⁶⁴

Motifs in 2 Baruch are also found in 4 Ezra: the dead sleep in the earth (2 Bar. 11.4; 4 Ezra 4.43); the souls of the righteous are preserved in 'chambers' (2 Bar. 21.23; 42.7–8; 4 Ezra 4.35); and Sheol later gives these up (2 Bar. 3.10; 33.3; 4 Ezra 4.43; see Collins 2000; Harrington 2000; Stemmerger 1972). Some also see in 4 Ezra a bodily resurrection, particularly in 7.32, "And the earth shall give up those who are asleep in it; and the chambers shall give up the souls which have been committed to them" (e.g., Collins 2000: 130–31). Yet, this is simply Hebrew parallelism and the text overwhelmingly asserts the afterlife of the soul alone: "the soul is separated from the body" (7.100), "rejoicing that they have escaped what is mortal" (7.96):

after death, as soon as every one of us yields up his soul, we shall be kept in rest [. . .] a man shall die, as the spirit leaves the body to return again to him who gave it [the righteous . . .] shall be separated from their mortal body [and see . . .] the perplexity in which the souls of the ungodly wander, and the punishment that waits them.

(4 Ezra 7.94, 100)

The general resurrection comes at the end of history, although in both texts there is the caveat that they are late first-century CE and may well have undergone some form of Christian redaction.

The fifth and final key theme is the oft-repeated notion in Second Temple Judaism that resurrected souls will become like angels.⁶⁵ For 1 Enoch, the glorification of the righteous is, in some way, comparable to angels or to stars (51.2–5, 10–12; cf. 104.2): "the righteous and the holy ones from among (the risen dead), will all become angels in heaven [. . .] The righteous will shine like the lights of heaven" (1 En. 51.1–2; cf. 104.2). This is, as in many other post-Biblical texts, a reference to the soul—such similes are never used of the body. For Philo, Abraham left the mortal realm to be "added to the people of God [. . .] having received immortality, and having become equal to the angels [. . .] for the angels are incorporeal and happy souls" (*Sacr.* 1.5). In the Ascension of Isaiah, the writer describes the seventh heaven where he saw "Enoch and all who were with him in their robes of the above, and they were like the angels who stand there in great glory" (9.7–8).

Elsewhere, there is the claim that the resurrected soul will become as a star or a heavenly body. Daniel 12.3 asserts that the wise will shine eternally like stars, which, for Collins is a “notion of resurrection in terms of astral immortality,” and not physical immortality (1998: 113). Segal concurs, insisting that this “can only mean to the Jews that they shall become angels, something that did not exclude astral immortality, for stars had been identified as angelic creatures from earliest times” (2004: 265, referring to Judg 5.20 and Job 38.7). Josephus, too, notes that “souls released from the flesh by the sword on the battlefield are [. . .] placed among the stars” (*War* 6.47).⁶⁶ Certainly, as angels were normally considered to be bodiless, this appears to negate any possibility of a future fleshly existence and so the sense here would imply the resurrection of the soul alone (Endsjø 2009: 125).

Philo writes that the stars are embodied, intelligent souls, describing the (resurrected) patriarchs as stars or constellations and noting that the rewards of the righteous soul are immortality and being inscribed “in the records of God, sharing the eternal life of the sun and moon and the whole universe” (*Opif.* 144).⁶⁷ So, too, 4 Ezra claims: “the righteous souls rejoice that they have now escaped what is mortal, they are to be made like the stars” (7.97).⁶⁸ In an extensive section on the post-resurrection form of the soul, 2 Baruch provides a detailed account:

After the appointed day, the glory of those who have proved to be righteous will be changed—their splendour will be glorified by transformations, and the shape of their face will be changed. These will be changed into the splendour of angels; they will be like the angels and be equal to the stars.

(51.1–6)

Endsjø notes of this text: “Again, a change to be equal to the stars is unlikely to include the flesh as angels were normally considered fleshless beings” (2009: 126).⁶⁹ Finally, as noted above, Pseudo-Phocylides (103–15) asserts that the resurrected souls actually become gods (ὁπίσω δὲ θεοὶ τελέθονται) (102; and see Nickelsburg 2000: 155; Perkins 1984: 51).

Philo and Pseudo-Philo

It may be fruitful at this point, before summarizing and reaching some general conclusion on the above, to draw out of the analysis the thoughts of Philo, as he stands as one of the most well-known, influential, and articulate writers of the period. His works are also voluminous and extend to a wide variety of topics.⁷⁰

Philo’s writings on the body, soul, and afterlife are consistent within Second Temple Judaism. The body is mortal, “a composition of earthy substance [. . .] created by the Creator taking a lump of clay, and fashioning the human form out of it” (*Opif.* 69–77). On death, it is “dissolved into earth”

(*Migr. Ab.* 2–3, 9, 14–17). The soul, however, is a “faithful copy of the divine image” (*Mut.* 223), or a “fragment of the Divinity” (*Leg. All.* 3.161), which proceeds from the Father and is breathed into the body (*Opif.* 69–77; *Somn.* 1.34; Perkins 1984: 54). From the perspective of the soul, the body is a polluted prison house and like an evil tomb, chest, or coffin.⁷¹ In stark imagery, Philo notes: “those souls which bear the heavy burden of the flesh, being weighed down and oppressed by it [. . .] being dragged downwards, have their necks forcibly pressed to the ground” (*Gig.* 28–31). For the righteous, however, the death of the body means that the “soul would live according to its proper life, being released from the evil and dead body to which it is bound” (*Leg. All.* 1.105–108; 2.77). Divine souls then ascend to the heavens where they pervade the universe as stars (*Gig.* 6–16).⁷²

What is less clear in Philo’s thought, is what happens to the soul of the wicked as he typically employs metaphorical or pictorial imagery (Grabbe 2000: 168–69; Perkins 1984: 53). On the one hand, and exposing Hellenistic influence, Philo considers such souls to “be drawn downwards [. . .] to the depths of Tartarus” (*Quaes Exod.* 2.40), but elsewhere he also refers to punishment in Hades (*Quis. Heres.* 45; *Congr.* 47). Here, God “banishes the unjust and godless souls from himself to the furthest bounds, and disperses them to the place of pleasures and lusts and injustices” (*Cong.* 57). Yet, Philo appears to see ‘Hades’ and ‘Tartarus’ not as literal places but as metaphorical conditions. The righteous use wisdom to attain virtue and so allow their souls to break free of bodily encumbrances and soar upwards to the heavenly realm; the souls of the wicked experience no such escape and remain imprisoned in some form of eternal death (*Post.* 39).

Philo has no concept of physical resurrection (Goodenough 1946; Sandmel 1979: 109–10). According to Harry Wolfson: “all the references to resurrection found in the traditional literature of his time were understood by him as being only a figurative way of referring to immortality” (1948: 1.404). In this way, and a point which gives further reflection on ‘resurrection’ texts discussed earlier, Philo interprets key Biblical passages such as Isa 26.19, Dan 12.2, and 2 Macc 7 as references to the immortality of the soul (Wolfson 1948: 1.402–406; followed by Riley 1995: 41). Also of relevance is Philo’s reflection on the resurrection of Moses:

when he was about to depart from hence to heaven, to take up his abode there, and leaving this mortal life to become immortal, having been summoned by the Father, who resolved his twofold nature of soul and body into one single unity, transforming his whole being into mind, pure as the sunlight.

(Mos. 2.288)

The phrase “[resolved] into one single unity” (εἰς μονάδος ἀνεστοιχείου φύσιν), is often translated, “into the nature of a single body,”⁷³ missing the point that this is now a new *single* entity, with an absence of any notion

of σῶμα.⁷⁴ Elsewhere, Philo speaks of Moses' death as "the migration of a perfect *soul* to the living God" (*Sacr.* 10). As such, Philo is in agreement with such texts as the Testament of Job or the Apocalypse of Adam and Eve which construe the death of these major figures in similar terms: the body dies and is buried, the soul, or a transformed soul for Philo, ascends to the heavenly realm.⁷⁵

How widespread Philo's particular understanding of afterlife was, is difficult to ascertain, but as Lester Grabbe notes, it need not be confined to Philo nor Alexandrian Jews, but may have been prevalent amongst the Hellenized diaspora. Certainly, Philo's understanding is little different to the broader framework of concept of afterlife within Second Temple Jewish texts noted above (Grabbe 2000: 165).

Pseudo-Philo may demonstrate an interim stage on concepts of the afterlife, on its way to a more Christianized understanding.⁷⁶ Certainly, the text aligns with other Second Temple Jewish passages in articulating the priority of the soul. For the righteous, God proclaims: "I will command the rain and the dew, and they will be abundant for you during your lifetime. But also at the end the lot of each one of you will be eternal, for you and your seed, and I will take your souls and store them in peace until the time allotted the world be complete" (23.12–13). Yet, for the wicked of the Mosaic wilderness generation, not only will the body be destroyed, but the soul will be held in chambers (in a similar way to 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch): "I will send the angel of my wrath upon them [the wicked] to afflict their bodies with fire in the wilderness [. . .] for their souls I will shut up in the chambers of darkness" (15.5; cf. 16.3).⁷⁷ Elsewhere, the writer notes that "the soul is separated from the body" (44.10), and places upon the lips of Jonathan (to David): "Even if death separates us, I know that our souls will know each other" (62.9). On his imminent death, Samson cries out: "Go forth, *my soul*, and do not be sad; die, my body, and do not weep about yourself" (43.7).

Elsewhere, however, the language of the afterlife is similar to that found in the New Testament: "But when the years appointed for the world have been fulfilled, then [. . .] I will bring the dead to life and raise up those who are sleeping from the earth. And hell will pay back its debt, and the place of perdition will return its deposit so that I may render to each according to his works" (3.10).⁷⁸ There is even the language of fiery worms and inextinguishable fire (63.4; 44.9), together with the idea of recompense for sin: "the place of fire where the deeds of those doing wickedness against me will be expiated" (23.6).

Summary

Out of the wealth of Second Temple Jewish literature discussed above, there are no texts up to and beyond the first Jewish war which speak unambiguously of the resurrection of the physical body. Rather, there is an emphasis on the demise of the body (in the sense of its decomposition), together with

an assertion of an afterlife experience of the soul or spirit alone. As noted above, of the eight texts commonly espoused to articulate a physical resurrection, these have been misread or misunderstood or are open to alternative interpretations. Josephus says nothing of a physical resurrection, there is a flight of fancy in 2 Maccabees, and 2 Baruch is a late work (certainly, later than most of the New Testament). What is most clear is the overwhelming emphasis upon the afterlife of the soul/spirit. Indeed, Josephus argues that the concept of an immortal soul was actually a Jewish doctrine (C. Ap. 1.162, 165; Endsjo 2009: 130).

Stanley Porter concludes his analysis and assessment of afterlife by noting: “there was a fairly large stream of Jewish tradition that did not entertain a bodily resurrection, but rather a continued spiritual existence” (1999: 53). I would go further and assert that this stream was not simply “fairly large” but the dominant motif of Second Temple Judaism.⁷⁹ Hence, the oft-repeated idea that Jews believed in the resurrection of the body and Greeks the immortality of the soul appears not only incorrect, but erroneous to the point that actually the opposite is true: Greek reflection (as seen in Chapter 1) required the presence of a physical body, whereas Jews of the Second Temple Period emphasized the afterlife of the soul (see, in part, Collins 2000: 129). This central difference may stem from a reflection upon the actual nature of the ‘divine.’ For the Greeks, the gods had physical attributes to the extent that they could have sex with humans, or be hurt or wounded; for the Jews, however, this was anathema: God was spirit.⁸⁰ This summary also has implications for a broader understanding of Jewish anthropology in that perhaps for too long this topic has been read or understood in the shadow of New Testament, or early Church, reflection on human constitution and the afterlife. However, before we proceed into the period of the early Christ-movement, we shall remain within the framework of Judaism with an analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Jewish trajectories into the later rabbinic period.

NOTES

1. See esp. Cavallin (1974); Lichtenberger (1993); Martin-Achard (1985); Nickelsburg (2006); Puech (1993); Stemberger (1972).
2. Wis 2.23–3.4; 9.15; 15.8; 16.14. In this sense, there are overlaps with Platonic thought; cf. Wis 8.19–20, “a good soul fell to my lot; or rather, being good, I entered an undefiled body.” See Collins (1981: 188); Green (1998: 161) cf. Nickelsburg (1972: 87–8, 179).
3. On Josephus see, Grabbe (2000); Sievers (1998).
4. Cf. Josephus’ reflection on Elijah bringing a young boy back to life: “he prayed God to send the breath into the child again and give him life” (*Ant.* 8.326).
5. *War* 7.343–48.
6. And see further below. On the text, see Perkins (1984: 50); Bauckham (1998a: 92). 2 Baruch is an early second CE Jewish text which appears to exhibit a number of Christian interpolations.
7. See Bedard (2012: 457–58). Indeed, 2 Enoch notes, “all *souls* are prepared for eternity, before the composition of the earth” (23.5, italics mine).

8. On *Pseudo-Phocylides* see, Cavallin (1974: 151–55); Christ (1975); Puech (1993, 1.158–62); Nickelsburg (2000: 155); Van der Horst (1978: 185–95); Wilson (2005).
9. For 1 Enoch, “All of the souls of the dead are gathered until the day of judgement” (22.3).
10. On 1 Enoch, see Nickelsburg (2001); Nickelsburg and Vanderkam (2004, 2012); Segal (2004: 356–63); Stuckenbruck (2007).
11. See, Harrington (2002).
12. And see wider, 4 Ezra 7.75–101. On 4 Ezra see Stemberger (1972); Collins (2000); Nickelsburg (1972: 136).
13. Hence, like other writers, the soul has a degree of ‘consciousness.’
14. On the *Test. Abraham*, Collins (2000); Sanders (1983).
15. On the *T. Job* see Endsjø (2009: 137); Gruen (2009); Spittler (1983).
16. See, Bauckham (1998a: 83); Glasson (1961: 13); Nickelsburg (1972: 18).
17. Cf. chs. 22; 62.13–16; 103.3–4; 104.2. On these verses Nickelsburg and Vanderkam note (2012: 184), “Earth is where the body is buried. Sheol is the place to which the spirit or soul descends.”
18. On 1 Enoch 22 (and its importance) see Wacker (1982); see also Cavallin (1974: 42, 48); De Boer (1988: 52–4); Nickelsburg (1972: 123, 136, 179).
19. So, Collins (2000: 123). He also writes, “Although the Jews borrowed from surrounding culture, the idea of a fiery Hell appears to be a Jewish invention” (2000: 127).
20. On this section, see esp. Nickelsburg (2001: 511–30); Stuckenbruck (2007: 482–561).
21. The footnote by Wintermute (1985: 102) on this text notes, “This vs. is subject to two quite different interpretations. It could be understood as a description of spirits which remain conscious and aware of post-mortem events while their bones rest in peace. It could also be understood as an example of 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.” Cavallin sees here the concept of the immortality of the soul, an early testimony of a totally spiritual concept of life after death in a Palestinian Jewish apocalyptic milieu (1974: 37–38). Wright notes that ‘they will rise up’ is the only occurrence in the relevant literature of something that looks like resurrection language being used to denote something other than new bodily existence (2003: 144).
22. On Josephus and the Essenes, see Klawans (2012).
23. See also, *Opif.* 77; *Mos.* 2.228.
24. On Philo, see Grabbe (2000); Perkins (1984: 53–55); Segal (2004: 368–75). See further, Bauckham (1998: 55); Harrington (1985); Nickelsburg (1972: 136–40). In Pseudo-Philo, the judgement between soul and flesh in 3.10 “may simply refer to the higher and lower aspects of the whole person” (so, Harrington 1985: 307).
25. See wider, 7.75–101, and also, Bauckham (1998: 55); Harrington (2002: 21–34); Nickelsburg (1972: 136–40).
26. Cf. 19.12. Judgement between soul and flesh in 3.10 “may simply refer to the higher and lower aspects of the whole person” (so, Harrington 1985: 307).
27. See, for example, Charlesworth (2006b: 153); Stemberger (1972), who notes that “the belief in the resurrection of the dead is found significantly” in these works (by which he means a physical resurrection).
28. Here the discussion is contra Stemberger (1972: 115–6), who argues that the afterlife in (Palestinian) Jewish texts of this period always has a bodily form.
29. See Charles (1913: 170–2); Isaac (1983: 5–89 (esp. 6–7)); Milik (1971); Segal (2004: 356–63). The most thorough treatments of 1 Enoch are, Nickelsburg (2001); Nickelsburg and Vanderkam (2012); and Stuckenbruck (2007).

30. Setzer (2004: 18).
31. On the debate see Bauckham (1998: 275–79); Nickelsburg and Vanderkam (2012: 183–84). The date for this chapter is offered as 40 BCE–mid first-century CE by Nickelsburg and Vanderkam (2012: 58).
32. On the text see Stuckenbruck (2007: 180–81; 227–29).
33. See Nickelsburg (1992: 685), “Reference to the “bones” of the righteous (25.6) indicates a resurrection to some kind of bodily life.”
34. Harrison (1962); cf. Job 4.14; 20.11; 30.17; 30.30; Ps. 6.2; 32.3; 35.10; 51.8; Jer. 20.9; Sir 28.17. On bones as part of one’s character/personality, Prov 17.22; 25.15.
35. See further, Green (1998: 162); Nickelsburg (2000: 168–70).
36. On the text see Van der Horst (1978: 185–95); Puech (1993, 1.158–62); Christ (1975: 140–49).
37. Translation by Van der Horst (1985: 577–78). See also, Perkins (1984: 51).
38. Cavallin (1974: 152) also sees this as a reference to bodily resurrection.
39. As seen below, the resurrected soul is typically spoken of in angelic terms, and angels are often called gods in Jewish texts (so, Van der Horst 1985: 578, n. g).
40. See wider, 4.179–92. Grant (1948: 122) sees this as a ‘resurrection of the flesh.’ See also, Collins (2000: 136). The dating of this book of the *Sibylline Oracles* is uncertain. Collins (1985: 381–89) notes that Book 4 is itself a composite oracle updated by a Jew in the late first-century CE. The final version is likely to have been completed around 80 CE. Elsewhere, Collins notes that there is much Christian redaction to many of the books (323).
41. Interestingly, the description of the life of the righteous after judgement is spoken of in terms of *spirit* (v. 189); there is no mention of a body.
42. See, Anderson, Stone, and Tromp (2000); De Jonge (1997); Dochhorn (2005); Tromp (2005). Johnson (1985: 252) dates the work “toward the end of the first Christian century.”
43. 43.2 [Vita].
44. On 2 Macc 7 see Collins (2000: 129); De Boer (1988: 49–50); Porter (1999: 59–60); Nickelsburg (1972: 93–110; 1992); Nickelsburg (2000: 148–52).
45. Cf. also 2 Macc 14.38–46. Both texts are examples of literary imagination, 14.38–46 clearly so, as the act of self-mutilation and speech to the crowd comes after “his blood [being] completely drained from him.”
46. In this sense, Collins assertion that the brothers of 2 Macc 7, “have full confidence that their limbs will be restored in the resurrection” could appear to be an overstatement (2002: 366).
47. E.g., *Ascen. Isa.* 9.7–8 (“And there [in the seventh heaven] I saw the holy Abel and all the righteous. And there I saw Enoch and all who were with him, stripped of their robes of the flesh.”); *T. Benj.* 10.6 (“... you will see Enoch and Seth and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob being raised up at the right hand in great joy”); Perkins (1984: 43–4); De Boer (1988: 67).
48. Such sentiments would also include 2 Macc 14.46. In Moore’s analysis of the later rabbinic literature (1927: 380–81), he notes that the dead “would rise with the defects and deformities they had in life, the lame, lame; the blind, blind [Eccles. R. on 1, 4]. After they thus appeared just as they had been, God would heal them of all their infirmities (Deut. 32.39).”
49. And see wider, Mark 9.43–48 (and //s). Also, *Gosp. Peter* 10; *Epistle of Barnabas* 5.6; Polycarp 7.1; 3 *Corinthians* 3.6, 16, 24–25; Endsjo (2009: 179).
50. The emphasis on the afterlife of the soul runs throughout the short apocalypse. See Perkins (1984: 38).
51. Πνεῦμα can sometimes be taken as ‘life,’ but in 2 Maccabees ‘life’ is usually translated from ζῶω (e.g., 7.9), or ψυχή (7.12). Yet ‘spirit’ cannot be a synonym

- for 'life' as 2 Maccabees frequently conjoins the two, as "life and spirit" (7.22, 23; 14.46). Here, I would suggest that 'spirit' means the breath of God, that is, the soul.
52. In 14.46 God is lord of life and spirit [τὸν δεσπόζοντα τῆς ζωῆς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος].
 53. 4 Macc 18.23 (italics mine). In this respect, the texts of 2 Maccabees and 4 Maccabees can be seen in continuity. Wright, however, because he sees the text of 2 Maccabees to be speaking exclusively in physical terms, and noting the obvious tension between the texts, must posit a sharp discontinuity between 2 and 4 Maccabees (2003: 143). In this regard, see also, Nickelsburg (1992).
 54. If 4 Maccabees is to be internally consistent, the numerous other texts within the work which speak of resurrection or eternal life but give no specific details (e.g., 7.3; 9.22; 13.17; 14.5–6; 17.12, 18–19), must also be seen through the lens of 18.23 (cf. also 13.15). See Nickelsburg (1972: 110).
 55. Although see the caveat in Elledge (2011: 411) concerning the apologetic features of Josephus which suggests caution when utilizing his writings as evidence for particular Jewish beliefs.
 56. Josephus may well have been a Pharisee; he certainly claims that he "governed his life by the rule of the Pharisees" (*Life* 11–12). However, Mason (1989) doubts such claims.
 57. See Porter (1999: 55), who notes that the imagery is much more like that of traditional Greek belief in the afterlife.
 58. Sievers (1998: 21) notes that Josephus never employs the verb ἐγείρω as meaning 'to raise (from the dead).' He does use the term ἀναβίδω ('come to life again') in his description of Pharisaic beliefs in an afterlife (*Ant.* 18.14); see also, Segal (2004: 381).
 59. On metempsychosis see Grabbe (2000: 165, 174–76); Porter (1999: 70); Segal (1997: 108–09).
 60. So, Klijn (1983: 617). On 2 Baruch in general, see Bauckham (1998: 283–84, 1998a: 92); Cavallin (1974: 87–8); De Boer (1988: 80–2); Lied (2009: 316–19); Nickelsburg (1972: 84–7).
 61. E.g., Collins (2000: 130–31); Evans (1970: 16); Perkins (1984: 50); Harrington (2002: 29).
 62. 30.1–2 (a key text, and one which informs 48.49–51.5). Cf. 21.23–24.
 63. 1998: 283.
 64. This concept of eschatological judgement and voyeurism is not unknown, see 1 *En.* 27; 4 *Ezra* 7.75–101; the *Similitudes of Enoch*; the *Apoc. Pet.*; and the *Ap. John*; Bauckham (1992); Stratton (2010: 66–71). This display of one-upmanship is also noted amongst later Rabbinic literature, cf. Montefiore and Lowe (1938: 601); Stemmerger (1972).
 65. See further, Cavallin, *Life*, 203–05; Collins (2000: 124); Chilton (2003: 339); De Boer (1988: 52); Park (2000: 157–59); Perkins (1984: 38, 50); Segal (1995, 1997: 98); Sim (1996: 142–45).
 66. See, Sievers (1998: 27).
 67. Cf. *Somn.* 1.135–145; *Gig.* 7; *QE* 2.114; *Mos.* 2.108.
 68. Cf. *L. A. B.* 33.5, "Then your likeness shall be seen as the stars of the heaven."
 69. Cf. 2 *Bar.* 30.2; 50.2; 51.5; cf. Lied (2009: 189);
 70. On Philo, see Grabbe (2000: 163–85); Perkins (1984); Segal (2004: 368–75); Vermes (2008: 46–47).
 71. *Leg All.* 1.105–108; *On the Migration of Abraham* 2–3, 9, 14–17; *Spec Leg* 1.345; 4.188.
 72. On the emphasis in Philo of the superiority of the soul to the body see Riley (1995: 41–2).

73. Such as Yonge (1993), and used as part of the Bibleworks software.
74. Indeed, the verb ἀναστοιχειόω typically denotes the resolving of *matter* (especially the body) into its constituent elements (LSJ *sv*).
75. In this case, one would disagree with Aus (2005: 11) when he questions whether Philo may have conceived of Moses' tomb as empty and concludes that he probably did. Perkins (1984: 53) notes that Philo speaks of the souls as being composed of the very same material as the stars.
76. On Pseudo-Philo see, Aus (2005); De Boer (1988); Harrington (1985; 2002).
77. On the overlap of Pseudo-Philo, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch see Harrington (2002: 21–34).
78. In a similar way, the author writes of the corrupt, “. . . behold, I command the earth, and it will swallow up body and soul together. And their dwelling place will be in darkness and the place of destruction; and they will not die but melt away until I remember the world and renew the earth. And then they will die and not live, and their life will be taken away from the number of all men. And hell will no longer spit them back, and their judgement will not be remembered . . . And the earth will swallow them up and I will do no more” (16.3 and cf. 51.5).
79. As such, and further to my critique of Johnston (2002) in the previous chapter, I would reject his statement, “In Israel there was no clear distinction between body and soul” (2002: 236).
80. Although there are frequent anthropomorphic concepts of God having eyes, ears, hands, arms etc.

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4 Life after Death in Additional Jewish Literature

The Dead Sea Scrolls and Later Rabbinic Thought

As part of this survey we do, of course, have to examine the Qumran scrolls of the Dead Sea community. Identifying the Qumran community with the Essenes is still widely favoured, although a significant number of scholars would now associate them with the Sadducees (of some kind).¹ Analysis of the Scrolls has led to multivalent scholarly views on their concept of afterlife, with some asserting that they held a belief in physical resurrection while others, the immortality of the soul alone.² Before beginning with the Scrolls directly, recourse will firstly be taken to Josephus who makes some succinct remarks on the community in two of his works. Although some would want to dismiss the perspective of Josephus on the Essenes, he is our closest and most informed writer outside of the community, and even implies that he was part of the group for a time (*Life* 10–11).³ In the *Jewish War* he provides an account of various aspects of Essene life, and turns to their involvement in the first Jewish War:

The war with the Romans tried their souls (ψυχὰς) through and through by every variety of test. Racked and twisted, burnt and broken, and made to pass through every instrument of torture, in order to induce them to blaspheme their lawgiver or to eat some forbidden thing, they refused to yield to either demand, not ever once did they cringe to their persecutors or shed a tear. Smiling in their agonies and mildly deriding their tormentors, they cheerfully resigned their souls (ψυχὰς), confident that they would receive them back again.

(*War* 2.152–53)

Although *souls* in the opening sentence could be taken as a descriptive category for the person as a whole, that in the last sentence cannot. Here, it is that part of the righteous Jew, dying for the sake of Torah and nation, which will exist beyond death. As such, Josephus predicates to the community a framework of thought on the afterlife which stands in direct continuity with many of the Second Temple Jewish texts noted in the previous chapter. His description of persecution, torture, and death is made

in language reminiscent, if not almost identical, to that of 2 Maccabees 7. What is also clear is that Josephus' account of their doctrine of the afterlife is unambiguous in that what is received back after death is the soul alone. He goes on:

For it is a fixed belief of theirs that the body is corruptible and its constituent matter impermanent, but that the soul is immortal and imperishable. Emanating from the finest ether, these souls become entangled, as it were, in the prison-house of the body, to which they are dragged down by a sort of natural spell; but when once they are released from the bonds of the flesh, then, as though liberated from a long servitude, they rejoice and are borne aloft. 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.

(*War* 2.154–55)

Although Josephus may employ prosaic language in his comparison of Essene thought with Hellenistic (and Roman) philosophy, his summary of Essene perspectives on the afterlife is entirely consistent with those described previously. The body is considered malevolent but yet temporary, holding the soul in some sort of 'bondage' until its demise. Conversely, the soul is indestructible and everlasting. Consequently, for Josephus, the Qumran doctrine of the afterlife is congruent with the framework of thought outlined in other post-Biblical Jewish texts; that is, the body will return to dust, and for the immortal soul there are distinct and opposing afterlife abodes for the righteous and the wicked. Such a framework is entirely consistent and in continuity with that of Second Temple Jewish texts seen thus far. And if we can posit that the first of these texts provide a further window upon 2 Maccabees 7, then this adds to the argument that what is being described there revolves around questions of the soul after death and not necessarily the body.⁴

In his work *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus makes a simple remark on the community:

The doctrine of the Essenes is [that] they regard the soul as immortal and believe that they ought to strive especially to draw near to righteousness.
(*Ant.* 18.18)

Once again, such sentiments cohere with what we have seen thus far within both Essene and other Jewish texts. The soul is immortal and after death there will be rewards for the righteous soul and punishment for the wicked.⁵

AFTERLIFE IN THE SCROLLS

When we turn to the Scrolls themselves, we note that the texts are entirely consistent with the outline provided by Josephus and with what has been seen elsewhere in Second Temple Judaism. Firstly, the body is made of clay/dust and is a source of pollution and wickedness, which, in the end, will return to dust (1QH 9.20f.; 20.24; 22.10).⁶ As for the soul, the Scrolls declare:

I thank you O Lord for you have placed my soul in the bundle of the living, and have hedged me about against all the snares of the Pit [. . .] you will save my soul since my steps proceed from you.
(1QH 2.17f.)

I thank you O Lord, for you have redeemed my soul from the Pit, and from the Hell of Abaddon. You have raised me up to an everlasting height.
(1QH 3.20f.)

[I am] as a sailor in a ship amid furious seas [. . .] the deeps resound to my groaning and my soul has journeyed to the gates of death.
(1QH 6.24)

Thou hast saved my life from the Pit [. . .] Thou hast preserved the soul of the poor one in the den of lions.
(1QH 13.6, 19)⁷

Without doubt, Essene depictions of afterlife scenarios delineate, in language similar to the Hebrew Bible, the priority of the soul. There is also the same sharp distinction between the destination of the righteous and wicked soul:

All who walk in the spirit [of truth, shall receive] healing, great peace in a long life, and fruitfulness, together with every everlasting blessing and eternal joy in life without end . . . All who walk in this spirit [of falsehood, shall receive] a multitude of plagues by the hand of all the destroying angels, everlasting damnation by the avenging wrath of the fury of God, eternal torment and endless disgrace together with shameful extinction in the fire of the dark regions.
(1QS 4.6b-14)⁸

Congruent with other works found in the Hebrew Bible or Second Temple Judaism, there are a number of texts which employ the language of physical resurrection, but which do so in metaphorical terms. The resurrection fragment (4Q521), is a good example:

And the Lord will accomplish glorious things which have never been [. . .] For he will heal the wounded, and revive the dead and bring good

news to the poor [. . .] He will lead the uprooted [. . .] and enrich the hungry.⁹

Some see in the clause, *revive the dead*, the assumption of actual physical resurrection (so, Frey 2010: 532; Vermes 1998: 391). Yet, the healing of the wounded, the bringing of good news to the poor, the leading of the uprooted, and the enriching of the hungry are all aspects of divine action which are this-worldly. So, why the writer would insert into the passage a short clause relating to an apparent physical afterlife makes little sense. It could refer to the typology of resuscitation found in the Elijah and Elisha traditions, but most likely the passage is best construed as entirely consistent with those texts from the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Isa 26 and Ezek 37) which speak of the revival of the dead in metaphorical terms; that is, as noted above, resurrection language being a way of expressing individual or national restoration. In this way the two opening clauses—the healing of the wounded and the reviving of the dead—are best seen as mutually interpretative. Indeed, Puech appears to see them as a singular overlapping motif: “He will cure the mortally wounded and raise the dead” (1994: 245).

Other texts purported to speak of a physical resurrection would include:

Bodies gnawed by worms may be raised from the dust to thy counsel of thy truth.

(1QH 19.10–14)

Hoist a banner, O you who lie in the dust!
O bodies gnawed by worms, raise up an ensign.

(1QH 14.34)¹⁰

N.T. Wright, noting that: “It is not clear from the context whether these passages are to be taken metaphorically,” still goes on to suggest that what we have here is a, “prediction of the dust-dwellers rising to newly embodied life” (2003: 187–88). Yet, de Boer notes that the text could simply be referring to the “living in their earthly weakness and not to the (physically) dead” (1988: 71),¹¹ and Vermes, that the poet’s language “may just be allegorical” (1998: 88). The text aligns with others elsewhere such as Second Ezekiel (4Q385–91) wherein the community understood Ezekiel 37 as a *metaphor* of restoration (so, Vermes 1998: 88). In the text 4Q385–91, the writer, remarking upon the righteous of Israel, asks of Yahweh when their piety will be rewarded. The passage then offers a paraphrase of Ezekiel 37, in which the ‘Son of man’ is commanded to prophesy to the bones, sinews, and four winds of heaven, and concludes:

And a great crowd of men shall stand and they will bless the Lord of hosts wh[o revived them.] And I said, ‘Lord, when will these things come to pass?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘[and . . .] a tree will bend and stand up [. . .].’

(4Q385, fr. 2.2–9; Vermes 1998: 571)

In a critical examination of this text, Albert Hogeterp (2008: 65) notes that “the expectation here does not apply to resurrection, but to the gathering together of the people and the divine act of returning a remnant (4Q386 1 ii 3).” Astonishingly, however, Wright claims of the text: “Here there seems to be no question: Ezekiel 37 is being seen, not simply as a metaphor for the return from exile, but as a prophecy of actual resurrection” (2003: 188). This is unlikely. There is no evidence within the Qumran text that the writer is thinking of a literal physical resurrection and, in employing the *metaphor* of Ezekiel 37, Wright needs to show demonstrably more evidence that the Qumran writer is not, likewise, employing the rich symbolism metaphorically. Indeed, as the writer goes on to note: “Are not the days hastening on so that the children of Israel can inherit [their land?],” which would appear to place the text within the specific context of national restoration (so, Martínez and Tigchelaar 1998: 769). Like Ezekiel, the poet employs the metaphor to look forward to a time when the nation (or the Essene community), will emerge from a time of trial (as a tree being bent over), to be blessed and restored. To assert here a literal physical resurrection is unwarranted. In some sense, Wright misreads or misunderstands the text in an identical way to that of the third century theologian Hippolytus (*Ref.* 9), who asserts a literal resurrection of the flesh. Hippolytus’ reading of the Scrolls is naturally preferred by Wright above that of Josephus (2003: 185).

Similarly, George Brooke, citing Wright, asserts that 4Q385 points unambiguously to physical resurrection, declaring that: “There can be no doubt that those who collected the scrolls together in the eleven caves at or near Qumran knew about bodily resurrection” (2006: 16). Yet, as is apparent, what they believed about *bodily* resurrection is uncertain. Brooke also employs the work of Devorah Dimant who suggests that the 4Q385 text presents: “the future reward for the righteous in the form of resurrection. Thus Pseudo-Ezekiel constitutes the most ancient witness to such an exegesis of Ezek 37.1–14, later popular with Jewish and Christian authors” (2001: 17). Yet, while the wider context of 4Q385 is unclear, it appears to be little different to Ezekiel 37 in that it is a metaphor of national restoration. Certainly, on the imagery of the *tree* in the concluding verse of 4Q385 (“a tree will bend and stand up”), Dimant goes to preposterous lengths to suggest that this is a clear reference to (physical) resurrection. Clutching at straws (or at least, ‘trees’ in the Hebrew Bible), she cites what she claims are a number of relevant key texts to bolster her argument: Deut 20.19 (the prohibition on cutting down trees while besieging a city); Isa 65.22 (“like the days of a tree, shall my people be”); and Ezek 37.16–20 (the joining together of the metaphorical ‘sticks’ which represent Judah and Israel).

The text from Deuteronomy is utterly meaningless in the context for which she wants it to speak, while the two prophetic texts not only have *no* reference to any form of resurrection, they rather speak into the context of national restoration, which is the topic of Ezek 37.1–14 itself. Thus, her

claim that the clause, “may then stand as a symbol for death and resurrection” (cited in Brooke 2006: 17) is to be roundly rejected. Intriguingly, none of the passages that conjoin the subject of *tree(s)* with notions of *afterlife* are cited by Dimant, perhaps as these speak against her thesis (such as Ezek 31.16–18; Sir 14.18; 4 Macc 18.16). Indeed, the author of 4 Maccabees, citing Ezekiel’s valley of dry bones, does so in terms of the immortal soul and not the body (18.23).

Brooke employs Dimant’s reasoning uncritically, and suggests that the “standing erect” (her words) of 4Q385 is also linked to 4Q521 where the expression, taken from Ps 146.8 (“The Lord lifts up those who are bowed low”), indicates that the Qumran text has “an explicit reference to the resurrection of the dead” (Brooke 2006: 18). Once again, the Biblical text employed makes no reference to afterlife, nor resurrection, and surprisingly, even Brooke himself appears to recognize the paucity of evidence in the Qumran documents on physical resurrection when he is forced to conclude: “The Qumran sectarians must have known about the belief, even if it was not a major part of their creed” (2006: 18). Like Wright and Dimant, Brooke seeks to assert evidence for physical resurrection when it is either absent or when there are other more reasonable alternatives.¹² His repeated statements such as: “Altogether there can be no doubt that there is ample explicit attestation in the non-sectarian compositions found in the Qumran caves of a belief in bodily resurrection” are unwarranted (2006: 18; and cf. p. 33).

Finally we could also cite 1QS 11.53–61:

As for me,
if I stumble, the mercies of God
shall be my eternal salvation.
If I stagger because of the sin of flesh,
my justification shall be by the righteousness of God
which endures forever.
When my distress is unleashed
He will deliver my soul from the Pit
and will direct my steps to the way.¹³

Once again, the emphasis is upon the deliverance of the righteous soul and, once again, there is no mention of the resurrection of a physical body. In this sense, one could disagree with the estimation of Philip Davies who claims: “It is not certain whether the writers of the Qumran scrolls believed in the possibility of human existence without a body [. . .] The belief that the righteous would enjoy an eternal reward included the expectation that this would be enjoyed in a renewed body” (2000: 207, 210). His assertion that this is “in line with the positions taken in literature influencing the Qumran texts, especially 1 Enoch and Daniel” is somewhat curious as, in the same work, Davies has already stated that 1 Enoch demonstrates a non-physical afterlife (2000: 189, 207).

In a similar way, Puech also seems determined to find physical resurrection within the scrolls. He cites 4QTestQah and 4QVis Amr as testifying to physical resurrection in the traditions of Isa 26 and Dan 12, but neither of the Qumran texts employs the language of resurrection and on the above readings of Isaiah and Daniel outlined in Chapter 2, neither do these texts necessarily speak of physical resurrection (Puech 194: 247). Interestingly, the only point at which the 4QVis Amr text employs the language of rising (“when you rise”) is in close collocation with “soul”¹⁴ (although the text is fragmented and uncertain at this point). Likewise, Puech has to be cautious with 4QPseudo-Dan (for Puech it only “implies a resurrection”) since the text itself is very ambiguous: “[. . .] they shall arise [. . .] the holy ones and return [. . .] iniquity.”¹⁵ At the same time he cites 4Q504 1–2 as a relevant text: “All those who are written in the book of life [will stand before you or stand up/revive and stay] to serve you and give thanks to your holy Name,” where, staggeringly, the bracketed clause is simply his own *assumed* insertion (1994: 248; cf. Martínez 1996: 416).

Puech’s analysis of the *War Scroll* maintains the same dubious assertions. His readings of cols. XIII–XIV emphasize that, despite the fact “there is no mention of resurrection” and “it is not possible to find any direct allusion to resurrection,” for Puech, the author has “accepted Daniel’s belief in [. . .] the resurrection,” by which he presumably means physical resurrection. And yet the author of XIV (11) clearly emphasises the afterlife of the soul: “Thou hast preserved the soul of Thy redeemed.” Similarly, Puech asserts that 4Q181 (*Pesher of Periods*) “knows Dan 12.1–3 and the resurrection to eternal life,” but whereas the text clearly knows of eternal life, there is no mention of “resurrection” (Martínez 1996: 212; Puech 1994: 252; Vermes 1998: 229).

In summarizing Qumran thought, one may note the analyses of de Boer, Nickelsburg, Collins, and Porter, all of whom claim that the scrolls contain not a single passage that can be interpreted with absolute certainty as a reference to resurrection.¹⁶ And, as Bruce Chilton observes, an analysis of the scrolls demonstrates an emphasis on the immortality of the soul and not bodily resurrection (2003: 317). Hence, critical reflection on those key texts within the Dead Sea Scrolls which afford more clarity on the afterlife, places these texts, and the community behind them, firmly within the framework of thought on the afterlife found in other Second Temple Jewish texts noted in the previous chapter. In this sense, and contra Puech, the observations of Josephus on the community appear to be consistent with the scrolls themselves and certainly, contra both Puech and Wright, the thoughts of Josephus are to be preferred above those of Hippolytus.¹⁷ Indeed, Jonathan Klawans’ recent analysis of Hippolytus on the Essenes, within the context of resurrection, concludes that Hippolytus’ consistently *added* references to physical resurrection into his accounts of the Pharisees and Essenes (2012: 227).

SADDUCEES

Finally, of course, within the wider period of the Scrolls, there is also the presence of the Sadducees. Unfortunately, information on them and their doctrine is sparse, with much coming from Josephus and the New Testament. Josephus claimed that they denied the immortality of the soul and that they postulated that this disappeared with the body.¹⁸ Mark 12.18 (and parallels) asserts that they rejected the notion of resurrection, although the text provides few details and simply follows an hypothesized *reductio ad absurdum*, by which Mark seeks to prove a point about the superiority of Jesus' teaching. There are additional minor references in Acts 23.6–8 which highlight a sharp exchange between the Pharisees and Sadducees at a meeting of the Jerusalem Jewish Council. Whether one can accurately ascertain their beliefs through the work of others is a moot point (especially as both Josephus and the evangelists may not be unbiased in such reports), and, certainly, if Philip Davies and others are correct in identifying the Essenes with the Sadducees *in some form* (note 1. above), then this would place a very different perspective on our understanding of Sadducean thought.

A traditional perspective would assert that, in holding to the Pentateuch as their sole collection of sacred texts, they maintained a conscious denial either of any form of afterlife or of the resurrection of the dead. From the Pentateuch, they would have believed in angels (as celestial beings), and the 'spirit,' in the sense of God's spirit as the breath of life (Gen 6.17; 45.27 and elsewhere), although their denial of this in the exchange of Acts 23.7–8 is then problematic (see Daube 1990: 493–97; Wright 2003: 131–40). But the Sadducees would have denied that such language could be applied to post-mortem men or women. In a Pharisaic critique of such a position, the Mishnah asserts:

All Israelites have a share in the world to come . . . And these are they that have no share in the world to come: he that says that there is no resurrection of the dead prescribed in the Law, and [he that says] that the Law is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean.

(*mSanh.* 10.1)¹⁹

The textual history of the clause, *prescribed in the Law*, is of interest, for it is omitted from certain texts and was probably not part of the original manuscript (see Cavallin 1974: 175–77; Montefiore and Lowe 1938: 600; Urbach 1975: 652, 991–92). Its presence does, of course, sharpen the debate between Sadducees and Pharisees at their point of disagreement: the divine nature of the whole of Torah, and not simply the Pentateuch. Certainly, the Sadducees are correct to claim that there is no concept of either afterlife or resurrection in the Pentateuch.²⁰ If one considers that the Sadducees were the more conservative traditionalists (so, Cavallin 1974: 194;

Wright 2003: 135), then their position opens up an interesting window on the eschatological thoughts of post-Biblical Judaism before 70 CE, for one could argue that thoughts of any form of afterlife or resurrection were, in the words of Wright, “a recent innovation” (2003: 135).²¹

In summary up to the conclusion of this section, if we include the Scrolls alongside the wealth of Second Temple Jewish literature outlined above, there are no texts up to and beyond the first Jewish war which speak unambiguously of the resurrection of the *physical* body.²²

RABBINIC LITERATURE

Following the aftermath of the first Jewish War and the emergence of a dominant form of Pharisaic Judaism after Jamnia, the later rabbinic literature demonstrates a wide variety of thought on the afterlife, together with certain curious nuances on post-mortem existence.²³ Certainly, with the demise of the Sadducees, and with the friction and disputes which existed between the two groups now alleviated (particularly on the issue of the resurrection²⁴), Pharisaic Judaism was able to assert its own framework of thought on the afterlife. Yet, this appears to have been largely un-systematized and the rabbis show differing emphases of a number of afterlife scenarios. There is little, for example, in the Mishnah. *Sanhedrin* 10.1 (noted above) is cited frequently, although this text tells us nothing of the precise details of our investigation into what it describes as the ‘world to come.’ There is a little more clarity in *m. Sanh.* 10.3, where:

The generation of the Flood have no share in the world to come, nor shall they stand in the judgement, for it is written, *My spirit shall not judge with man forever*; [thus they have] neither judgement nor spirit.

Here, a share in post-mortem existence, or lack of it for the Flood generation, is articulated in terms of the spirit (although its precise meaning is obscure). There is a further ambiguous text in *Sotah* 9.15: “saintliness leads to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit leads to the resurrection of the dead. And the resurrection of the dead shall come through Elijah.”²⁵ The clearest text is found in *Yebamoth*, which is consistent with the weight of Second Temple Jewish texts seen above on the emphasis of the soul and its departure from the body on death:

“Evidence [of a man’s death] may be given only after his soul is gone forth . . .”.

(*m. Yeb.* 16.3; cf. *m. Ber.* 5.2)

When we turn to the later rabbinic literature, even amidst the variety of thought in the Talmuds, *Tosefta* and *Targums*, we still see much evidence of

that described in the earlier post-Biblical texts: a stress on the survival of the soul (alone) after death, and a clear understanding that the souls of the righteous and wicked depart to very different abodes. Rabbinic reflection upon Isa 26 in *Pesiq. R.* 20.4, for example, explained the descent of God's dew to quicken and revive the *souls* of the righteous, and in *b. Sabb.* 88b it is where God "brought down the dew with which He will resurrect the dead, and He revived them [the souls]" (see Aus 2005: 191). In these texts it is clear that the rabbis saw the resurrection of the dead in terms of the revival of the soul. In a *baraita* in *Shab.* 152b, attributed to R. Eliezer, who quotes 1 Sam 25.29 (a passage of some importance in rabbinic literature in support for belief in life after death), post-mortem existence is considered only in the respect of the survival of the soul:

It was taught, R. Eliezer said: The souls of the righteous are hidden under the Throne of Glory, as it is said, *yet the soul of my lord shall be bound up in the bundle of life* (1 Sam. 25: 29a). But those of the wicked continue to be imprisoned, while one angel stands at one end of the world and a second stands at the other end and they sling their souls to each other, for it is said, *and the soul of your enemies, them shall he sling out as from the hollow of a sling* (1 Sam. 25: 29b).²⁶

Cavallin notes of this text: "After-life is considered only in the respect of a continued existence of the souls, whether righteous or wicked [. . .] the use of 1 Sm 25.29 speaks for the assumption that the application of this text to the fate of the souls after death is likely to be quite early" (1974: 182). In the Tg. Jon., the text of 1 Sam 25.29 is cited again: "And may my lord's soul be deposited in the treasury of eternal life before the LORD, your God, but the soul of your enemies may He let it fly as people do with stones of a sling" (Cavallin 1974: 187). A further example is found in *Lev. R.*, Mezora' 18.1:

R. Phinehas and R. Hiliiah in the name of R. Simeon said: When does the spirit return to God who gave it? (Eccl. 12.7). When the dust return to the earth as it was, but it is also said, 'The souls of thine enemies He will sling out' (1 Sam 25.29) [. . .] God says to man, 'Behold, I am pure, and my dwelling-place is pure, and my ministers are pure, and the soul which I have given you is pure. If you return it to me in the same condition, all is well; but if not, I will tear it in pieces before you.'²⁷

As we have seen, such texts cohere with the framework of thought elsewhere: the physical body decomposes and returns to dust, the soul of the righteous goes to a place of blessing, the soul of the wicked to a place of potential punishment. This is also clear in *b. Shab.* 152b where, "Our Rabbis taught: *'And the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return to God who gave it'* [. . .] R. Mari said: [Even] the righteous are fated to be dust, for it is

written, 'and the dust return to the earth as it was'.²⁸ The departure of the righteous soul is also explicated in Genesis Rabba 62.2, where such souls are allowed a glimpse of the blessings awaiting them in the age to come:

All the reward intended for the righteous is ready for them in the age to come; and while they are still in this world, the Holy One, blessed be He!, lets them see the reward that he has prepared to give them in the age to come. And their souls are satisfied; and they fall asleep.²⁹

The same sentiments are found in *b. Sanh.* 90b:

For ye maintain that resurrection is not a Biblical doctrine, but it is written, [*Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment*], *that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him* [. . .] This is disputed by Tannaim: *That soul shall utterly be cut off*; he shall be cut off in this world and in the next.

The tractate *Sanhedrin* in the *Tosefta*, proceeds to further explicate *m. Sanh.* 10 noted above in providing a rabbinic discussion on afterlife existence employing the metaphor of the root and branches of a tree (and which of these, if either, would survive judgement). In a wide-ranging discussion on whether the root and/or branches would remain, and which are used metaphorically to designate either the children (as branches) of the wicked (the root), or a meritorious deed (as branches) of the wicked (the root), the tractate also gives another explanation of the metaphor: the root means the soul and the branch means the body. Hence, once again, for some rabbis at least, the distinction of soul and body and the question of which of these would have any afterlife experience, was a pertinent matter for discussion. As for the differing afterlife abodes for the righteous and wicked, the *Tosefta* tractate claims that the wicked are said to return to Sheol (*t. Sanh.* 12.11–13.2).³⁰ Interestingly, it appears that even for the Rabbis themselves, there is uncertainty on their own future hope: "When Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai fell ill [he said] there are two ways before me, one leading to Paradise and the other to Gehinnom, and I do not know by which I shall be taken" (*b. Ber.* 28b).

Conversely, there are texts in which the resurrection of the body is conceived in a very literal way. The *Tosefta Sanhedrin* tractate mentioned above has a comment upon the wicked of the flood generation, claiming: "The Almighty says, 'I will not suffer their souls to return to its case,'" implying it seems, that, for the righteous, perhaps the soul *would* return to its body (*t. Sanh.* 13.6).³¹ A central prayer of the rabbinic period (although of uncertain date) was the morning benediction (*Ber 60b*), which makes a similar point on the afterlife of the righteous:

When he wakes he says: 'My God, the soul which Thou hast placed in me is pure. Thou hast fashioned it in me, Thou didst breathe it into me,

and Thou preservest it within me and Thou wilt one day take it from me and restore it to me in the time to come. So long as the soul is within me I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, my God, and the God of my fathers, Sovereign of all worlds, Lord of all souls. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who restorest souls to dead corpses.³²

Likewise, the *Targum Jonathan* takes a very literal approach to Isa 26.19:

It is thou that bringest the dead to life, thou raisest up the bones of their dead bodies; all that were cast to the dust shall live and sing praises before thee; for thy dew is a dew of light unto them that observe thy law, but the wicked to whom thou gavest might, but who have transgressed thy Memra, shalt thou deliver unto Gehinnom.³³

Elsewhere, *Leviticus Rabbah* (Wayikra 4.5) discusses the relation of body and soul using two amusing metaphors. In the first of these—the judgement of a blind and a lame man following their theft of figs—the explication of the metaphor is that the two are equally culpable: “[God] brings the soul and casts it into the body, and judges the two together.” In the second metaphor—the judgement of two daughters, one the daughter of a priest and the other of a layman—the respective judgements of the body and soul are now distinct:

So it will be in the world to come with the body and the soul when they come to judgement. God will let the body alone, and condemn the soul. Then the soul will say, ‘We have sinned together, why dost thou leave the body alone, and condemn me?’ God answers, ‘The body belongs to the lower sphere, to the place where they sin; but you belong to the upper sphere, where they do not sin; therefore I leave the body alone and condemn you.

(cited in Montefiore and Lowe 1938: 312–13)

In both, the texts suggest that the physical body has some form of afterlife existence, but gives little further detail.

A point of some debate amongst the rabbis appears to have been that over the question of an afterlife existence of those who died outside Palestine. For R. Eleazar:

The dead outside the Land will not be resurrected; for it is said in Scripture, And I will set glory in the land of the living, [implying] the dead of the land in which I have my desire will be resurrected, but the dead [of the land] in which I have no desire will not be resurrected. R. Abba b. Memel objected: *Thy dead shall live, my dead bodies shall arise*; does not [the expression] ‘*Thy dead shall live*’ refer to the dead of the Land of Israel, and ‘*My dead bodies shall arise*’ to the dead outside the Land.

(*b. Ket.* 111a)³⁴

The debate continued:

R. Hiyya b. Joseph said: A time will come when the just will break through [the soil] and rise up in Jerusalem, for it is said in Scripture, And they will blossom out of the city like grass of the earth, and by 'city' only Jerusalem can be meant for it is said in Scripture, 'For I will defend this city'.

(*b. Ket.* 111b)

Others, however, circumvented the problem in more ingenious ways:

R. Simai said, The Holy One, blessed be He, will burrow the earth before them, and their bodies will roll through the excavation like bottles, and when they arrive at the land of Israel, their souls will be reunited to them.³⁵

There was also the pertinent question (placed upon the lips of Queen Cleopatra), of how the dead would be clothed:

Queen Cleopatra asked R. Meir, 'I know that the dead will revive, for it is written, And they [the righteous] shall [in the distant future] blossom forth out of the city [Jerusalem] like the grass of the earth. But when they arise, shall they arise nude or in their garments?'—He replied, 'Thou mayest deduce by an *a fortiori* argument [the answer] from a wheat grain: if a grain of wheat, which is buried naked, sprouteth forth in many robes, how much more so the righteous, who are buried in their raiment!'

(*b. Sanh.* 90b)³⁶

Yet, what is also of interest is a tradition that the righteous body would not even decompose, "Tanna debe Eliyyahu [states]: The righteous, whom the Holy One, blessed be He, will resurrect, will not revert to dust [. . .] just as the Holy One endures forever, so shall they endure forever" (*b. Sanh.* 92a).

An extensive treatment of the afterlife is found in the tractate *b. Sanh.* 90–92, which, in itself, also demonstrates a variety of thought. There is then, what appears to be an emphasis on the afterlife existence of the soul:

That [wicked] soul shall utterly be cut off; he shall be cut off in this world and in the next: this is R. Akiba's view. R. Ishmael said: But the verse has previously stated, he reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off are there then three worlds? But [interpret thus]: and [that soul] shall be cut off—in this world he is to be cut off—in the next; whilst as for [the repetition], that is because the Torah employs human phraseology.

(*b. Sanh.* 90b)

Yet, there is also a discussion on what appears to be an indication of physical resurrection (although not clarified). This stems from a pertinent question asked from an (unknown) ruler: "An emperor said to Rabban Gamaliel: 'Ye maintain that the dead will revive; but they turn to dust, and can dust come to life?'" The question is answered positively using an *a fortiori* argument from the work of a potter. There is also evidence of a clear disagreement over what appears to be a talk of physical resurrection:

A sectarian [*min*] said to Gebiha b. Pesisa, 'Woe to you, ye wicked, who maintain that the dead will revive; if even the living die, shall the dead live!' He replied, 'Woe to you, ye wicked, who maintain that the dead will not revive: if what was not, [now] lives,—surely what has lived, will live again!'

So, critics of such a view are called 'wicked' *sectarians*!³⁷ This is also clear in *b. Baba Bathra* 16B, where, "R. Johanan said: That *wicked* [Esau] committed five *sins* on that day [. . . one of which is] he denied the resurrection of the dead. [We know that] he denied the resurrection of the dead because he said, *Behold, I am on the way to die*" (italics, mine).

Elsewhere, there is a clearer view of post-mortem resurrection:

Raba opposed [two verses]: It is written, I kill, and I make alive; whilst it is also written, I wound, and I heal!—The Holy One, blessed be He, said, What I slay, I resurrect [i.e., in the same state], and then, what I wound, I heal [after their revival]. Our Rabbis taught: I kill, and I make alive. I might interpret, I kill one person and give life to another, as the world goes on: therefore the Writ states, I wound, and I heal. Just as the wounding and healing [obviously] refer to the same person, so putting to death and bringing to life refer to the same person. This refutes those who maintain that resurrection is not intimated in the Torah.

(*b. Sanh.* 91b)

In addition, there is also a discussion and disagreement over Ezekiel 37, and to what extent it is literal as opposed to a simple metaphor or parable:

But should we not deduce [the reverse] from the dead whom Ezekiel resurrected?—He accepts the view that in the truth [the story of the resurrection of the dry bones] was [but] a parable. R. Eliezer the son of R. Jose the Galilean said: The dead whom Ezekiel revived went up to Palestine, married wives and begat sons and daughters. R. Judah b. Bathyra rose up and said: I am one of their descendants, and these are the tefillin which my grandfather left me [as an heirloom] from them.

(*b. Sanh.* 92b)

Various benedictions are relevant to our discussion as many were engraved in the Jewish mind, at least from the period of the reconstruction after 70 CE:

Thou art mighty forever YHWH, thou quickenest the dead, thou art mighty to save [. . .] and keepest faith to that sleep in the dust [. . .] who killest and quickenest and causest salvation to spring forth. And faithful art thou to quicken the dead.³⁸

We also find a similar perspective in the *Shemoneh Esrei* (or *Amidah*), perhaps the most important prayer of the synagogue.³⁹ The second blessing is called *Gevurot* ("mighty deeds"):

You, O Lord are mighty forever, You are the Reviver of the dead, You are greatly able to save. You sustain the living in loving kindness, You revive the dead with great compassion, You support the falling, heal the sick, set free the bound and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, O Master of mighty deeds? Who compares to You, a king who puts to death and restores to life, and brings forth salvation? And You are faithful to revive the dead. Blessed are You, O Lord, who revives the dead.

HILLEL AND SHAMMAI

Finally, there are, of course, the writings of the great rabbis, Hillel and Shammai, and the schools that followed in their names. Both espoused an afterlife hope in which the resurrection of the body was conceived in a very literal way. The Shammaites were perhaps the more extreme literalists in that their interpretation of Ezek 37:1–14 explained the metaphor as a description of the future general resurrection. Hence, for Shammai, resurrected life is a life in an earthly body, which is identical with that having died (the bones of Ezek 37:1–14 represent identity and continuity). For Hillel, however, although he was in agreement on the fact of a new eschatological body, it would be an entirely new body (from Job 10.10–12;⁴⁰ cf. Cavallin 1974: 173). So, the school of Shammai maintained that there would be some kind of relationship between the material remains of the dead and their resurrected bodies, while the Hillelites argued that there would not, maintaining that the resurrection would be a new creation of the body, *ex nihilo* (the new 'embryo' of GnR 14.5, LevR 14.9).⁴¹

In summarizing rabbinic thought, the detailed and extensive arguments of *b. Sanh.* 90–92, over a number of issues, can only be satisfactorily explained by the fact of disagreements over the nature of the resurrection. There appears to be a general consensus on the continuity of the soul, but less so on the physical body. In reference to the rabbinic literature, Wright overstates

his case considerably when he asserts: "Nobody doubted that Daniel 12 spoke of bodily resurrection; by the first century some at least were reading Ezekiel in that way, though with metaphorical overtones of return from exile still audible as well" (2003: 197). Although Dan 12 is cited in *b. Sanh.* 92a, it does not stress a *physical* resurrection, and, as noted, there is a debate in *b. Sanh.* 92b over the Ezekiel text. How early the various rabbinic thoughts on the afterlife may have been developed after Jamnia is difficult to assess; there are, as yet, simply no clear methodological criteria by which we can safely retroject rabbinic comments and debates on questions of the afterlife back into the first century or earlier.

The rabbinic commentaries citing Hillel and Shammai, for example, may tell us more about the debates of the Talmudic period than those of the first century BCE and beyond, where the arguments of both rabbis on the resurrection of a *physical* body would be unique in their time (1st BCE–1st CE) compared to the weight of Second Temple Jewish texts noted above. It is of interest, too, that *no* post-Biblical text up to the first century CE mentions either Hillel or Shammai even when discussing the afterlife. Indeed, apart from a single reference to Hillel in 3 Enoch, the two rabbis are absent not only from the works of the Old Testament pseudepigrapha,⁴² but, astonishingly, also from the entirety of the works of Philo and Josephus. Even in the Mishnah, which has an extensive catalogue of the debates and disagreements of the two rabbis, even over certain consequences involving dead bodies (Ohol 2.3; 7.3; 18.1; Mikw 1.4), there is no mention of their differences over the resurrection! Emil Schürer's comments on the two rabbis are perhaps pertinent in this context when he notes that "the accounts provided by the later sources bear almost throughout the stamp of legend" (1979: 2.364), and, in general on the rabbinic literature, the comments of Montefiore and Lowe are also very significant:

according to one doctrine, when you die, you sleep till you 'rise' again at the general resurrection and for the last Judgment. According to another doctrine, when you die, you may, if you are righteous or repentant (and more especially if you are an Israelite), straightway enjoy in happy blessedness the life of the blessed world to come, and if you are wicked and an idolater and an enemy of Israel, you may, when you die, go straightway to hell. How long you will remain in hell is another matter; it may be for a shorter or a longer period, or again it may be for ever. Or, again, at the end of a period in hell you may be annihilated. Or, again, you may be annihilated at your earthly death. Passages which imply or express all these various bizarre conceptions and confusions abound, and there is no one accepted theory or conception.

(1938: 581)

In concluding their study of rabbinic thought on the afterlife, Montefiore and Lowe note: "It may be pointed out that there is a good deal of confusion

in the rabbinic literature about ‘the world to come’ [. . .] One never seems to get to the bottom of the oddity of the Rabbis” (1938: 581, 600).⁴³ Indeed, the great rabbinic scholar G.F. Moore concurs, noting that, “Any attempt to systematize the Jewish notions of the hereafter imposes upon them an order and consistency which does not exist in them” (1927: 2.389).

CONCLUSION

In sum, and as a preface to our study of the New Testament, Second Temple Jewish texts and the Scrolls allow us valuable insights into post-mortem existence, particularly in areas which are developments away from those of the Hebrew Bible. In continuity with the Hebrew Bible, the body is made from dust and after death returns to dust; the soul, however, is seen as immortal. In discontinuity with the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple Jewish texts delineate perspectives whereby the souls of the righteous and wicked go to different places. Those of the righteous go to be with God, and so achieve a sense of bliss and peace; those of the wicked are sent to an everlasting prison where they are subject to eternal punishment. In many texts, the souls of the righteous become like angels or stars in the heavens. Apart from one late text in Josephus, there is no unambiguous concept of a physical bodily afterlife. The reconstitution of a physical body is only undertaken in the last days as part of God’s re-creation or reconstitution of the physical world. This is not to say that one can presume to see the perspective of Josephus developing automatically from his Jewish background (that would have to be argued); it could be argued that such notions stemmed from his Greco-Roman milieu. As for the Sadducees, these stand in some continuity with the sacred text of the Pentateuch, whereas the Jewish authors of Second Temple Jewish texts stand in discontinuity with the Hebrew Bible, most likely following reflection on the afterlife following the Maccabean wars. The later rabbinic writings as a whole are rather obscure or multivalent: while some offer an unambiguous framework of an afterlife which involves a physical body, others disclose diverging views and debate, and many texts have an emphasis on a conception of an afterlife conceived more in terms of the soul.

NOTES

1. On the debate see Davies (2000: 189, 210); Segal (2004). Also, in general, on this chapter, see Elledge (2011) and Popović (2009).
2. On the former, Schubert (1960); on the latter, Carmignac (1958); and see Laurin (1958); Le Moyne (1972: 167–68).
3. Also on the Essenes see Philo, *Prob.* 75–91; *Hypothetica* 11.1–18. On those who dismiss the evidence of Josephus, see e.g., Puech (1994: 254, n. 44), who writes, “The presentation of Flavius Josephus does not give us a correct picture of the Essenes’ belief, and at least on this point he cannot be trusted.” Puech

provides no evidence for this statement and, as will be shown by the end of this section, Josephus articulates Essene belief perhaps better than Puech wants to allow.

4. In a calamitous category error, Wright, noting the overlap between this text and 2 Maccabees 7, ignores the Jewish attitude towards the body and insists on an 'anthropology' which, "consists primarily of the body, which will be deprived of its animating soul for a while but will then receive it back again. My guess—it can only be that—is that Josephus was here echoing, whether consciously or otherwise, the language either of 2 Maccabees or of similar martyrological texts now lost to us" (2003: 183). To do so, of course, Wright has to actually ignore the Essene understanding of the body outlined by Josephus above.
5. In the context of this paper, the text makes perfect sense, whatever the translation of προσόδον (see the debate in Feldman's Loeb translation, p. 15 n. e). The huge concern for Wright is that this text may be a way of referring "to a blissful *disembodied* immortality" (2003: 184, *italics mine*), i.e., the resurrection of the soul alone, which Wright does not want to envisage. Ironically, in asserting the need for some sort of continuity between present and future life, Wright notes that one obvious way is described in the Wisdom of Solomon—the language of the soul!
6. See Martínez (1996: 355–61); Vermes (1998: 292–300). In the long passage remarking upon the body and its demise after death (1QH 20.24–23.15), one may have expected that any notion of *physical* resurrection would have been found here. Although some of the texts are uncertain, the only two points in this section which speak of some form of eternal life are in passages which also speak of the spirit (1QH 21.28–29; 23 frag. 2.10).
7. Strangely, despite the fact this section of 1QH 13 is abundant with terminology of the afterlife of the soul and has no mention of the body, Brooke (2006: 28) maintains that the "speaker begins by asserting a physical position that is resonant with the language of bodily resurrection." In doing so, Brooke appears to be misconstruing the point of the text.
8. See Davies (2000: 199).
9. On this fragment see Puech (1994); Wold (2012). Wright (2003: 186) cites the passage by following the translation of Vermes, yet at the clause "revive the dead" switches to, and italicizes, the translation of Martínez, viz., "[He] will make the dead live . . ." The two translations give quite a different sense to the clause.
10. Cf. Isa 66.24. On bodies and worms Chapter 2 above.
11. De Boer (1988: 72) also cites Kuhn (1966: 104–05) who argued for the presence of anthropological dualism in the Scrolls and spoke of the separation of the spirit-self from the flesh and its elevation to the heavenly realm from the sphere of dust and therefore mortality and death. In this sense, the text could be read to signify a qualitative change in one's earthly existence, indicated by the motif of cleansing from sin. De Boer asks whether we are then to understand the deliverance from Sheol, etc., in a metaphorical sense only, to signify cleansing from sin? Or does the text imply that physical demise was no longer of any concern because the community already in some way 'had' eternal life (cf. 1QH 2.17–20)? This text, like 1QH 6.24 and 11.13, is reminiscent of Biblical Psalms (e.g., Pss 16, 49, 71).
12. Cf. Porter (1999: 67) who suggests, "4Q521 has language reflective of Isa 35.5–6 and 61.1–2. There is a sense here of restoration of previous existence, rather than transportation to an idyllic realm."
13. See Barrett (1987: 230).
14. 4QAmran^e Frag. 3, see Martínez (1996: 274) and Frag. 5 in Martínez and Tigchelaar (1998: 1093).

15. 4Q245 *Frag.* 2. Martínez (1996: 289).
16. Collins (1992: 134); De Boer (1988: 71); Nickelsburg (1972) (cited in Porter 1999: 66); and note Davies' comments after his analysis of the *Community Rule*, *Damascus Document* and *War Scroll*, "there is no statement of a doctrine of resurrection and no consensus about the precise nature of the final state of the righteous" (2000: 210).
17. With reference to n. 3 above, Puech, in wanting, like Wright, to assert a belief in physical resurrection on behalf of the Essenes has to dismiss the writings of Josephus.
18. *Jos. War* 2.165; *Ant.* 18.16–17; *Mark* 12:18–23 & pars.; *Acts* 4:2; 23:8; Wright (2003: 131–140).
19. Further on the Pharisees and Sadducees in rabbinic literature, see Setzer (2004: 33–36).
20. Curiously, the later rabbis did assert resurrection from the Pentateuch (*b. Sanh.* 11), and Hades is present in the Pentateuch (*Gen* 37.35; 42.38; 44.29, 31), but only as a synonym for death.
21. Wright claims that Sirach is a spiritual ancestor of the Sadducees and that they "would certainly have approved of Sirach's attitude to death and what might lie beyond . . ." (2003: 136). Yet, whilst Sirach gives little specific detail on the afterlife, the writer asserts that for everyone, the flesh returns to dust (17.1), and the spirit departs (to Sheol?; 38.21–23; 41.4). As such, the writer stands in continuity with the Hebrew Bible and against both the Sadducees (for whom there is no post-mortem existence) and later post-Biblical Jewish writers (who envisage an eternal existence for the soul and judgement after death). Bauckham (1998: 82) writes that Sirach, "is probably the last Judean writer of the Second Temple period of whom it can be confidently stated that he did not expect eternal life and judgment after death." Cf. *TDNTW* 121; Moore (1927: 2.317). In this sense, Wright is incorrect: the Sadducees would have been opposed to Sirach's concept of an afterlife. For Sirach, there were only two principal ways in which a person could 'outlast' death (in an 'earthly' sense). The first was through children, who represent their parents after death (11:28; 30.4–5; 46:12), and the other was by means of a good reputation (39:9; 41.11–13; 44:8).
22. One other Jewish text sometimes cited is the *Apocryphon of Ezekiel* (see Mueller & Robinson 1983). Extant fragments of the text are found only in quotations by the Fathers (notably the fourth-century writings of bishop Epiphanius, *Haer.* 64.70.5–17), and in fragments of the Chester Beatty Papyrus 185. A similar story is found in the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Sanh.* 91a-b). Mueller and Robinson note that dating and provenance are uncertain. That the fragments of the work are preserved predominantly in later Christian sources and that the text espouses the immortality and judgement of the *body* (which is suggested nowhere else in post-Biblical Jewish literature, not even in Josephus), would certainly point to later editing by a Christian or Jewish-Christian redactor.
23. See the brief overviews in Cavallin (1974: 171–92); Segal (1997: 113–125); Wright (2003: 190–200).
24. As noted above. For a variety of other disputes see *m. Makk* 1.6; *m. Par.* 3.3, 7; *m. Nid* 4.2; *m. Yad* 4.6–8.
25. The sending of Elijah, noted in *Mal* 4.5, is to enable the reconciliation of parent and child and so to turn away the curses of Yahweh upon the land. See further, Moore (1927: 2.272); Wright (2003: 193). Cf. also *b. AZ.* 20b: "Study leads to precision, precision leads to zeal, zeal leads to cleanliness, cleanliness leads to restraint, restraint leads to purity, purity leads to holiness, holiness leads to meekness, meekness leads to fear of sin, fear of sin leads to saintliness, saintliness leads to the [possession of] the holy spirit, the holy spirit

- leads to eternal life.” The footnote to this text claims that “The phrase may also mean that the possessor of the Holy Spirit is endowed with the power of restoring life to the dead” (Epstein 1961: 106 n9).
26. Cavallin (1974: 182) citing a *baraitha* in *Shab* 152b. See Park (2000: 151). Park’s analysis of Jewish epitaphs on gravestones leads him to conclude that such blessings on inscriptions, “envision God’s careful concern and protection for the soul of the deceased.” On the ‘bundle of life,’ Park notes, “It is difficult, however, to determine whether it is a description of a final blissful existence, or refers specifically to an intermediate state between death and resurrection” (153).
 27. Cf. Montefiore and Lowe (1938: 312); and also, *b. Shab*.152b, “The Rabbis say: As the spirit was given to thee pure, so return it pure.”
 28. Interestingly, *b. Shab* 152b-153a claims that the physical body survives for a full year before decomposing, “A certain Sadducee said to R.Abbahu: You maintain that the souls of the righteous are hidden under the Throne of Glory: then how did the bone [practising] necromancer bring up Samuel by means of his necromancy?—There it was within twelve months [of death], he replied. For it was taught: For full [twelve months] the body is in existence and the soul ascends and descends; after twelve months the body ceases to exist [153a] and the soul ascends but descends nevermore.”
 29. Targum and Midrash [online]. Available from: <http://virtualreligion.net/iho/targum.html#banquet> [accessed May 7th 2014].
 30. See, Montefiore and Lowe (1938: 604); and Internet Sacred Text Archive [online]. Available from: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/tsa/tsa37.htm> [accessed March 7th 2014]
 31. The Mishnah elucidates a debate between R. Akiba and R. Eleazar on the future of the wilderness generation, particularly the men of Korah. Akiba claims that they will have no future in the world to come, although Eleazar (citing 1 Sam 2.6), claims that they will (*m. Sanh.* 10.3). The debate is continued in *t. Sanh.* 13.9b, although now citing a different proof text to 1 Sam.
 32. Cavallin (1974: 178). Cf. *b. AbodZara* 5a, “The Son of David will only come when all the souls destined to [inhabit earthly] bodies will be exhausted.”
 33. Cavallin (1974: 188) (citing the ET by Stenning 1949).
 34. Although R. Memel appears to link the reference to miscarriages.
 35. *j. Ket* 12. #3, f. 35b, line 13; *b. Ket.* 111a (Abbaye), cited in Montefiore and Lowe (1938: 600).
 36. Cf. also *b. Ket.* 111b, ‘R. Hiyya b. Joseph further stated: The just in the time to come will rise [apparelled] in their own clothes. [This is deduced] a *minori ad majus* from a grain of wheat. If a grain of wheat that is buried naked sprouts up with many coverings how much more so the just who are buried in their shrouds.’ Note also, the parallels between these texts and 1 Cor 15.
 37. See also, *Gen. R.*, Bereshit 14.7 (noted in Montefiore & Lowe 1938: 591), where someone who denies the resurrection is called the heretic.
 38. *J. Ber* 4.6 (7); *b. Ber* 28b-29a; Meg 17b; Cavallin (1974: 178).
 39. The basic form of the prayer may have been composed c. fifth century BCE, originally consisting of eighteen blessings divided into three sections.
 40. Job 10.9–12, “Remember that you fashioned me like clay; and will you turn me to dust again? Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese? You clothed me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews. You have granted me life and steadfast love, and your care has preserved my spirit.”
 41. *Gen. Rab.* 14.5; *Lev. Rab.* 14.9. Despite the debate, the rabbinic emphasis upon some kind of physical post-mortem existence is clear, *m. Sanh.* 10.1; *m. Sot.* 9.15; *b. Sanh.* 90a-92b; Cavallin (1974: 171ff.); Montefiore & Lowe (1938: 601f.); Wright (2003: 190–200).

42. The index of Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols, 1983, 1985), cites Hillel only once (3 Enoch) and Shammai not at all.
43. They also note, "The appalling self-delusion which could glibly talk of a God of love and yet believe in an eternal hell was, I think, sooner and more prevailingly lost in Judaism than in Christianity" (581). See also Urbach (1975: 651).

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5 New Testament Beginnings

Afterlife in the Thought of the Apostle Paul

In 1974, Hans Cavallin wrote,

Paul . . . could not possibly have accepted or even understood any other idea of life after death than that which included the whole man, body and soul, i.e., the resurrection of the body, simply because they were Jews. This resurrection faith, based on Hebrew anthropology, will then be stated as *the* NT doctrine, and *the* genuine Christian approach to the question of after-life, as opposed to the Greek idea of the immortality of the soul.

(1974: 16, italics his)

Many cite Cavallin as authoritative. Yet, as we have seen thus far, life after death for the Hebrew Bible and for the vast majority of texts from the period of Second Temple Judaism clearly laid an emphasis on the post-mortem survival of the soul and not the body. In this sense, as noted in the conclusion to Chapter 2, perhaps Hebrew anthropology needs to be re-thought. At the same time, the Greek concept of life after death, as we have seen in Chapter 1, *did* assert the need for a physical body. These two strands will be held in mind as we approach the earliest formulation of the afterlife in the New Testament in the writings of the apostle Paul.

To preface our analysis of Paul's understanding and construction of the afterlife we take a slight detour to delve into particular perspectives upon the character of the apostle himself, for, perhaps controversially for some, the assertion will be made that Paul was of only average intelligence and fomented confusion over many aspects of early Christian praxis. Hopefully, less controversially, it needs to be remembered that Paul had an imminent eschatological expectation and was prone to visionary experiences.¹

In answering the charge of 'How can it be asserted that Paul is of only average intelligence?'; simply, it is because he tells us so himself:

You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced

in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.

(Gal 1.13–14)²

His advancement (προσκόπτω) in Judaism was only beyond *many* of his contemporaries (ὕπὲρ πολλοὺς συγγλίκιώτας). Paul does not say *all* or *most*, which he undoubtedly would have done had that been the case for that would have strengthened his rhetorical argument. So, where would this leave him amongst his contemporaries? Certainly, not top of his class. If he was in the highest fifty percent, this would have allowed use of *most*. Most likely, we can only assert that Paul was an average middling student. An additional point is his claim that it was the fact of being “far more zealous” (περισσοτέρως ζηλωτῆς ὑπάρχων) than his contemporaries which was a (or the?) significant factor accentuating his advancement in Judaism. Yet, this was an ‘advancement’ simply towards being an average student. So, it wasn’t intelligence, understanding, purity, piety, or such things, it was zeal.

The book of Acts, naturally, presents a different perspective. Paul *did* advance in Judaism to the extent that he had the authority to give the approval for the death of Stephen;³ he had the authority to enter the homes of Christ-believers in Jerusalem and “dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison;” and he was given authority by the High Priest to travel to Damascus in search of other Christ-followers and bring them bound to Jerusalem. Surely the pinnacle of any ‘advancement’ in Judaism was to be given authority by none other than the High Priest himself and to be the defender and gate-keeper of Judaism against those who would seek to undermine it? Unfortunately, we hear nothing of this from Paul and so cannot verify the veracity of such claims, although we must, of course, recognize the Lukan *tendenz* towards accentuating the life of Paul (Luke’s ‘hero’), which influences the structure and content of his literary work. We could though conflate the witnesses of Paul and Acts to suggest that it was perhaps the apostle’s zealousness which may have fomented an attitude leading to violence against those who apparently stood against Judaism.⁴ In modern religious parlance one could summarize these texts to suggest that Paul was, in his days before becoming a Christ-follower, a religious fundamentalist of only average intelligence with a propensity to conflict and violence (cf. 1 Tim 1.13; Lüdemann 1995: 118–19).

Elsewhere, Paul has to admit that he is unskilled in speech, and so a poor communicator, as well as concur with his Corinthian critics that “his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible” (2 Cor 10.10; 11.6; see also Furnish 1984: 468, 478–79, 490–91; Martin 1986: 242–43, 311–13; Tolmie 2012). It is also clear that some in Corinth see him as a fool which, in part, he appears to concur with.⁵ He also has to defend himself against charges of financial mismanagement over a collection of funds, as well as

vacillating in his travel arrangements.⁶ Further, that Paul evinces lack of clarity of thought which leads to confusion for others is clear in a remarkable passage in 1 Corinthians:

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I [did] not at all [mean] with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.

(1 Cor 5.9–11, NASU)

Here, Paul refers to a letter prior to 1 Corinthians. The social setting is that it appears the Corinthians had written or sent an oral report to Paul asking his advice on this issue, and he writes to inform the community of how to structure interpersonal relations now that they are believers.⁷ Yet, how is it that Paul's injunctions in this lost former letter are apparently so ambiguous and confusing that the Corinthian community take them to indicate the exact *opposite* of what the apostle actually means: that the disassociation with the sexually immoral is a reference to those *outside* the Christ-movement, not as Paul now insists to those within (6:9).⁸ Did they then have to ask, again, for clarification on this, or did Paul hear that there was confusion within the community? In either case, it is the apostle's inability to make himself clearly understood which is at fault. (Although one could perhaps argue that the source of confusion was the original request from the Corinthians but, as will be shown, there are many issues elsewhere where Paul apparently sows the seeds of confusion.) So, while Paul asserts the necessity of on-going relations with those outside the Christ-movement (6.10), he has failed both during his time in Corinth and through his previous letter to explicate its exact form. Confusion at Corinth stems perhaps from Paul's own inadequacies as an educator. Certainly, the social and ethical boundaries of the Christ-movement may have been clear in Paul's own mind, but these were obviously not articulated clearly enough to his converts.

There are also additional problems within the Corinthian community. If Paul had been the founder and guiding mentor of the community for some long time, then why, between the time of his departure and the writing of 1 Corinthians, had social relations deteriorated so badly? And why were individuals, or some (or even many) in the community, now engaged in activities which the apostle could condemn only in the severest of terms: e.g., that someone should be handed over to Satan (1 Cor 5:5); that certain conduct was αἰσχρός, or could 'destroy' a fellow believer, or may be construed as participating with δαιμόνια (11:6; 8:11; 10:20–21); that the community was setting its heart on 'evil' (10:6); and bringing itself under judgement, sickness, and death (11:30)? There are also signs that Paul's relationship with

the (majority of) the community had broken down and yet he feels, in this context, that it is suitable to warn of impending punishment until the Corinthians are 'obedient' (2 Cor 10.6; 12.20). It is a catalogue of extraordinary concerns.

And neither does the enigma of 1 Corinthians end there. When one bears in mind that Paul's initial tenure at Corinth was some eighteen months (a figure which is widely accepted and which fits well into what is known of Pauline chronology), and one notices the disparate nature of the problems of 1 Corinthians, one wonders why such issues arose only *after* Paul's departure (Alexander 1993: 115–23; Jewett 1979; Thiselton 2000: 29–32). It is difficult to imagine that question of propriety in worship and the Eucharist, head-coverings, idol food, the use of tongues and prophecy, and, following misunderstanding in Thessalonica, the nature of the resurrection, would not have arisen during this long period. One has to ask the difficult question of why this is so, and why was Paul's ministry at Corinth apparently so inadequate? If many neophyte believers entered the Christ-community after Paul's departure and were insufficiently re-socialized into Paul's radical concept of life in Christ, one has to deliberate over the ideological or doctrinal shape of the community at Paul's departure. It certainly appears that there was enough confusion in the minds of those he left behind on the issue of on-going relations with those outside the Christ-movement to seek further advice from Paul (1 Cor 6:9–11). But, even here, one has to wonder why? Over a period of eighteen months did the question never arise, or did Paul never think it useful, to explicate on-going social relations between believer and non-believer and to demarcate some of the clear social boundaries outlined in 1 Corinthians? Are Paul's inadequacies as an educator and his failure to explicate precisely what the 'gospel' is, and how it should 'work,' the reasons why the Corinthians turn so easily to other 'versions' of Christian theology and praxis?⁹

But 1 Corinthians is not unique in this regard. There is confusion in Thessalonica over the parousia and nature of the resurrection body; problems in Galatia over the role of Torah within the Christ-movement; further problems are evident in 2 Corinthians over the adequacy of Paul's ministry; problems, too, in Philippi over competitors and Judaizers, as well as evidence of dissension and conflict within the Christ-movement there (Phil 4:2–3). Overall, a litany of problems perhaps stemming from an inadequate theological and social reflection upon the dramatic and far-reaching implications of a radical message. Too often, it seems, Paul's directives appear to be reactive rather than proactive. There is also the question of whether Paul is functioning too much as an independent missionary with not enough recourse to the apostles and other witnesses of Jesus' earthly ministry who constituted the earliest Christ-followers. Certainly, a natural reading of Galatians 1.15–24 would suggest that Paul was something of a loner, and although receptive to having a travelling partner, the apostle took the lead in terms of establishing communities of Christ-believers and inculcating theological and ethical

praxis. He also appears, for some reason, not to want to build upon another's foundation (Rom 15.20), despite the obvious paradigm of Jesus building upon the work of John the Baptist.

For modern commentators, Paul also appears to have lost the critical debate at Antioch, so, somehow, there was perhaps concern by some in Jerusalem that Paul was unpredictable or unstable; perhaps a veritable 'loose cannon' (see Nanos 2002)? Indeed, Paul's argument outlined in Galatians may have been symptomatic of his lack of clarity wherein his climatic statement on circumcision and the law in 5.3 ("Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law"), is rhetorically charged and not wholly true. Certainly, it cannot have been true of Abraham whom Paul frequently cites. If the Jerusalem pillars or others had heard or read such injunctions, then it is easy to see how Paul's ministry was something of a concern for those within the early Christ-movement and certainly for those without (cf. Acts 21.20–24).

As is well known, and noted above, the relationship between Paul's letters and the book of Acts is also problematic.¹⁰ In the letters why do we hear nothing of key figures and events: the proconsul Sergius Paulus on Cyprus; the riot in Ephesus; Paul's arrest in Jerusalem and the plot to kill him; his trials and defence before the governors Felix and Festus and King Agrippa; his arrival and time in Rome; or the many miracles and conversions along the way?¹¹ It is quite a remarkable list, all missing from Paul's hand. This is especially curious when his letters do assert and catalogue his hardships during his missionary travels, accentuating his apostolic credentials within a dying-in-Christ motif.¹² Would not a reminder to his readers that he has defended the gospel, standing before kings, governors, and others, and suffered for doing so, not accentuate his claims? And while the book of Acts certainly highlights times of testing for Paul, there is nothing of famine, nakedness, danger of the sword, a fivefold Jewish lashing, a threefold beating by rods, a threefold shipwrecking, or danger of bandits, etc.

So, does Paul accentuate (or even exaggerate) his hardship catalogue for his readers in order to compare himself either with Hellenistic moralists who saw them as tests of character and models of endurance, or with Jewish apocalyptic traditions of eschatological hardship and woe (see Glancy 2004)? And could this be the reason why his various communities scattered around the Mediterranean appear unsure of Paul, and disregard him, in favour of others, whatever their 'apostolic' credentials.¹³ What is also of interest is that Paul frequently conjoins comments about pain and suffering with religious ecstatic experiences (2 Cor 3–4 with 4.7–12; 6.3–10; Rom 8.19–22 with 35–36); and any attempt to understand Paul must also be cognizant of the fact that he stands within the traditions of early Jewish mysticism as an apocalyptic visionary, prone to what can be best described as an altered state of consciousness (ASC).¹⁴ This is especially true of the narrative of Paul's vision of his heavenly journey in 2 Cor 12 which is integrated into the most extensive *peristasis* catalogue of the Pauline corpus (11.21b–12.10).

Here, his mystical heavenly ascent amidst wondrous sounds and visions ultimately culminated in his thorn in the flesh.¹⁵ And this may also illuminate a curious incident in Acts 16 where Paul, following his leading by the ‘spirit of Jesus’ and his vision of a man of Macedonia (Acts 16.7–10), apparently allows himself to be severely flogged and imprisoned rather than ameliorating such punishment by declaring himself to be a Roman citizen (cf. 22.29).

Certainly, Paul’s rapture highlights his tendency towards altered states of consciousness. The plurality of *visions* and *revelations* in 1 Cor 12.1 and the *abundance* of revelations in 12.7 (RSV) indicate multiple experiences outside of that narrated here.¹⁶ Paul may well have been a practitioner of particular rituals and of an ascetic lifestyle which helped induce such visions (e.g., 1 Cor 9.24–27; Acts 22.17).¹⁷ Indeed, Paul actually adumbrates a high level of apostolic authority from the ability to experience transcendent visions, and it is unsurprising that the narrative of 12.1–6 is located within the larger discourse of 11.16–12.10 which has the singular focus of the reasons for Paul’s opportunities to boast. From an analysis of 12.1–6, C.R.A. Morray-Jones claims that such experiences were, “a central feature of Paul’s experience and self-understanding. Since this is so, there are no grounds for the assumption that his visions were purely spontaneous, involuntary events; it is quite probable that they were induced by the use of mystical techniques” (1993: 283).¹⁸ Interestingly, Coleen Shantz, in her analysis of the link between peristasis catalogues and authority, notes, “Frequently, ecstatic religious behaviour is interpreted as a means to manipulate the larger social group within which it is practised—it is decoded as a means to gain power, resources, or other privilege” (2008: 194).¹⁹ One of the seminal works on Paul and ASCs is that of Alan Segal (1990), who argues that the very basis of Paul’s theology stems from his conversion experience and his mystical ascension(s), and that his visionary experience of the risen Christ informs his understanding of the future resurrection experience (1990: 69; 2004: 417). Building upon Segal’s thesis, C.D. Elledge goes on to assert that, “Paul’s own mystical-apocalyptic state of consciousness already inwardly anticipated and participated in the ultimate transformation of the body into the spiritual image of the risen Christ” (2011: 401).

Yet, within the early Christ-movement, ASCs are not peculiar to Paul. They are also predicated of Peter, James, and John during the supernatural transfiguration of Jesus outlined in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew (an incident which Paul appears to be unaware of), and Peter is also said to experience visions while in a trance in Acts 10–11, and a vision of an angel in Acts 12.9. Ananias and Paul have experiences of visions before the divine healing of Paul in Damascus, and Paul has a further vision of the lord in Acts 18.8. Hence, it would appear that the significant ‘pillars’ of the nascent Christ-movement, Paul included, all exhibit similar characteristics of having experiences of altered states of consciousness and of visions.²⁰ Following Shantz, one could wonder if the tension between Paul and others related to competition over ASCs and the accruelement of prestige, authority, and power. In an earlier analysis, William Walker notes that disputes over appearance

traditions and authority within the nascent Christ-movement were similar to disputes over ancient Israelite theophany traditions in the legitimizations of places of worship. In a similar way, these christophany traditions were used to legitimate particular individuals and groups (1969: 162).

AFTERLIFE IN PAUL

So how does the above, and particularly with respect to previous chapters, comport with Paul's understanding of the afterlife? Certainly, a natural corollary of the above would be that we have to tread carefully, remembering that Paul may not articulate himself very well, nor understand precisely the concerns of his conversation-partners (nor may he articulate the thoughts or concerns of such partners in an adequate way).²¹

As Paul claims that he is a Pharisee (Phil 3.5), a comparison of Pauline thought with that of Josephus is certainly fruitful. Whether Josephus was actually a Pharisee or not is a moot point (Mason 1989), but even if not, he asserts that he has studied first-century CE Pharisaism, had, for a time, lived his life by the rules of Pharisaism, and he provides us with an overview of their thoughts on the afterlife (*Life* 10–12, 21; *War* 2.162–64; *Ant.* 18.12–17; and see Endsjø 2009: 146). Still, care needs to be taken as to whether he presents an accurate reflection of their views and the degree to which he stylizes them with a view to his audience.²²

As noted above, for Josephus, Pharisaic thought envisions that the soul survives death and that the soul of the righteous is allotted a temporary resting place in heaven (*Ant.* 18.14; *War* 3.374). At the end of the ages this then enters a new habitation: a new *and different* chaste body (*War* 2.163). If Paul held to the same doctrine we could posit that, in his Christ-believing state, he construed Jesus' death being followed by the raising of his soul into heaven, like the souls of some of the Hebrew patriarchs noted in Chapter 3.²³ The stark difference between Paul and Josephus, and the driving impetus for Paul following his revelatory experience, is his claim that the transformed and glorified Christ has returned from heaven to reveal himself in a dramatic christophany (and by which Paul declares him to be Israel's messiah).²⁴ This is why the apostle can repeatedly depict the transformed Jesus in terms of the first-fruits (Rom 8.23; 1 Cor 15.20, 23), and the Spirit as a pledge or guarantee of what is to come for the righteous (2 Cor 1.22, 55; Eph 1.14). It is an image of the splendour awaiting believers.

In 1 Corinthians 15, describing this revelatory christophany Paul uses the term ὥφθη (the aorist passive of ὀράω), which almost exclusively denotes 'exceptional supernatural apparitions.'²⁵ And he uses the same verb of all the other encounters of the risen Christ in the chapter,

v.5 he appeared (ὥφθη) to Cephas, then to the twelve.

v.6 After that he appeared (ὥφθη) to more than five hundred . . .

- v.7 then he appeared (ὤφθη) to James, then to all the apostles;
 v.8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared (ὤφθη) to me also.

The verb is found in a wide range of ancient literature: the LXX (including the Apocrypha);²⁶ Philo;²⁷ the Apostolic Fathers;²⁸ and numerous Greco-Roman texts.²⁹ In the New Testament, eighteen of its nineteen occurrences are of supernatural appearances. These include various angelic appearances;³⁰ the presence of Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration;³¹ tongues of fire;³² Paul's vision of a man from Macedonia;³³ supernatural appearances of the heavenly Ark of the Covenant, a great red dragon, and a woman clothed with the sun;³⁴ and appearances of God or the risen Christ.³⁵ Josephus, likewise, uses the verb in describing supernatural events: the dramatic appearance of the goddess Isis; the supernatural opening of huge Temple doors;³⁶ supernatural events that take place before large numbers of people, such as the miraculous appearance of chariots and troops in armour running around in the clouds over Israel,³⁷ and a huge star resembling a sword which stood over Jerusalem.³⁸ The appearance to five-hundred mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15.6 would fall into this same category (and employs the same verb). Hence, we could assert that Paul knows only of the resurrected Christ as christophany *and* that he asserts that all other experiences are likewise!³⁹ Yet, was Paul's revelatory vision that of the glorified soul of Christ or is this a proleptic example of Josephus' *end of the ages* being for Paul the *here and now*? That is, did Paul think that the christophany included Josephus' new *and different* chaste body?⁴⁰ And does this form the origin of Paul's imminent eschatology? Paul's writings demonstrate that he is struggling to make sense of it all.⁴¹

Further, the tradition history of this list of visions in 1 Cor 15 is uncertain and problematic in numerous ways; certainly, the dating is in doubt for its origins may go back two decades before its use here. Neither can we ascertain how much of the list Paul received and the extent to which he made additions. Without doubt the original list did not include reference to Paul himself (v. 8), and may have well have ended at v. 4. The note of an appearance to the five-hundred may well be a later addition since the line breaks the formal structure. Robert Price asks why this significant piece of information is wholly absent from the Gospel traditions and suggests that it is a later apocryphal legend analogous to stories prevalent in the New Testament Apocrypha (e.g., the Acts of Pilate). Indeed, he argues that the entire section could be a scribal interpolation; a later hand feeling that he could "strengthen the argument of the chapter as a whole by prefacing it with a list of 'evidences for the resurrection'" (2005: 91).

Before looking further at the key text of 1 Corinthians 15.35–58, there is the question of the afterlife narrative of 1 Thessalonians, probably Paul's earliest extant letter. Here we see that following Paul's visit and teaching, the Thessalonians are confused about the nature of the afterlife, and it would appear to be Paul's lack of specific detail that lay at the root of the

problem. From 1 Thessalonians 4 it is clear that his earliest instruction did not include details on the general resurrection of believers nor the nature of post-mortem existence.⁴² The Thessalonian believers appear to be still fully immersed in their cultural milieu whereby they perceive the salvific effects of their new-found faith to be beneficial only for the living, and to this end they are grieving for departed friends “. . . as others do who have no hope” (1 Thess 4:13). Paul chides their ignorance (4:13), but it is born out of the lacuna of his own teaching. Certainly, there is doubt as to the precise nature of post-mortem existence and perhaps some believed, as in some aspects of first-century Greco-Roman thought, that there would simply be no such existence (see Eriksson 1998: 238). Indeed, if Paul had spoken of the necessity to wait for ‘enlightenment’ from a divine emissary from heaven (1:10; 4.16a), then for some, their new faith may have seemed little different to other Oriental cults which pervaded the Roman Empire.

Paul’s opening comment in 1 Thessalonians 4.13–18 is of interest, “But *we do not want you to be uninformed* . . . about those who have died.” Does this mean that during his time with the Thessalonians, Paul had neither spoken nor taught about issues of death and the afterlife? If so, given his emphasis on Jesus’ own death and afterlife elsewhere in the corpus, this would be quite unusual. Conversely, if Paul had spoken of such issues, then he did not articulate himself well enough. He goes on to explicate a picture of the end times in 1 Thess 4.16–17:

For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call and with the sound of God’s trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ⁴³ will rise first (ἀναστήσονται). Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

The use of ἀναστήσονται here, and in 4.14, instead of the Pauline ἐγερθήσονται, likely reflects a pre-Pauline tradition (so, Bruce 1982: 111; Wanamaker 1990: 174; cf. 1 Thess 1.10). Indeed, Paul’s general statement on the resurrection here and elsewhere has also been considered as deriving from pre-Pauline formulaic statements, especially in the phrase “[God] raised/raises from the dead” (e.g., 1 Thess 1.10; Rom 4.17; 2 Cor 1.9), and parallels are frequently cited with the second of the Jewish Eighteen Benedictions which derive from the first century BCE (see Lüdemann 2012: 538; Schürer 1979: 2.460):

You live forever and raise the dead . . . you provide for the living and make the dead alive . . . Blessed are you, Lord, who make the dead alive.⁴⁴

Yet, Paul adds further confusion in his assertion that believers will be “snatched away” to be with the Lord (1 Thess 4.17), a verb typically used in the period to describe those carried off by the Greco-Roman gods and made physically immortal.⁴⁵

It is unclear how this picture ties in with Paul's revelatory christophany, or what Paul means by the rising of the dead in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 6.14; 2 Cor 4.14; Rom 6.5). Most probably, this is the rising of the soul as in the Apocalypse of Adam and Eve, Testament of Job, and Pseudo-Phocylides. There is further confusion about the living caught up in the clouds. If Paul means by this the ascent of physical bodies, it would be a unique picture within Second Temple Judaism (and within the New Testament), in which case, one wonders about the tradition history of such a concept. Bruce (1982: 102) suggests that this transformation of the living into a new existence is further clarified by 1 Corinthians 15.50–52 which, of course, would mean that the transformation is out of the 'flesh and blood' of the natural body (and see further below).⁴⁶ Certainly, one way to reconcile Paul's statement in 1 Thess 4 (that the dead are raised), with that of 1 Cor 15.52 (the dead are transformed), is to posit stages in the development of the apostle's thought concerning the nature of the afterlife (so, Moss and Baden 2012: 201).

1 CORINTHIANS 15

As noted in Chapter 1, the recent analysis of physical resurrection within a Greco-Roman context by Dag Endsjø, suggests that Platonic metaphysics were the peculiar study of the few, of an intellectual aristocracy (Chadwick 1980: xi), and that Greek traditions pre-Plato saw immortality to have been inseparably tied to an incorruptible body. He argues that the Corinthians would have been brought up with stories of those who had died and were subsequently resurrected:

The mythical corpus of which the Corinthians would have been aware often speaks of people who died and were resurrected. The notion of an immortalized body was not unknown to the Greeks . . . The idea that the soul was immortal independently of the body appears to be originally unknown to the Greeks. Whenever someone in the Greek tradition was physically resurrected from the dead, we always find absolute bodily continuity.

(Endsjø 2008: 419, 429, 433)

As we saw in Chapter 1, Endsjø goes on to note that Greeks equated immortality only with a continuous physical existence and that the eternal existence of bodiless souls was not the same as 'immortality' nor did it mean an eternal *life* of the soul. It simply equalled an everlasting existence as a dead soul. Endsjø concludes that for the Greeks, originally, immortality and eternal life always meant an endless existence of both body and soul (2008: 428). At the same time, from Chapters 3–4, we noted the emphasis within Second Temple Jewish texts on the afterlife of the soul alone and in our

prolegomena to this chapter, that Paul construes his revelatory experience of the risen Christ as a glorified spiritual entity.

Returning to 1 Corinthians 15, much of what we see there now makes sense: Paul and the majority of the Greeks and Romans in the Corinthian community have differing conceptual frameworks of the afterlife and, although employing similar terminology, are largely talking past each other. And that this is the case despite Paul's long tenure in Corinth further points to an inherent problem in his teaching itself, perhaps together with confusion amongst neophyte Christ-believers over certain Gospel traditions (Nickelsburg 2006: 246–47).⁴⁷ Such a view also ameliorates the apparent inconsistency in Paul's argument whereby he appears to maintain that the Corinthians denied some form of 'resurrection' yet elsewhere concedes that they acknowledge it (vv. 2, 11, and the argument of vv. 13–19). So, while Paul explains that he handed on (παράδιδωμι) to the Corinthians the message that Christ died and was raised (1 Cor 15.1–3), he provides no precise detail of this tradition, and, as it stands, such a simplistic and minimal statement is likely to have been received by the Corinthians as pointing to the physical immortalization and deification of Christ similar to the many renowned heroes of Greco-Roman tradition. Yet, these same traditions do not include a general resurrection of the shades from Sheol which Paul, from the perspective of the Corinthians, also appears to be asserting in 15.12–19; that is, the physical immortalization and deification of Christ is simply the first-fruits of a general resurrection of all believers (15.20–28).⁴⁸

For the Corinthians this is simply confusing and how this may work too obtuse and enigmatic: were they all to be physically immortalized and deified? And from their perspective, Paul's apparent aversion to language of the *body* in this section perhaps problematizes the issue further. As Tuckett observes,

There is virtually nothing in the primitive kerygma cited by Paul, or in Paul's exposition of this in 1 Cor 15.1–11, explicitly about Jesus' *bodily resurrection*. The verb "he was raised" occurs only once (in v. 4) and neither the word σώμα nor any cognate word is used at all in the passage. (1996: 255)⁴⁹

In this sense, this section of 1 Corinthians 15 has little to do with a Corinthian objection to the materialistic notion of a *bodily* resurrection over against a belief in the immortal soul, as many scholars propose.⁵⁰

As we proceed to 15.35ff., Paul presents further clarification of the dispute when he allows his initial rhetorical question in the text ("How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?") to be developed by an imaginary interlocutor, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?"⁵¹ Together, such statements appear to come to the central context of the problem—the issue of the *body* involved in such resurrection. Behind the Corinthian interlocutor's question, "with what *kind of*

body do [the dead] come?” may be a simple question related to the nature of the resurrection body within the context of traditional Greek mythology; that is, whether this new body will be like that of the gods (e.g., strong, beautiful etc.; so Songe-Møller 2009: 113, 115). Further, that the masses would receive physical immortalization (perhaps with deification also), is undoubtedly a surprise for the Corinthians, for such concepts were traditionally for the heroes alone.

The puzzlement is answered only by Paul’s sharp retort, ἄφρων, “Fool!” He continues in v. 36 to assert that the afterlife is prefaced by the death and burial of the physical body; yet, that he is struggling to articulate the transition of life to afterlife is evident in the twisting changing similes that follow: that of seed gives way to flesh, then to heavenly bodies, finally to glory (vv. 37–41), before returning to his point of origin, the resurrection of the dead in v. 42. The point of the seed metaphor is to emphasize discontinuity in the sharp transition of form between its sowing (a form of death) and later emergence from the soil: God provides a new form (σῶμα) in place of the original. So, too, he asserts that there can be distinctions and differences between types of ‘flesh’ and types of ‘body.’⁵² Read from a perspective of Greco-Roman thought on the afterlife outlined in Chapter 1, this section is perfectly understandable as the physical immortalization and deification of Christ: the physical earthly body of Christ has died and been buried (15.37) after which it is immortalized (by God), suitable for a glorified heavenly existence (15.38, 40). What follows is also entirely understandable from the Corinthians’ conceptual understanding of afterlife (vv. 42–43):

It is sown perishable, raised imperishable
Sown in dishonour, raised in glory
Sown in weakness, raised in power.

Yet, for the Corinthians, confusion arises from his concluding antithesis, ‘It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body’ (v. 44), and is further problematized when Paul proceeds to provide an account of Adam, all of which is perfectly aligned with Second Temple Jewish texts on emphasizing the afterlife of the soul (vv. 45–49):

The first man, Adam, became a living being. The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

The crux of the confusion between the two parties is on the concept of a ‘spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν),’ for Paul employs the term σῶμα

without actually defining what is meant. The Corinthians hear this as physical immortalization, whilst Paul does not.

Certainly, to use the same noun for *both* the flesh-and-blood earthly matter *and* the new post-mortem life may be considered, at the very least, unfortunate, especially as he will go on to say explicitly that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (15.50).⁵³ Paul, it seems, is attempting to describe some new type of form capable of housing the spirit. It is language which is Paul's stumbling block: how best to describe this new nature which will house the glorified soul/spirit. If Paul's revelatory experience of Christ was in any way anthropomorphic then the use of σῶμα may be one of Paul's options; that is, it is some form of *somatic* entity which houses the soul/spirit, although such terminology will, as here, cause confusion. As he notes in 15.49, "Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly." Although one can follow his argument in 1 Corinthians 15, his use of σῶμα in this context is problematic for his Corinthian community.⁵⁴

Finally, in 15.50, we arrive at the point to which Paul was, perhaps unsuccessfully driving, "What I am saying brothers and sisters is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." Yet, from a Greco-Roman perspective the route here has been tortuous and unconvincing: is there going to be physical immortalization or not? It appears 'yes,' in 15.38, 40, 44; but 'no,' in 15.50. And what follows (15.52–53) exacerbates the confusion, as this is entirely what would be expected from a Greco-Roman tradition:

the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this *mortal* will have put on *immortality*, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory".

(italics mine)

Hence, it is Paul's σῶμα language which sows the seeds of misunderstanding. For Hans Conzelmann, *soma* here means not 'body' but the new life as a new creation (1975: 281), and Christian Wolff, too, sees it as an entirely new entity (1996: 404–405).⁵⁵ C.H. Dodd remarks, "By 'body' Paul does not mean anything material, but the organic principle which makes a man a self-identical individual, persisting through all changes in the 'substance' through which he realizes himself, whether material or non-material" (1932: 125). Yet, one must doubt that the Corinthians would have understood or followed the subtleties of Paul's argument in this way. Further, according to the book of Acts, what he experienced as dramatic revelation, as noted above, was the new post-mortem existence of Christ in a form of christophanic glory similar to that noted, on occasion, in the Hebrew Bible of Yahweh of which no author uses the term 'body.'⁵⁶ So, what he appears to mean

in terms of post-mortem existence was actually a new entity for which he (confusingly) uses the term ‘body’ with all its encumbrances of natural flesh and blood. Elsewhere, of course, Paul can describe the antithesis of spirit and flesh in such a way as to hope for the deliverance of the flesh in a way which actually excludes the possibility of a resurrection of the flesh: in 1 Cor 6.13, God will destroy both food *and the stomach* (Bynum 1995: 4; Grant 1948: 124), and note the antitheses of Romans 7–8. Yet, here he is happy to employ the language of σῶμα.⁵⁷

1 Cor 15.51–53 confirms the above thoughts on the resurrection scenario of 1 Thess 4.16–17,

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Those alive at the parousia (the Last Trumpet), including the apostle, will be changed: the perishable, mortal body will be transformed into an immortal, imperishable form—a transformation that will mean the certain end of perishable, fleshly body. But this transformative death does not constitute a defeat, it is a transformation into victory for the new ‘form’ that is to come (15.54–55). Whether this was understood, or accepted, by the Corinthians is unclear. Elsewhere in the Pauline corpus, *flesh* (σάρξ) has negative connotations which are frequently connected with sin (Rom 7.18, 25; 8:8; Hällström 1988: 10); as such, the incarnation of Christ was made only in the *likeness* of sinful flesh (Rom 8.3; 1.3; Col 2.11; Endsjo 2009: 141–42). In Philippians too, Paul asserts that God, “will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory” (3.21), and in Colossians, that he will “remove the body of the flesh” (2.11).

C.D. Elledge, commenting on Paul’s phrase “spiritual bodies” has recently noted, “This problematic term is laced with both brilliance and mischief. It stands as a brilliant balance of both continuity and discontinuity in the portrayal of the future life . . . One senses, however, that Paul’s paradoxical cleverness probably confused the Corinthians even more than they already had been” (2006: 44). That Paul has caused confusion is clear; whether it is through “brilliance and mischief” is to be doubted. Rather, it presents the apostle struggling to understand and articulate the precise nature of afterlife experience. Indeed, one may posit that Paul caused confusion both to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians due to ambiguity and terminological inaccuracy. It is unsurprising, then, that he has to clarify his thoughts, yet again, in 2 Corinthians.

It is here, finally, in 2 Corinthians 5, where we find perhaps his clearest yet nuanced expression on the afterlife, and unsurprisingly he replaces his earlier σῶμα-language for a series of building metaphors:

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in

the heavens. For indeed in this [house] we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.
(2 Cor 5.1–5)⁵⁸

At the end of the age, when there is a new or re-creation, the righteous will be transformed and will have some kind of new existence which Paul describes as a dwelling from heaven, a house/building from God eternal in the heavens. This stands in correlation with Josephus' chaste body/new habitation which could be descriptors of the new afterlife form of Christ that Paul has experienced; in effect, an anthropomorphic entity capable of housing the spirit. Caroline Bynum notes of this section, "2 Cor 5.1–10 may be read as implying that we discard the body when we exchange our earthly clothing or tabernacle for habitation in heaven. Whatever it is that survives in paradise, it is not (according to this interpretation) either accompanied or reclothed by anything physical or material" (1995: 4).⁵⁹ As such, Paul stands in direct continuity with the Second Temple Jewish texts examined above which place the afterlife experience firmly within the realm of the soul. Where he differs, of course, is in his belief that the soul of Christ has been granted an early (and the first) experience of being housed in this new glorified entity.

Elsewhere in 2 Corinthians, Paul speaks of the outer versus the inner nature (1.9; 4.14, 16), and notes, "Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know [Him in this way] no longer" (5.16, NASU). He concludes, "We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (5: 8, 10), by which he assumes that being before the judgement seat is not now in the body. A similar sentiment is found in Philippians, where the apostle notes, "But I am hard-pressed from both [directions], having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for [that] is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake" (1.23–24).

CONCLUSION

Along with the weight of Second Temple Jewish texts discussed above (and especially in Josephus), Paul construes Jesus' death as followed by his soul being raised from the dead and taken up to heaven. What Paul understands by this is never made explicit. It could mean that Jesus' soul descended first

to Sheol (and hence, perhaps pointing to the later traditions of the descent of Christ's *spirit* to the underworld, 1 Pet 3.18; 4.6; cf. Eph 4.9–10), before being raised to the heavenly realm, or it could imply continuity with other Second Temple Jewish texts which suggest an immediate ascent to heaven. In either of these scenarios, the now glorified and resplendent Christ returns from heaven to reveal himself in successive christophanies. Whereas, for Josephus, the soul will 'at the end of the ages' enter a new habitation, for Paul, his revelatory experience is a depiction of the first-fruits; an image of the splendor awaiting believers. At the end of the age, when there is a new or re-creation, the righteous will be transformed and will have some kind of new existence which Paul describes (in 1 Corinthians 15) as a *spiritual* 'body' or, later (2 Corinthians 5), as a dwelling from heaven, a house/building from God.

It is of interest and relevance that neither of the two major Jewish writers of Paul's day, Josephus and Philo, construes the immediate afterlife in terms of the physical body. In some sense, Josephus' chaste body/new habitation can be seen to stand in correlation with the newly transformed form of Christ of which Paul had his revelatory experience. And for Philo, his account of the afterlife of Moses agrees considerably with the perspective of Paul,

when he [Moses] was about to depart from hence to heaven, to take up his abode there, and leaving this mortal life to become immortal, having been summoned by the Father, who now changed him, having previously been a double being, composed of soul and body, into the nature of a single body, transforming him wholly and entirely into a most sun-like mind.

(Mos. 2.288)⁶⁰

In this sense, Paul's emphasis on the raising up of some form of 'spiritual' entity is a concept close to that found in Enoch and Daniel and in the sense that the physical body is only of secondary importance (if that); Paul appears to have little interest in what happened to Jesus' post-crucifixion body and may have been unconcerned if his remains had been found. This would simply have been the bare seed that was sown: the husk is sloughed off when what is within emerges above the soil (see Collins 2002: 373). Indeed, perhaps the seed metaphor actually derives from the knowledge that Jesus' physical body was 'sown' in the earth. Further, the ambiguity found in Paul is perhaps best summed up by Peter Carnley when he notes,

It is clear that Paul is struggling imaginatively to explain the nature of the resurrection body. This suggests that, whatever his Damascus Road experience was, it was sufficiently ambiguous and unclear as not to be of real help in explaining the detailed nature of the body of the resurrection. The evidence thus leads us back to the view that his initial experiential encounter with the raised Christ was in the nature of some

kind of “heavenly vision.” The fact that the nature of the body of the resurrection seems to have been open to speculation indicates that this was indeed a speculative matter that was brought up rather than settled by the encounter with the raised Jesus on the Damascus road.

(1987: 233)

If this reading of afterlife in Paul is placed in direct continuity with the analysis of Second Temple Judaism made above, then all of this makes perfect sense: a simplistic purview of the resurrection of the newly immortalized physical flesh-and-blood Christ is rejected by Paul and in its place stands a nuanced concept of Christ’s soul now housed within a new glorious entity. Yet, while standing in continuity with post-Biblical Judaism, such a reading also places Paul in tension with other Biblical traditions which assert a resurrection of Jesus’ earthly physical body (particularly the Gospels of Luke and John).⁶¹ An examination of these texts within the context of issues highlighted here will follow, yet it is important to note that for perhaps too long the Pauline texts on the afterlife have been read through the lens of later traditions. In allowing the Pauline texts to speak for themselves this may mean, of course, allowing certain tensions to remain, or of holding less-lightly to later texts and Christian traditions which may influence or even distort our reading of Paul. In short, as James Dunn argued for the Fourth Gospel some years ago, in his essay, ‘Let John be John’ (1983), one could say the same of Paul concerning his understanding of the afterlife: Let Paul be Paul!

NOTES

1. On imminent eschatology, 1 Cor 7.26, 29–31; 1 Thess 4.13–18. On visionary experiences, 1 Cor 15.6; 2 Cor 12; Gal 1.12, 16.
2. See Bruce 1982: 90–91; Longenecker 1990: 29–30; Moo 2013: 99–102.
3. Συνευδοκέω appears to have the sense of an active, rather than just a passive approval (Acts 8.1; 22.20; Rom 1.32; 1 Cor 7.12–13; cf. Luke 11.48). See Haenchen (1971: 293).
4. Acts 7.54–8.1; 9.1–2. One could ask, therefore, if Saul/Paul, even as a young man, was one of those who became furious and gnashed his teeth at Stephen, as well as covering his ears and yelling at the top of his voice.
5. 2 Cor 11.16, 19; 12.6, 11. The adjective ἄφρων employed here, is the same as the noun form used against his Corinthian interlocutors in 1 Cor 15.36 on the issue of the resurrection.
6. On the collection, 2 Cor 8.20 (and wider, 8–9); on his travel plans, 2 Cor 1.15–22.
7. The Corinthians appear to have had a penchant for writing to the apostle seeking advice on a wide range of issues (as 1 Corinthians makes abundantly clear).
8. This is brought out in a number of translations of 5.11: NRSV, “But actually, I wrote to you . . .”; RSV, “But rather I wrote to you . . .”. Although, for Paul, those outside are nevertheless, sexually immoral too (6:10), as well as idolaters, swindlers, and idolaters (6:10); harsh language indeed, even though *he wouldn’t want to judge them* (6:12)!

9. Cf. 2 Cor 11.4, "For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you submit to it readily enough."
10. Commentaries on Acts typically have introductory sections on the issue. Two very useful older studies are Haenchen (1968) and Mattill (1978). The problems in reconciling 1 Thessalonians and Acts 17 are particularly acute.
11. On the historical reliability of Paul's trials before Felix and Festus see Haenchen (1971: 651–66). One could argue that Luke simply wants to get Paul to Rome, and does so in the most imaginative way possible (and note Haenchen's language of Luke's "colourful story," p. 659).
12. E.g., Rom 8.35; 1 Cor 4.9–13; 2 Cor 1.8–11; 4.7–12; 6.3–10; 11.23–29; 12.10; Gal 4.12–16; Phil 1.12–26; 3.7–11; 4.10–13; 1 Thess 2.1–6. See Kruse (1994: 18–20) and the literature cited there.
13. Cf. 1 Cor 1.12; 3.5–6; 16.12; 2 Cor 11; Gal 1.6–9; 2.11–13; 3.1; Phil 1.15–18; 3.2–11.
14. See Collins & Fishbane (1995); DeConick (2006); Elledge (2011); Flannery, Shantz & Werline (2008); Klauck (2000, 2000a) Morray-Jones (1993: 177–217, 265–92); Segal (1997, 2004, 2008).
15. On other ecstatic experiences, see Gal 1.11–17; 1 Cor 9.1; 15.3–8; also, Rom 8; 2 Cor 3–5; and Shantz (2008: 195–96).
16. Paul's use of *ὀρασις* indicates *supernatural* visions and is used elsewhere in the NT in this context (see Louw & Nida *sv*). It, or cognates, are used in a similar context in a range of broader literature (cf., Suetonius, *Claud.* 1; *Vesp.* 7; Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.289; 2.54; Tacitus, *Ann.* 11.21). On the practise of rapture and ascent in the ancient world see Himmelfarb (1995). On Paul as a mystic see Segal (2004: 399–400).
17. Also, Rom 8.26; 1 Cor 14.13–18; Eph 6.18–19; *Acts of Paul* 5, 23; and see Peerbolte (2008: 170); and Glancy (2004), who highlights the significance of the link between trauma and ecstatic experiences.
18. And note the comment by Peerbolte that, "Paul's description places him among apocalypticists who practised ecstasy in a manner that later became very popular in circles of *merkabah mysticism*" (2008: 170).
19. Citing Lewis' landmark study of spirit possession and its instrumental arguments (2003).
20. See especially, De Jonge (2002) who argues that early Christianity was "born from visionary experiences" (35). For the notion that christophanies served to legitimate the authority of those to whom the appearances were said to have occurred see p. 42, fn. 21 and the literature cited there, and Goulder (2000: 93–5).
21. See Wedderburn (1981: 229). Tuckett (1996: 247–48), reminds us that we only have Paul's side of the argument and wonders whether Paul really understood the Corinthian position or, indeed, whether he deliberately misrepresents them. He correctly notes that if Paul had misunderstood the Corinthians, then there is virtually no control at all in attempting to reconstruct the Corinthian position (252).
22. Alan Segal makes the pertinent point, "Josephus on the pharisaic doctrine of afterlife: Josephus described the Pharisees as envisioning another, different kind of body for imperishable souls. He meant that the Pharisees saw the earthly body as corruptible and that the righteous would receive a new, incorruptible body. This is exactly what Paul says in 1 Cor 15" (2004: 381).
23. This could possibly take place via Sheol (as later New Testament and early Christian literature attest, Acts 2.31; Eph 4.9; 1 Pet 3.18–20; 4.6; Apostles Creed).

24. For Acts, of course, this experience occurs on the road towards Damascus (Acts 9, 22, 26).
25. BAGD, 577–78; Grimm-Thayer, 451–52. See Evans (1970: 64–5); De Jonge (2002: 43–5); Lüdemann (1994: 48–50); Scott (2008: 97–8). Scott notes that for the first forty years of Christianity the verbs ὥφθη in 1 Corinthians and ἀποκάλυψις in Galatians are basically the only ways the NT announce Jesus' appearances, and that these in no way entail that the disciples visually sighted a physical or supernatural body (97).
26. Tobit 12.22; 2 Macc 2.8; 3.25; Bar 3.38.
27. *Det.* 1.159; *Mut.* 1.1, 15; *Abr.* 1.77 (the appearance of God to Abraham).
28. *Herm. Vis.* 3.10.3; 3.11.2 (the appearance of a vision: a woman sitting in a chair); 3.10.7 (the supernatural appearance of a young man).
29. See, BAGD, 577–78; Grimm-Thayer, 451–52.
30. Luke 1.11; 22.43; Acts 7.30, 35;
31. Mark 9.4; Matt 17.3; Luke 9.31.
32. Acts 2.3.
33. Acts 16.9.
34. Rev 11.19; 12.1, 3.
35. Luke 24.34; Acts 7.2; Acts 13.31; Heb 9.28; 1 Tim 3.16, and the various accounts of Paul's encounter with the risen Christ by Luke. The only clear non-supernatural use of the verb in the NT is in Acts 7.26 where Luke narrates the appearance of Moses to two fighting Israelites (Exod 2.13).
36. *War* 6.293; *C. Ap.* 1.289.
37. *War* 6.296–98.
38. *War* 6.290. Other examples of supernatural events before large groups include a great light which appeared at the Feast of Unleavened Bread at the ninth hour of the night, shining so brightly it appeared to be daylight, and lasted 30 minutes (*War* 6.290); in the midst of the court of the temple a cow brought for sacrifice gave birth to a lamb (*War* 6.292); and the appearance of horsemen and “two young men . . . remarkably strong, gloriously beautiful and splendidly dressed” who attacked Heliodorus for stealing the Temple funds (2 Macc 3.22–28).
39. Paul notes in Galatians 1–2 that he met Peter, James, John, and many other members of the Jerusalem community, so, presumably, in employing ὥφθη for all of these appearances, he is making a clear and informed assertion of the nature of the revelation of the risen Christ. Collins notes of the verb that such language, as a transcendent “manifestation of the divine, did not imply physical sight” (1999: 535; cf. Thiselton 2000: 1198–200).
40. As an aside, no-one has yet linked this idea to the question of why the disciples failed to recognize Jesus during successive post-mortem appearances (Matt 28.17; Luke 24.13ff.; 24.37–39; John 20.14; 21.4).
41. See Engberg-Pedersen (2009: 132), who notes the same struggle. Lüdemann asserts that this definitely *not* a physical appearance (1994: 33, 50–54).
42. On 1 Thessalonians, Wright (2003: 213–19).
43. There is a textual variant with this phrase. The majority have οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν Χριστῷ; F G* have οἱ νεκροὶ οἱ ἐν Χριστῷ.
44. See Lüdemann (2012: 538); Schürer (1979: 2.460).
45. Endsjo (2009: 152); and cf. 1 Cor 15.51–52. Paul's use of ἀρπάζω typically has connotations of the supernatural, 2 Cor 12.2, 4; as it does elsewhere, Matt 13.19; John 10.28–29; Acts 8.39; Jude 23; Rev 12.5.
46. Elsewhere in the genuine Pauline literature the verb is used at Rom 15.12 and 1 Cor 10.7, neither of which refers to resurrection. It is only found at Eph 5.14 where it is a citation of Isa 26.19.
47. On the general structure of 1 Cor 15, see Usami (1976: 473–79).

48. As Endsjø notes, the Corinthians readily accepted that Christ had been raised from the dead, but it was the concept of a future mass resurrection that was inconceivable (2009: 148).
49. On σώμα see Thrall (2002).
50. See Tuckett (1996: 253), and the long list of scholars noted there who support such a claim.
51. Sider (1975: 429) maintains, with the support of linguistic data that a better translation would be, "Is it possible that the dead are raised?"
52. Paul is here employing σώμα within recognized ancient categories of plant life or heavenly forms. BADG *sv*; LSJ *sv*.
53. The same tension is noted by Barclay (1996: 17), who writes, "There are real difficulties in grasping Paul's meaning here: he insists that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God' (15.50), but retains the term 'body' in the phrase 'spiritual body' (15.44). Interpretation depends on the sense of the term *soma* which normally has physical connotations but could be used in this context in a weaker sense." For a survey of texts see Perkins (1984). On this verse, see also, Jeremias (1955), but also the critique of Jeremias in Usami (1976: 489ff.) and Sider (1975).
54. And, it seems, for modern translators, for it is interesting that both the NASU and NRSV translations insert the English 'body' even when absent in the Greek: the NASU at 15.42 (It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body); and the NRSV at 15.53–54 (For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled . . .).
55. Conversely, Thiselton (2000: 1269), wanting to hold onto the σώμα language, employs the phrase, "super-earthly bodies." Interestingly, Hays claims that Paul consciously extends the normal meaning of body because the context makes quite clear how this extended meaning is to be understood (1997: 271). Hays fails to appreciate that it was *not* understood by the Corinthians!
56. Although theophanies in the Hebrew Bible can be described in anthropomorphic terms (Gen 32.28–30), they are normally described in terms of the supra-natural (Exod 13.21–22; 24.9–11; Judg 13.21–22; Isa 6.1).
57. See esp. Rom 7.24; 8.11.
58. Paul will employ σώμα in vv. 6 and 8, but here the sense is unambiguously a this worldly flesh-and-blood body. On Paul's metaphors here see Roetzel (1992).
59. Cf. Thrall (2002: 291), who writing of the "inner man" of 2 Cor 4.16–17 notes, "The inner man could be the 'self' that passes from the body of flesh to the body of resurrection."
60. Cf. 2 Enoch 22.8–10; 1 Cor 15.51.
61. Cf., Grant (1948: 125), "The earliest Christianity understood resurrection in the spirit. Only as controversy develops does it become fleshly. 1 Cor 15.3 shows no suggestion of a fleshly resurrection (confirmed in 15.45; cf. 2 Cor 3.17; Rom 8.9–11). Mark's conception of resurrection cannot have been very different from the transfiguration." And see Mark 9.6 with 16.8.

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6 The Priority of the Body

Post-Mortem Existence in the Later New Testament

It will be useful to summarize the salient points from the previous chapter before proceeding to an analysis of the Gospels and the later traditions of the New Testament. As part of his polemic against the Corinthians, and to add weight to his assertion of apostolic authority, Paul insists that he is one of many indisputable witnesses to the resurrected Christ (1 Cor 15.3–8). His personal revelation of ‘seeing the lord,’ was of a newly constituted ‘spiritual’ entity (15.44), now housed in a ‘dwelling from heaven’ (2 Cor 5.1–4), and distinct from the flesh and blood earthly body. Only in this new form is it capable of inheriting the kingdom of God (15.50; see Riley 1995: 8). Paul’s revelatory christophany, standing in continuity with other post-resurrection appearances, leaves the physical body of Christ to one side, which, hence, does not feature in any of Paul’s statements on the afterlife. Yet, his assumption that the body of Christ is left to decay also offers consolation to those departed Christ-believers whose own bodies would be clearly recognized to be decomposing in their own tombs or elsewhere. Consequently, there is hope for believers in the continuity and parallel model of the Christ-event: the transformation and glorification of Christ’s soul is the proleptic event of their own glory to come (see Pannenberg 1996: 68).

AFTERLIFE IN THE GOSPELS

As we turn to a critical analysis of various aspects of the gospel passion and resurrection narratives, there is the curious conundrum that Paul does not appear to have heard of salient features of the Easter stories. This is articulated well by Roy Hoover:

[Paul] tells us that he spent two weeks as Simon Peter’s houseguest in Jerusalem just three years after his conversion and calling (Gal 1.18), probably less than five years after Jesus’ death. If the amazing stories about an angel or two loitering in or near Jesus’ re-opened and empty tomb early on that Sunday morning were literally true, Peter would surely have known about them. Paul in 1 Cor 15 makes no mention of

having received the Easter stories the gospel authors tell. Nowhere in any of his letters does Paul ever mention an empty tomb story. It seems reasonable to infer from this that Peter did not report [such stories] because Peter had never heard those stories either.

(2008: 82)

The absence of many of the gospel traditions from the letters of Paul (especially that of 1 Cor 15) is striking, and a comparison of Paul's account with the gospel passion narratives is also problematic on a number of other grounds. I put aside questions related to the empty tomb tradition and to the raising on the third day (1 Cor 15.4), which goes against Jesus' repeated injunctions in Matthew that the *only* sign granted to this generation would be the sign of Jonah (1.17 LXX; 2.1 HB), that the Son of Man would be in the grave three days and, *specifically*, three nights (Matt 12.39–40; cf. 16.4).¹ This itself stands against other Gospel traditions (in Mark 16.2; John 20.1; and elsewhere in Matthew) that Jesus was in the tomb only two nights.² Paul's understanding that the resurrected Christ appeared to Peter (1 Cor 15.5) also stands in tension with the Gospels. Mark has no separate resurrection account to Peter, although the scribal insertion of the longer ending to Mark has the risen Jesus appear to the eleven as they later sat at table (cf. Mark 16.14). Matthew, too, has no separate resurrection to Peter, who sees him in Galilee with the eleven (Matt 28.16ff.). Luke 24.34 notes that the risen lord had appeared to Peter, but provides no details. Finally, John also has no separate resurrection account to Peter, who sees Jesus only alongside the other disciples on two different occasions (John 20.19; 21.15–22).

There is also the conundrum of *the twelve* in 1 Cor 15.5, for all three Synoptics stress that Jesus appeared to the *eleven* (Mark 16.14; Matt 28.16; Luke 24.9, 33). The Western reading has 'eleven' in place of 'twelve' and, since Judas was no longer present, the Church Fathers speculated that the twelve must have included Matthias (e.g., Origen, Chrysostom, Eusebius, Theophylact, Photius). Although, curiously, Metzger regards this as simply a "pedantic" preoccupation with numbers, it raises a number of important issues. Paul uses the term *twelve* only here, normally preferring the term *apostles*, which may confirm a pre-Pauline tradition;³ and the choosing of Matthias to replace Judas occurs only *after* the ascension according to Acts. If the twelve here does include Matthias and follows the ascension, there is then a further question over the appearances to the five-hundred, James, and the apostles, in that these may have been similar to the appearance to Paul (i.e., a christophany). As William Alston notes, "If all the appearances were like Paul's Damascus Road experience [. . .] then the Gospel stories of encounters with a risen Jesus who possesses a visible and tangible quasi-human body are seriously misleading" (1997: 160).

Other additional points of interest would be that Paul has no mention of any women in his resurrection framework, whereas Mark tells us that the risen Jesus *first* appeared to Mary Magdalene (16.9); Matthew has the

appearance to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (28.9); and John, like Mark, has an appearance to Mary alone (20.14). Finally, the Judas tradition is, of course, different in Matthew (where Judas returns the money and hangs himself, 27.1–10), and Luke (where he buys a field with the money, Acts 1.18ff.).

In comparing Paul's resurrection accounts—which appear to have no interest in detailing the restoration of Jesus' corpse—with that of Mark, we see an interesting overlap, for Mark, too, provides no account of the resurrected body. What we find in Mark is Jesus' statement that those who rise from the dead are like the angels in heaven (Mark 12.25), together with a cryptic saying that those (patriarchs) who do rise from the dead are not 'the dead' but are 'the living' (12.26–27). Hence, for Mark, the patriarchs are alive; but in what sense? Surely, their bodies were seen to die and be buried, with the assumption that they would then decay (Gen 25.8; 35.29; 49.33–50.14). So, what then does this make of the need for any kind of physically resurrected body if the patriarchs are alive with God without it (Evans 1970: 32)? Hence, Mark's framework of resurrection belief could well parallel that of Paul in that what is raised to be with God is the soul alone, especially as the Markan text notes the figure of Abraham in the context of the afterlife (12.26; and cf. the Testament of Abraham noted in Chapter 3 in which the body of Abraham is buried and his soul ascends to heaven).

Elsewhere, Mark has the disciples questioning among themselves, "what this rising from the dead could mean" (9.9), a passage which both Matthew and Luke omit.⁴ And there is the cryptic tale that the miraculous power of Jesus' early ministry is associated with John the Baptist and his having been raised from the dead (Mark 6.14, 16). This cannot be associated with the Baptist's literal physical resurrection as the traditions concur that he was beheaded and buried (Mark 6.14–27; Matt 14.1–12; Luke 9.7–9), and Herod surely knew or had reports that this was a different physical 'person.'⁵ Hence, the concern of Herod Antipas who worries that John the Baptist has risen from the dead, is best explained by belief in some form of metempsychosis or that the 'power' of the Baptist had passed over to Jesus (Mark 6.14, 16).

So, what did the Markan Jesus appear to believe in terms of resurrection? The disciples at many points in Mark's narrative appear to be confused or unsure about the very nature of the resurrection, although the text is written from the later standpoint of belief that, "He has been raised" (Mark 16.6). Yet, what this means for Mark is also unclear. In Jesus' debate with the Sadducees on the nature of the resurrection, the Markan Jesus asserts that those who "rise from the dead [. . .] are like angels in heaven" (12.25), the proof text for which is Exodus 3.6 in which, as noted, the patriarchs are asserted to be resurrected and alive with God (Mark 12.26). In this sense, Jesus articulates the manner of the resurrection (a comparison to angels) and the fact of the resurrection (an appeal to Exod 3.6) very differently to the early Christians, who will later assert both by simply pointing to the risen Christ (Meier 2000: 14).⁶

More generally in Mark, the narrative typically highlights the disciples' *confusion* over the language of resurrection, and particularly over key statements by Jesus (Mark 8.31–32; 9.9–10, 31–32; 16.6; cf. 16.14). So, if the disciples demonstrate a distinct lack of understanding of what 'rising from the dead' actually entailed, does this mean that the language and framework of resurrection actually played no prominent part in Jesus' teaching? Perhaps we could concur with Geza Vermes, when he writes:

The cross and resurrection were unexpected for the apostles. One must conclude that the prediction by Jesus of his death and resurrection and his reference to Biblical prophecies about his suffering and glorification are unauthentic. They appear to represent the tracing back to Jesus of some of the weapons of the apologetical-polemical arsenal of the Jewish-Christian church.

(2008: 68, and likewise, p. 106)⁷

Indeed, what needs to be remembered in this context is that a significant number of extant Gospel narratives of the eyewitness claims of resurrection appearances do not themselves come from actual eyewitnesses. Rather, they derive from the later believing community and, potentially, through the hands of later theological narrators (so, Lüdemann 2012: 540).

When we arrive at Mark's passion narrative proper, there are numerous peculiarities. If the author is correct that, ignoring the command of the angel to go tell the disciples, the women at the tomb instead said nothing to anyone (16.7–8), then there is a problem in how the disciples learned of the resurrection (as noted by Lüdemann 1995: 26). The shorter and longer endings of Mark ameliorate this by contradicting 16.8 and asserting that Mary Magdalene did indeed tell Peter and the disciples. Matthew does likewise (28.8). The Markan narrative may well be drawing upon aspects of 1 Cor 15.5 that a number in the early Jesus movement saw the risen Christ, and formulated an imaginative myth of origins of these first sightings. As Crossan notes, why are there no traces of the passion in early texts such as the Q document, the *Gospel of Thomas*, or the *Epistle of Barnabas*? His conclusion is that the passion narrative was "most likely created by Mark himself" (1995: 26–27; cf. 123, 209). This perhaps explains the unusual ending of Mark at 16.8 and the variant traditions that follow. Did the empty tomb story not exist prior to Mark, and was the assertion of the silence of the women meant to ameliorate the thorny questions of why the tradition was unknown (Collins 1997: 89; Kirby 2005: 240)?

Matthew takes Mark's passion narrative and incorporates subtle editorial features which smooth out some of Mark's rough edges and attempt to add a notion of persuasiveness to Mark's inconsistencies. That said, it is very surprising that Matthew adds so little to Mark's narrative. The comparison of the two is well summed up by C.F. Evans:

[Matthew's] passion narrative is a writing out of Mark's almost word for word, and his few additions are either legendary and apologetic, as

in the suicide of Judas, the dream of Pilate's wife and Pilate's washing of his hands, and the setting of the guard at the tomb, or they interpret the events by a crudely literal version of the supernatural, as in the statement that at the moment of the death of Jesus there was an earthquake, tombs were opened and many bodies of the saintly dead were raised.

(1970: 82)⁸

Evans (1970: 85) goes on to ask why Matthew or the Matthean community did not possess a passion narrative or distinct (separate) traditions of its own and he notes the distinctive apologetic traditions that witness to later Jewish-Christian tensions and controversies. This is seen, for example, in the theft of Jesus' body and the fact that Matthew has the *Roman* guards report the incident at the tomb not to Pilate but to the Jewish authorities, from whom they receive a bribe and the promise of adequate protection (something very unlikely in its historical setting).⁹

Other Matthean additions would include Jesus' appearance to the eleven disciples in Galilee and the curious statement in 28.17 that some of the disciples "doubted" that this was Jesus. From a later perspective, this begins to address the uncertainties of some second and third generation Christ-believers who are immersed in intra-communal conflict within the broader Christ-community (e.g., seen in 1 John) or even within the Matthean community itself (see Stanton 1992). More significantly for our purposes here, we see in Matthew the beginnings of a physically resurrected Jesus to the extent that the women at the tomb are able to grasp Jesus' feet (28.9). Here, Mark's angelophany is turned into not just a christophany, but a revelatory experience of a physically resurrected body (see Funk 2008: 16). The 'physicality' of Jesus' resurrection body will, of course, be later enhanced both in Luke's Gospel and that of John. Yet, for Matthew, even here, his narrative framework begins to break down in the inconsistency of his resurrection narrative: the stone covering the tomb is not absent as in Mark but is rolled back by an angel from heaven to reveal the tomb as empty and the body of Jesus missing. So how, in Matthew's mind, has a physically resurrected Jesus emerged? It is clear at this point that Matthew is furnishing later christological belief and doing so in response to a Jewish polemic still current at the time of writing that Jesus' body was stolen by the disciples (28.11–15; cf. 27.62–66). Yet, in editing the Markan account, it is unclear to what extent additional reliable historical information can be gleaned from Matthew's final two chapters (see Evans 1970: 85).

Whether Matthew made a distinctly conscious attempt to assert and establish a physical resurrected body from the somewhat minor detail of 28.9 is uncertain. The Matthean text seems, rather, to want to ameliorate the problems of Mark's ending in which the women flee the tomb in terror and amazement and said nothing to anyone (Mark 16.8). Matthew, while retaining the fear of the women, adds the detail of their "great joy" and asserts that they ran to tell the disciples (Matt 28.8). What follows (28.9) is a curious pericope, for it immediately stands in tension with the preceding

verses and the proclamation of the angel to the women that, “He [Jesus] is not here [. . .] he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there, you will see him” (28:7). The sudden appearance of Jesus, the women taking hold of his feet, and Jesus’ command for them to go to Galilee (already asserted by the angel) read like a later editorial insertion. The entire incident and speech contained in vv. 9–10 is therefore extraneous:

ANGEL (vv. 5–7): “Do not be afraid, go quickly and tell his disciples [. . .] he is going ahead of you to Galilee, there you will see him.”

JESUS (vv. 9–10): “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Certainly, the omission of vv. 9–10 allows the ending of v. 8 to connect smoothly to v. 11 ([v.8] “So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples [. . .] [v.11] While they were going . . .”). There are also various textual uncertainties surrounding 28.9 which are outlined in the textual apparatus of UBS 3, UBS 4, and NA 27 (and see Metzger 1994: 60).

An additional textual difficulty noted in comparing Matthew and Mark is Matthew’s addition to Mark 16.7, “But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee.” The Markan text is enhanced by Matthew: “Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee” (Matt 28.7). The textual insertion ἀπο τῶν νεκρῶν is weak (rated C in the UBS 3rd edition, although, strangely given no mention in the 4th revised edition), and is absent from many early versions.¹⁰ These numerous textual ambiguities in Matthew may well lead one to argue that, like Mark, Matthew appears largely unconcerned about detailing the explicit nature of Jesus having been resurrected with a physical body. If so, then it is actually Luke who has the first unambiguous and detailed exposition of a physically resurrected body and, certainly, it is the Lukan resurrection narrative which has exercised the greater influence on Christian tradition (Evans 1970: 95).

LUKE-ACTS

Yet, what is intriguing about Luke’s narrative is the initial emphasis upon the afterlife of the soul or spirit. Jesus’ physical death on the cross is preceded by the declaration that he passes his *pneuma* over to the Father, with the cry, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23.46). Like many of the Second Temple texts outlined above, this makes perfect sense: the soul departs to be with God in heaven, the physical body is buried on earth. Interestingly, the righteous criminal hanging on the cross to Jesus’ side is promised the same experience, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise” (παράδεισος, 23.43); that is, the souls of both would be together

in heaven.¹¹ The same scenario is also assumed in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16, where, like the souls of Adam, Job, and Abraham seen in the Second Temple Jewish texts of Chapter 3, following the death of Lazarus he was “carried away by the angels to be with Abraham” (16.22). So, too, in the speech of Stephen in Acts, he prays, “Lord Jesus, receive my *pneuma* (Acts 7.59; see Eckstein 2002). The text here is of additional interest with respect to Stephen’s vision of heaven and of the *pneuma* of Jesus standing at the right hand of God (7.55–56), for one could assume that within a Lukan perspective, if Jesus were to return to earth, such a christophany would be similar to Paul’s revelatory experience. Yet, Luke has the return of Jesus in a definitive physical form; a veritable flesh-and-bone physical god striding the earth (Hoover 2008: 85). So, in Luke, perhaps we see the conflation of two separate traditions: the stress on the afterlife of the soul/spirit prevalent in Second Temple Judaism standing alongside Greco-Roman afterlife traditions of a deified Christ with an immortalized physical body (which, of course, for the author also serves to counteract the rising influence of nascent Docetism).

Elsewhere, Luke appears quite content to stress the physicality of supernatural emanations from heaven; e.g., that at Jesus’ baptism, “the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove” (Luke 3.21–22). This emphasis on the physicality of Jesus’ resurrected body is also “designed to counter suggestions that the disciples saw merely a spirit or a ghost (Luke 24.40).”¹² Certainly, Luke’s narrative is written at a time of conflicting theories and opinions between later Christ-believers, some of whom claimed that the resurrection was spiritual instead of bodily, and that stories of him eating had some kind of theological agenda (such beliefs are replete amongst Gnostic sources where there is criticism and condemnation for those who defend physical resurrection). Hence, Luke (and John), are likely to reflect a secondary stage of the resurrection tradition.¹³ As Lüdemann notes:

The bodily form of Jesus in Luke probably comes from a discussion in the wider community about the nature of the corporeality of the risen Christ (John 21; 1 John; 1 Cor 15). Luke attempts to solve the problem. For these reasons it should have become clear that there is no relationship to the real testimony to the ‘resurrection’ of Jesus. The historical yield is virtually nil. This also applies to the whole of Luke 24.36–53. (1995: 46)

Apostolic witness to this physical body is also important for Luke. Neither Mark nor Matthew have Peter visiting the tomb, yet Luke not only details this visit (Luke 24.12¹⁴), but also implies that Peter is the first witness to the resurrected Jesus (and that this took place in Jerusalem, 24.34). This, of course, contradicts the angelic assertions to the women in both Mark and Matthew that Jesus would appear in Galilee (so, Mark 16.7, “But go, tell his

disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you;" and Matt 28.7, "he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him").

Almost half of Luke's final chapter on the resurrection is taken up by the narrative of the Emmaus Road which admirably reflects Luke's artistic skilfulness.¹⁵ It at once serves to confirm Jesus as a "mighty prophet;" that he has been unjustly put to death; and that he is a profound expositor of the Hebrew Bible. It also underscores the centrality of the context of the Eucharist in which is fully experienced the risen Christ (Lüdemann 1995: 41).¹⁶ C.F. Evans writes:

The Emmaus Road narrative [. . .] succeeded in doing what no other resurrection story was able to do; it has presented in the form of a narrative the whole later creedal formula 'died for our sins according to the scriptures, and was buried, and was raised the third day according to the scriptures and appeared'; and it has traced back to Jesus himself, as something normal and to be expected, both the Christian doctrine of a suffering and exalted Messiah at which the church eventually arrived, and also the scriptural research which, on the evidence of the NT as a whole and of the speeches in Acts in particular, was to lie behind the church's interpretation of its gospel.

(1970: 94)

The narrative reflects a later period in apostolic history when the 'blindness' of the outsider who is unable, or unwilling, to accept Jesus as messiah is a painful reality for the early Christ-movement. The two disciples are 'kept' from recognizing Jesus; their eyes were only opened in the central act of the breaking of bread, at which point they were only then fully able to recognize him (24.16, 31). The subsequent vanishing is a typically Lukan theme.¹⁷ In the following narrative, the reappearance of Jesus is of interest in that the disciples think that they are seeing, not a 'ghost' (so, NRSV), but a spirit, πνεῦμα (so, NASU, NIV, NKJV; 24.37, 39). The pivotal Lukan point here is in Jesus' assertion that his return, recognizable as *spirit*, is also physical: "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet" (24.39–40, NASU). Interestingly, of course, the disciples clearly recognize the resurrected Christ as *spirit*, but have to be convinced, with many proofs, that he is also physical!

The appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Luke 24.36–42 is the clearest narrative thus far in the Gospel traditions of the attempt to combat forms of nascent Docetism and to assert the unambiguous nature of a physically resurrected Jesus. Here, Luke may be attempting to harmonize the range of (earlier) traditions which emerge in the passion narratives, for while certain Gospel narratives refer to the physical aspects of Jesus' resurrection body (Matt 28:9; Luke 24:39;¹⁸ John 20:27), the majority are ambiguous and

vague. Jesus is unrecognizable by Mary Magdalene, even after she beholds him (John 20:14), and he remains unknown to his followers both on the Emmaus Road (Luke 24:13ff.), and by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:4–12). There are occasions when Jesus appears miraculously (Luke 24:36; John 20:19, 26), or vanishes (Luke 24:31); he also appears ‘in another form’ to two disciples (Mark 16:12), and appears as a spirit (πνεῦμα) to a larger group (Luke 24:36–37).¹⁹ Elsewhere, the disciples disbelieve (Matt 28.17; Luke 24.38–41; John 20.24–29). In addition, the Markan tradition of Jesus’ own statement on resurrection proclaims that, “when the dead rise [. . .] they will be like the angels in heaven,”²⁰ and the Lukan tradition of Paul’s own revelatory experience expounds little in the way of the nature of the risen Christ other than that the vision came in the form of a brilliant light (Acts 9.3–6; 22.6–11; 26.12–16). There would, then, appear to be no fixed tradition as to the exact nature of the resurrected afterlife of Christ.²¹ There is also a later tradition in 1 Peter with a clear emphasis on the soul/spirit, 3.18–19: “[Christ] having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits [now] in prison.” Hence, in Luke 24.36–42, the author is perhaps attempting to answer all of what must have been many queries and questions by the second and third generation Christ-movement in a way which is both coherent and recognizably consistent in relation to disparate traditions (see Nickelsburg 2006: 246).

When we turn to the book of Acts, Luke retains the distinct emphasis of Jesus’ physicality, asserting repeatedly that this physical man who walked the earth prior to the passion is in perfect continuity with the *man* who has now been resurrected. This is observed in Acts 2.22–36 in which Luke states of Jesus, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption’ (2.31). Interestingly, the text draws upon Ps 16.10, ‘For you do not give me up to Hades, nor let your faithful one see corruption,’ with the striking change, of course, that Luke inserts the language of ‘flesh’ (σάρξ) which is absent from the Psalm. That this is done deliberately is clear in that Luke cites the same verse from Psalm 16 again in Acts 13.35, where he does so verbatim, and so which excludes the language of flesh. The assertion of the resurrected Jesus as ‘man’ is also found in Acts 10.39–41, 13.30–37, and 17.31. In stressing Jesus’ post-resurrection physicality, it appears that in both the Gospel and Acts, Luke wants to distance the resurrected Jesus as far as possible from the category of heavenly vision or of a non-physical resurrected being. Yet, as noted, there are tensions within Luke’s overall narrative between what appears to be an older tradition based on Second Temple Jewish texts on the afterlife of the soul and Luke’s insistence in other narratives of the stress on Jesus’ physicality.

That said, Luke is certainly content with detailing successive christophanies from heaven but only once his assertions of a physically resurrected Jesus have been made perfectly clear. However, such christophanies appear to be only for the leading figures of the early Christ-movement and perhaps

serve to legitimate their authority (De Jonge 2002: 41–42). As Walker notes, “The author [Luke] wants to insist as vigorously as possible, no doubt for theological and apologetic reasons, that Jesus actually was raised from the dead and that he was seen by a particular group of people who were divinely appointed as witnesses to the resurrection” (1969: 159).²² Some authors posit that Luke is actually restraining the emphasis by Paul of what appears to be a non-physical divine revelation of Christ; e.g., the emphasis in Acts that during Paul’s christophany he was blinded (a feature of the first two narratives in Acts which detail Paul’s divine revelation, Acts 9.8–9; 22.11; see Endsjø 2009: 176–77). Elsewhere, of course, there are further tensions between Luke and Paul in that, for Paul, the new entity of Christ is raised in glory, is indestructible, and is not of flesh and blood, whereas for Luke the risen Christ is unquestionably flesh and blood and retains the scars of the crucifixion (Luke 24.39). Christ’s eating of fish in Luke also contradicts Paul’s assertion that the resurrected ‘body’ will have no stomach and no need of food (1 Cor 6.13; Carrier 2005: 135; Walker 1969).

The on-going importance for the early Christ-movement to counter nascent Docetism (and at the time of the late first-century CE, proto-Gnosticism also), is carried on into the resurrection narrative of the Fourth Gospel. The conviction that Jesus existed as some kind of divine being inhabiting an illusory ‘body’ which had no real flesh nor blood needed to be countered with some urgency (cf. 1 John 1.1; 4.1f; 2 John 7).²³ The Thomas story of the Fourth Gospel is a perfect example of the literary imagination of an author (or authors) writing into a situation of theological and social need in that divergent opinions were fomenting unrest and division in the early community (e.g., 1–3 John; Jude; so, Allison 2005: 247; Lüdemann 1995: 71). This is certainly true of John 21, which is clearly a later editorial insertion or redaction and has an overriding theological concern to prove Jesus’ physicality (so, Allison 2005: 255). For Francis Fiorenza, the chapter “intertwines several significant motifs of discipleship, faith, and community in relation to Jesus’ resurrection” (1997: 224). The key Johannine text is, of course, that of the doubting Thomas narrative which has a similar, although more urgent function, like the Emmaus Road and following Lukan narrative, in highlighting both the insider/outsider perspectives and laying stress on the physicality of Jesus’ resurrection. For the Johannine redactors, the doubting outsider, like Thomas, “will not believe” (John 20.25), unless there is unambiguous proof that Jesus has been physically resurrected. The memorable literary account of the granting of that proof to Thomas allows the redactor(s) to stress to the outsider/unbeliever, “Do not doubt but believe [. . .] Blessed are those who have [. . .] come to believe” (20.27, 29; Nickelsburg 2006: 246).²⁴

Outside of the Gospel passion narratives, there is an emphasis on the resurrected form being like that of angels; e.g., Matt 22.30–31 (“For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven”), and Luke 20.35–36 (“but those who are considered

worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels”).²⁵ The Gospels also detail a range of resuscitations or near-death experiences, two of which are of interest and relevance here. The raising of Jairus’ daughter employs the verb ἐγείρω (Mt 9.18; Mark 5.22; Luke 8.41), the same verb employed by Paul of Jesus being raised in 1 Cor 15. Mark 5.42 and Luke 8.54 also employ ἀνίστημι (raised; cf. ἀνάστασις resurrection), which Paul uses of Jesus’ resurrection in 1 Thess 4.14, and of the resurrection of believers in 1 Thess 4.16. Interestingly, in Luke 8.55 the author makes the significant point that it is the young girl’s spirit (πνεῦμα) that is returned to her, meaning that post-mortem existence was predicated primarily of the spirit and not the body.

The second key Johannine narrative is that of the raising of Lazarus in John 11. The author notes that Lazarus was raised from the dead, (ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, 12.1), the same phrase used of Christ’s resurrection in 1 Cor 15.15, 20, 35. In rabbinic literature, the soul was said to hover around the body for three days, during which time resuscitation was possible.²⁶ In both of these instances, N.T. Wright claims that Lazarus and Jairus’ daughter were “genuinely dead,” but then qualifies this to suggest that these may have been near-death experiences. For Wright, Lazarus’ body had not begun to decay (despite Martha’s fear of a bad smell from bodily decomposition in 11.39); that is, he was truly dead but kept from bodily corruption. Here, despite the linguistic parallels of the resurrection of Jesus, Wright wants to maintain Jesus’ apparent bodily resurrection as a unique event (2004: 507).

THE LATER NEW TESTAMENT

Finally in this chapter, mention could be made of later New Testament texts which make passing comment on the nature of the afterlife. For 1 Peter, the outcome of one’s faith, for the believer, is the salvation of the soul (1 Pet 1.9), which stands in continuity with the life of Christ, who was “put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison” (3.18–19). Here, Christ stands as a model for the believer under duress: “Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right” (4.19, NASU). A summary of the author’s thought on the afterlife could be taken from 4.6: “For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to [the will of] God.” In the book of Revelation too, the seer, “saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given” (Rev 6.9), and following the final victory, again, he saw “the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God” (20.4).²⁷ Clearly, from the perspective of this author,

those suffering martyrdom for their faith saw their physical bodies perish and yet their souls translocated to the heaven to await the end-times (the sense of waiting under the altar may refer to a place of some privilege). Jonathan Knight writes of this verse: “The reference to ‘souls’ (6.9) suggests an anthropology in which the death of the human person allows the soul to ascend to heaven;” and he notes the rabbinic parallel of *b. Sab.* 152b, where “the souls of the righteous are kept under the throne of glory” (1999: 69; cf. Sweet 1990: 141–42). For the authors of both 1 Peter and Revelation, the afterlife is unambiguously one of the soul/spirit.

The book of Hebrews is also of great interest, despite the fact that it hardly mentions the afterlife, as it is typically dated to the period before the First Jewish War.²⁸ Hebrews 9.27 notes that “inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this [comes] judgment,” and so stands in direct continuity with other Second Temple Jewish texts. In 11.35, the writer appears to make some kind of passing reference to 2 Maccabees: “Women received [back] their dead by resurrection [ἀνάστασις]; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection.” N.T. Wright asserts here:

The text uses the word resurrection in the two senses of resuscitation of the very recently dead and resurrection to new bodily life at some stage in the future. Both are clearly bodily; the reason for distinguishing them and calling the latter one ‘better’ is presumably because the writer is aware that in 2 Maccabees the mother was looking not for a short-term resuscitation but a new creation, part of the great new work, ushering in the age of cosmic justice that the creator god would one day perform. (2003: 458–59)

Yet, as we have seen above, such a reading is unsafe. Asserting that ‘resurrection of the dead’ *must* mean a physical resurrection needs to be argued, not simply assumed. And in relation to the explication of 2 Maccabees argued earlier, insisting on a bodily resurrection from this text is insecure.

Wright goes on to note that the anticipated ‘heavenly country’ of 11.14–16, is identified in Hebrews 12 as the heavenly Jerusalem. But does this then suggest a spiritual entity for those ‘spirits made perfect of the righteous’ (12.23)? Perhaps aware of this, he quickly asserts: “The spirits of the righteous are presumably the saints and martyrs of old awaiting their new bodies in the new creation [. . .] this future hope, for the world that will last, a world more solid is reaffirmed in the final chapter” (2003: 459). Yet, the lasting city of 13.14 refers back to the heavenly Jerusalem of 11.16 & 12.22, and the future hope, according to 6.19 is held onto as an anchor *of the soul*, where the righteous after judgement are made perfect and are enrolled in heaven *as spirits* (12.23).²⁹

The verbs of raising found in Hebrews are identical with those used in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism: ἐγείρω (11.19), and ἀναγώ

(13.20), and the work also incorporates the concept of ‘bringing up’ the dead (13.20). In Heb 5.7, we have the picture of Jesus’ earthly ministry being “in the days of his flesh.” His subsequent entry into “the holy place” is made by passing “through the veil, that is, His flesh” (10.20), in order to enter the presence of the “Father of spirits” (τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων, 12.9). So, the “eternal hope,” which also stands as a model for the believer, exists as an ‘anchor of the soul’ (6.19). Here, the writer appears to sharply distinguish the earthly physical fleshly Jesus from the heavenly spiritual abode of the soul.

Hence, one could read key passages in Hebrews as wholly consistent within the framework of Second Temple Jewish texts if we appreciate that these point towards a spiritual concept of the afterlife. It is the soul/spirit which remains after the death of the body, is judged, and departs to a heavenly existence (for the righteous) or to punishment (for the wicked). Attempts to read into Hebrews ideas of a physical resurrection are unsafe and impose upon the text readings from elsewhere such as Josephus, or, particularly, the bodily resurrection accounts of Jesus in Luke and John.

CONCLUSION

Following the earliest writings of the New Testament—the primary Pauline corpus and the Gospel of Mark—the general tenor of much of the rest of the New Testament on the post-resurrection state of Christ appears to follow a trajectory away from that of Paul and towards an emphasis on the *physicality* of Christ’s resurrection appearances. Nevertheless, there are tensions within these later texts when they overlap with earlier motifs which adhere to a model of the divine exaltation of Christ’s soul. These are seen, for example, in the visionary experiences of Stephen and others outlined by Luke, who can, at the same time, hold to a very clear emphasis on Jesus’ post-resurrection physical body. Perhaps such reflection, beginning from the 70s CE, was precipitated by the trauma and devastation caused during the war with Rome which Josephus informs us led to the deaths of over one million Jews, including the crucifixion of thousands of Jews outside the gates of Jerusalem in 70 CE and the mass suicide of embattled Jews at Masada in 73 CE.³⁰ Within a context of such horror, deliberation was surely made on the post-mortem state of the body. Further consideration could also have been made upon traditions of the Hebrew Bible with regard to the afterlife ‘state’ of various well-known figures (Enoch and Elijah obviously come to mind, as well as the text of Ezekiel 37; see Chilton 2003: 333). The peculiar story of the resurrection and vindication of the saints in that intriguing pericope in Matthew 27.51–53 is also of relevance and likely points to an early pre-Matthean tradition reflecting the physical restoration of the righteous. Did the author *really* believe that the many bodies (πολλὰ σώματα) of the saints (ἅγιοι) were preserved uncorrupted or were re-constituted in order

to appear to many people in the city? Or that such bodies were raised and yet suspended, in some sort of macabre Shakespearian grave scene, between Jesus' death and resurrection before finally departing the graveyard for the city of Jerusalem? Or is it simply part of a fervent imagination attempting to deal with the trauma, and what was likely to be a high level of apocalyptic tumult, at the time of the Christ's passion and the few decades beyond?³¹

Changes within the passion narratives themselves also give pause for thought. Joseph of Arimathea in Mark's account of Jesus' burial is simply a respected member of the council who lays Jesus in a tomb, but becomes for Matthew a disciple of Jesus who lays him in his own new tomb (Mark 15.43–46; Matt 27.57–60).³² Mark's young man at the empty tomb dressed in a white robe becomes for Matthew a glorious angel descending amidst an earthquake (Mark 16.5; Matt 28.2–4). Matthew adds the guards who play a not insubstantial part of his narrative (Matt 27.62–66; 28. 4, 11–15). And while the women depart quickly in Mark, Matthew has a brief physical appearance by Jesus and then a more extended one later in Galilee (Mark 16.8; Matt 28.9–10, 16–20). For Luke, Joseph of Arimathea becomes a good and righteous man looking for the Kingdom of God; Matthew's single angel becomes two (in dazzling apparel); and there are extended appearances of Jesus both on the Emmaus Road and then his dramatic appearance to the disciples in Jerusalem and his leading of them from the city towards Bethany (Luke 24.4; 13–53). The embellishments continue in the Fourth Gospel: Joseph of Arimathea becomes a *secret* disciple who, alongside Nicodemus, embalms Jesus' body with an exceptional amount of myrrh and aloes;³³ Luke's two dazzlingly attired men become two angels; and Luke's two extended appearances to the disciples become three, including the doubting Thomas story and, in Galilee, the re-assertion of Peter as the authoritative figure of the early community. As Richard Carrier notes of these developments: "There can be no doubt that we are looking at extensive legendary embellishment upon what began as a mundane story" (2005: 165).³⁴ This also becomes clear in texts of the later New Testament where it appears that myths, fables, and endless genealogies are present within the nascent community.³⁵ Goulder (2000: 99) is probably correct when he writes:

So it becomes important to stress the reality, the physical nature of the resurrection. This is done in steps. At first, in the 60s we have the empty-tomb story (which requires burial in a tomb), which we first find in Mark. Then in Luke we have stories about Jesus' eating and drinking and asking to be touched. Finally these physical aspects are made memorable by the stories of Thomas and Mary Magdalene.

("Do not hold on to me" in John (20.17))

Many of these early stories revolve around the visionary experiences of key authoritative figures in the early Christ-movement. When Mark's young man dressed in white becomes, for Matthew, an angel of the lord, it is narrated

that “His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow (λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν)” (28.3). The only close parallel in the Septuagint of the phrase is found in Daniel 7.9 (ὥσεί χιῶν λευκόν), which is a description of Daniel’s vision of the Ancient of Days in the heavenly throne room where it is employed of the brilliance of his clothing. Elsewhere, there are three occurrences in the Septuagint of the phrase “[white] as snow:” Exodus 4.6, Numbers 12.10, and 2 Kings 5.27, each of which is used within the context of some form of supernatural event.³⁶ A comparable description of the heavenly Christ is made in the book of Revelation: “His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire” (Rev 1.14). This is, of course, John’s vision of Christ in the centre of the heavenly throne room (see Morris 1987: 54). In Luke, Peter’s vision of the resurrected Christ, ὄντως ἡγέρθη ὁ κύριος καὶ ὤφθη Σίμωνι, is made in language reminiscent to that of Paul’s own revelatory visions.³⁷ The following narrative in Luke’s Gospel and that of the Fourth Gospel too, on the extended presence of the risen Christ, has him accompanied only by the inner core of the disciples. Likewise, the threefold narratives of the presence of the risen Jesus in chapters 20–21 of the Fourth Gospel is made only amongst the closest disciples.

Peter, of course, along with James and John, had the revelatory experience of the transfiguration (Mark 9.2ff. par.), which also employs the concept of the brilliant whiteness of certain garments. He also has a visionary experience at the home of Simon the Tanner which is described in Acts 10.10 and 11.5 as a trance (ἔκστασις), an altered state of consciousness most likely brought about by deprivation of food (Acts 10.9–10). Paul, too, has an experience of being caught up into paradise wherein he received the “surpassing greatness of revelations” (2 Cor 12.4, 7, NASU).³⁸ Jesus, also, is described numerous times within the New Testament as having visionary experiences. Mark notes that during Jesus’ baptism “he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him,” an event that was also accompanied by an auditory experience (Mark 1.10–11, “And a voice came from heaven”). The narratives of the tempting of Jesus in both Matthew and Luke are extended visionary experiences, most likely altered states of consciousness brought about by a fast of forty days (Matt 4.1–11; Luke 4.1–12; both Matthew and Luke highlight that after the fast Jesus was “famished”). Luke appears to relate this ASC to the consequent dramatic empowerment by the Spirit (Luke 4.14).

In the sense of searching for the primary category in which the risen Christ was experienced, it appears that *supernatural vision* is the key. Certainly, Paul’s experience of “seeing the lord” derives from his heavenly revelation as vision (1 Cor 15.8; see Chilton 2000: 224). The progressively physical nature and experience of the risen Christ take this initial visionary experience into a new direction and the narratives of the empty tomb and subsequent outworking of this in the Gospels is a later tradition. Whether the appearances to Peter and Paul are due to the former’s “severe guilt complex”

and the latter's "smouldering Christ complex," and whether the subsequent appearances are part of a mass psychosis or mass hysteria, (so, Lüdemann) is uncertain. All one can say with certainty is that the key figures of Peter and Paul (perhaps James and John also) held to 'vision' as the primary vehicle of revelation by Christ to themselves and the nascent community (Lüdemann 1995: 129–30). Further, that it is these figures, each with a propensity to ASCs and visions, who were the founding fathers of the initial community and an essential part of its early development (and played a determining role in the theological shaping of this community), is not to be underestimated.

As such, the assumption of a physically resurrected Christ is unnecessary for these initial revelations, and what perhaps is of greater interest are the doctrinal battles within the context of emergent heresies which gives rise to the 'whys' and 'wherefores' of the subsequent development of the 'physical' Christ (De Jonge 2002: 35, 41–42).³⁹ Other categories which come to mind are God's predisposition towards and the upholding of the suffering righteous as well as the connection of visions to the notion of divine 'sending' and mission; cf. the sending of Moses and Gideon in the context of supernatural revelation (Exod 3.1–12; Judg 6.11–14). The assertion of a physically resurrected Christ did, of course, arouse considerable resistance from early Christians (although not pagans).⁴⁰ In this context, one could ask the vital question of whether the story of the empty tomb was new with Mark and whether the women at the tomb, apparently ignoring the command to go and tell the disciples, is an apologetic foil meant to explain why the empty tomb tradition was not known before Mark. And certainly, the notion that ideas of 'resurrection' could be adequately expressed in terms of an empty tomb is certainly shaped by Greco-Roman traditions of the translation and apotheosis of exceptional human beings (so, Collins 1997: 88–89). As we have seen, concepts of the empty tomb and 'missing' body were essential in the Greco-Roman mind for the physical immortalization of the hero.⁴¹ And this would appear to be a crucial reason behind the move from the primitive Pauline kerygma of Christ's resurrection as one of the soul alone towards one of his full physicality: the significant rise of Greco-Roman gentiles entering the early Christ-movement and the general rejection of the gospel by first-century Jews.

In this sense, the Gospel by Luke (arguably a Greek⁴²) is key and makes perfect sense within a context of Greco-Roman resurrection narratives: Christ died (Luke 23.46), following which the women at the tomb find that his body has disappeared (24.3), and learn that it has been taken elsewhere (24.5, 7, it has been raised); following which it then returns to earth physically immortalized like the gods, where Christ is able to vanish from sight (24.31) and miraculously re-appear (24.36). At this point, he is able to provide unambiguous proof of his newly immortalized physical body (24.39–43), before finally returning to the heavens (24.51).⁴³ For Luke, like Matthew, it is vital to assert to his Hellenistic audience that Jesus' body had been taken elsewhere and not left decomposing in the tomb, otherwise the

assertion of deification and physical immortality would have been impossible to defend (so, Endsjø 2009: 167). This is highlighted again by Luke in Acts when Peter asserts that Jesus' "flesh did not see corruption" (Acts 2.25–28).

Hence, we may argue that Luke is making a concerted effort to establish a framework of resurrection belief more aligned to Greco-Roman thought. Certainly, the parallels are striking. And beginning with Luke, one could argue that this is why early Christianity began to abandon the Second Temple Jewish emphasis on the afterlife of the soul alone for an afterlife framework which held the body as a central component. This was more attuned to Hellenistic thought, and, significantly, well before the end of the first century CE it was Greco-Roman gentiles who were now dominant within the early church. So, too, the fact that this physically resurrected Christ was also proclaimed as the model for a similar resurrection of all believers was perhaps a welcome surprise: thoughts of an eternity in Sheol were now superseded by anticipation of a glorious afterlife like the Greco-Roman heroes of old. Yet, as Paul's travel partner, Luke cannot have been unaware of Paul's own reflection on the afterlife of the soul alone and hence perhaps we see in Luke-Acts the author's attempt to reconcile two disparate traditions.⁴⁴ Such thoughts also prompt further reflection on Paul's argument in 1 Cor 15, for if such nascent traditions were already available in the 50s CE, then the context of the misunderstanding between Paul and his Hellenist interlocutors in Corinth is all too easy to understand. These propositions will be elaborated further in the conclusion.

NOTES

1. Luke 11.29–32 mentions the only sign given as that of Jonah but does not note the three days and three nights.
2. Matt 27.63; Mark 8.31; 9.31; 10.34; John 2.19–21. In Luke it is not stated but implied in his passion chronology (cf. 24.1)
3. See the textual analysis by Thiselton (2000: 1186) and see Metzger (1994: 500). The "eleven" is introduced in D*, F, G, Vulg, and some Syriac and Latin vss (with Eusebius and Jerome).
4. Barclay (1996: 18) notes that it is unwise to be dogmatic about what he, or other early Christians, understood to be the physical effects of resurrection. See Evans (1970); Nicklesburg (1972); Harvey (1994).
5. There is an intriguing question as to whether the 'body' of John the Baptist that was buried by the disciples (Mark 6.29; Matt 14.12) included the head of the Baptist which was presented to Herod's daughter and then given to Herodias, his wife.
6. Meier also argues that the double occurrence of ἀνάστασις, in 12.18, 23, elsewhere unknown in Mark, may be a "fingerprint of the pre-Markan author left on the dispute story" (2000: 5).
7. C.f. Evans (1970: 67): "At the heart of the resurrection tradition appeared a vacuum."
8. On Matthew's redaction of Mark's passion narrative see also Senior (1976).

9. For a useful comparison of the passion narratives of Mark and Matthew see Senior (1976).
10. Metzger (1994: 60) notes that the omission may have been due to an “oversight in transcription.”
11. Παράδεισος occurs only here and two other places in the New Testament (2 Cor 12.4; Rev 2.7). In 2 Cor it is located in the third heaven (12.2).
12. Pace Barclay (1996: 19), who also asks, “If these aspects of the stories are apologetic or literary accretions, one is entitled to ask how much else is merely legendary.”
13. So Lüdemann (2000: 54). See also, Alsup (1975), who argues that Luke’s concern for bodily proofs are redactional and intended to serve the interests of the “early catholic” period of the church (68–9, 75); and Lüdemann (1995: 34), “[Luke] has an interest in the bodily resurrection of Jesus, in order to refute claims which disparaged the Christians and their faith.”
14. Although there is some textual uncertainty with this verse.
15. Alsup (1975: 193–94) argues that it was not a Lukan creation but was a composite taken from his special source and may be the oldest of the resurrection stories. See also, Gillman (2002).
16. Tensions in the story within Luke’s wider narrative include the disjuncture between 24.24 (“Some of those who were with us went to the tomb . . .”), with the earlier assertion that it was Peter alone who ran to the tomb (24.12).
17. Especially related to angels, cf. Luke 1.38; 2.15; 9.33; Acts 10.7; 12.10.
18. Here, Luke articulates Jesus’ resurrection as one of the “flesh.” Cf. Acts 2:31.
19. Translated ‘spirit’ in NASU, ASV, NKJV, but as ‘ghost’ in NRSV, NIV.
20. Mark 12:25; see Meier (2000: 7), “. . . it is most likely that the dispute story in Mark 12:18–27, minus perhaps a few short phrases, circulated in the pre-Markan tradition of the first Christian generation.” See also Garrison (1997: 88–9) on Mark 9:1.
21. On the relationship of these various pericopes see Brown (1970: 1019–51, 1089–92); Hubbard (1974: 101–36).
22. See also Nickelsburg (2006: 246–47).
23. For an overview of such tradition and the Gnostic sources see Robinson (1982: 5–37).
24. Sheehan (2008) provides a useful overview of the progressive stages of the Easter narratives. See also Lowder (2005: 165–66).
25. The Lukan text employs ἰσάγγελος a New Testament hapax meaning ‘like or equal to an angel’ (so, UBS *sv* (71); Liddell & Scott *sv* (383); BAGD *sv* (380). Cf. Philo *Sac.* 1.5 ἴσος ἀγγέλοις γεγονώς, ‘having become equal to the angels.’
26. *Semitica* 8; Genesis Rabbah 100.64a; Leviticus Rabbah 18.1 (on Lev 15.1); *Ecccl Rab* 12.6; StrBill 2.544–45; Beasley-Murray (1981: 189–90); Carson (1991: 411).
27. On death and afterlife in Revelation, see Collins (2002: 374).
28. C. 65 CE, so, Hewett (1960: 39); before 70 CE, so, Bruce (1964: xlii–xliv); ~ 64–before 70 CE, so, Ellingworth (1993: 29–33); 65–70 CE, so, Lindars (1991: 21).
29. Lane notes that these are “those who have died but who now inhabit the heavenly city that is the goal of the pilgrimage of godly men and women under both covenants” (1991: 470).
30. Josephus notes that of the one million one hundred thousand who perished, the majority were Jews (*War* 6.120). On mass crucifixions, *War* 5.449–451; on Masada, *War* 7.304–406.
31. See Chilton (2003: 333), who also notes the possible influence of Ezekiel 37.

32. On the legendary developments of the figure of Joseph of Arimathea see Gundry (2000: 105–106, 131–33); and more recently, Lyons (2014).
33. Beasley-Murray (1981: 359); Carson (1991: 629–30). Nicodemus appears only at John 3.1, 4, 9; 7.50; 19.39. On the general legendary developments of the figure of Joseph of Arimathea see Gundry (2000: 105–06, 131–33).
34. So too, Collins (1997: 88–100), who writes, “Matt 28 and Luke 24 may be redactional expansions of Mark 16.1–8. There is no evidence that these have independent traditions about the empty tomb” (90). See also, Sheehan (2008: 97–9); and Allison (2005: 308–11), who provides an extensive list of legendary stories about empty tombs or disappearing bodies in antiquity. See also Chilton (2003: 309–34), who details a useful comparison of the visions and angels at the tomb (331) and the Galilee versus Jerusalem traditions (333–34).
35. See, 1 Tim 1.4; 4.7; 2 Tim 4.4; Titus 1.14; 3.9; 2 Pet 1.16. on the redactional expansions of Mark by Matthew and Luke see also Collins (1997: 90).
36. Other uses “as snow” can also refer to the cleansing of sin, Ps 50; Isa 1.18. Lightening is often associated with divine appearances, so Carter (2000: 545). See also the parallels in Dan 7.9–10; 10.7–9.
37. Like Paul, Luke frequently employs ὥφθι for supernatural experiences: Luke 1.11; 22.43; 24.34; Acts 2.3; 7.30; 9.17; 16.9.
38. On the assumption that the man of 2 Cor 12.2 is Paul himself, Martin (1986: 398–99); Furnish (1984: 524–25). See also, Goulder (2000: 93–4).
39. De Jonge asks the central question, “Were visionary experiences really the basis and cause of faith in Jesus’ resurrection, and thus the impulse behind the emergence of Christianity?” (p. 35).
40. See Riley (1995: 58–9) and the texts cited there: 1 Clement 24–26; Ign., Smyr. 2–3; 2 Clem. 9; Barn. 5; Irenaeus, Haer.; Acts of Paul. Riley notes here that Athenagoras, De Res. argues for the doctrine against Greek philosophical objections within and without the church.
41. Endsjø (2009) notes that this was a powerful topos in the Hellenistic world (161), and cites the contemporary Greek text of Chariton’s romantic novel *Callirhoe* where a similar thing happens (162).
42. On the debate, see Keener (2012: 403–05) and secondary literature there.
43. As noted by Endsjø (2009: 175), “The ability of the resurrected Jesus to pass through walls and vanish is paralleled in ancient texts.” And see the many such texts cited there.
44. Endsjø conjectures that this may be the reason for Luke’s assertion in Acts that Paul’s revelatory experience on the road to Damascus discredit him as a reliable witness of the resurrected Christ: he was blinded by the light (2009: 176).

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7 The Rise of *Gehenna*

Afterlife in Early Christianity

INTRODUCTION

As our chronological purview of Christian writing on the afterlife begins to move from the later New Testament period into that of the early church (second-fourth centuries CE), there are a number of developments which play an important part of our analysis: the increasing influence within the early church of trends towards a deprecation of the flesh (a significant aspect of the growing and prominent movements such as Gnosticism and Docetism); and the sharp growth in the numbers of Gentiles entering the early Christian community.¹ The deprecation of the flesh was a vital facet of various tendencies towards asceticism in the period where exhortations to purify the flesh—often in the form of sexual continence, see, for example, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*—were commonplace.² The Gnostics, of course, sought the exclusion of the body altogether (so, Evans 1970: 10).

In some senses the rise of Docetism made a doctrinal emphasis on the risen flesh of Jesus somewhat inevitable, as can be seen, for example, when a docetic (or docetically-inspired) text such as the *Gospel of Peter* is answered and rebutted by the Church Father Ignatius in his defence of the fleshly resurrected Christ (see further below). Indeed, the resurrection of the physical Christ in the Gospels of Luke and John can be read as deliberate anti-docetic polemic and, as noted in the previous chapter, in some ways a shift away from Paul. But whether this was a deliberate rebuttal of Paul or simply a response to the exigencies of a critical period in taking a determined anti-docetic stand is difficult to establish. An emphasis on the resurrection of the flesh also provided a powerful doctrinal argument for Christians against various Gnostic systems, which typically held Docetism in common (see Davis 1972; Riley 1995: 107). Nevertheless, although Docetism was very pronounced in the second century, the *doctrine* of the resurrection of the flesh, even amongst such influential theologians as Clement of Alexandria and Origen, had yet to be firmly established as an essential aspect of the rule of faith. Gregory Riley makes an important point on this change:

This point needs emphasis: “immortality of the soul” explained the resurrection of Christ for many Christians for centuries, and did so based

on the same traditions and texts as those used by the “orthodox” who advocated resurrection of the flesh [. . .] If so, then the spiritual risen Jesus was far more substantial than one would assume from modern secondary literature.

(1995: 9)³

IGNATIUS AND THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

As we proceed chronologically through the Church Fathers, we begin to see the change that Riley speaks of. In his struggle with Docetism, Ignatius (35/50–98/117), the bishop of Antioch in the late first or early second century, lays emphasis on the resurrection of the physical fleshly Christ (Davis 1972: 448–55; Riley 1995: 116; Setzer 2004: 71). In the letter *To the Smyrnaeans* 2–3, he writes:

he truly raised himself—not, as certain unbelievers say, that he suffered in appearance only (it is they who exist in appearance only!). Indeed, their fate will be determined by what they think: they will become disembodied and demonic. For I know and believe that he was in the flesh even after the resurrection and when he came to Peter and those with him, he said to them: “Take hold of me; handle me and see that I am not a disembodied demon.” And immediately they touched him and believed, being closely united with his flesh and blood [. . .] And after his resurrection he ate and drank with them like one who is composed of flesh, although spiritually he was united with the Father.⁴

Ignatius’ polemical attack on the Docetists recalls aspects of that found in the Johannine literature (which may have a similar provenance), and which castigates them as unbelievers whose end, interestingly, will be a *disembodied* state. The appearances to the apostles of the physically resurrected Jesus may draw upon the passion narratives of Luke and John. The presence of false teaching in various communities has obviously led to tensions and divisions (*Trall.* 9–11; *Phil.* 2–4), and elsewhere Ignatius also attacks certain ‘Judaizers’ (*Phil.* 6.1; *Magn.* 8.1; 9.1; 10.3).

In other places amongst the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, there are scattered references to the resurrection of the physical Christ. The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (c. 156 CE) notes that the resurrection to eternal life is “both of soul and of body in the incorruptibility of the Holy Spirit” (14.2); and there is an oblique reference in *1 Clement* 26 (c. 95–97 CE) when the author asserts, “the Creator of the universe shall bring about the resurrection of those who have served him in holiness [as . . .] Job says: ‘And you will raise this flesh of mine, which has endured all these things.’”⁵ Around the same time, the author of *2 Clement* (c. 95–140) misunderstands the Pauline distinction between body and flesh and insists, “as Paul does not, upon the resurrection of the flesh” (so Barrett 1979: 98; cf., *2 Clem.* 9). The author

asserts categorically: “For just as you were called in the flesh, so you will come in the flesh [. . .] Let none of you say that this flesh [. . .] does not rise again” (9.1, 3). These early texts demonstrate a determination to combat both Docetism and various forms of Gnosticism in a sustained apologetic manner by asserting the physicality of Christ’s resurrection. Yet, the social context of 2 *Clement* and other texts (e.g., Polycarp’s *Letter to the Philippians* 7), suggests that ideas of the resurrection of the body or the flesh were certainly not shared by all Christians. For Claudia Setzer, Polycarp (2.1) in particular “seems to be reacting to more than just a passing threat. Not only is someone promoting this ‘false teaching’ but it may even be the majority view at Philippi, since he calls it ‘that which deceives many’” (2004: 72; and see Riley 1995: 60). By the end of the second century however, the church’s catechetical instruction insisted upon the resurrection of the flesh as a point of orthodoxy. Key figures in this regard were Justin Martyr (c. 100–165), Irenaeus (c. 130–202), Minucius Felix (150–270), and Tertullian (160–225).⁶

JUSTIN AND IRENAEUS

In his *Apologies* and dialogue with the Jewish philosopher Trypho, Justin attempts to define orthodoxy around the resurrection of the flesh, which also at the same times helps to deter forms of extreme asceticism and libertinism (see Stanton 1994). For him, the true Christian is now the one who affirms this essential doctrine and, interestingly, he argues that those who insist on the afterlife of the soul alone are heterodox and are not to be considered Christians:

For I choose to follow not men or men’s doctrines, but God and the doctrines [delivered] by Him. For if you have fallen in with some who are called Christians, but who do not admit this [truth], and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to heaven; do not imagine that they are Christians.

(*Dial.* 80)

This appears to be the first appearance of the term ‘resurrection of the flesh,’ and here it is given its fullest and most explicit formulation (see, Setzer 2004: 75; Stuhlmacher 1993: 54). For Justin, the physical body received back in the resurrection is fully complete; i.e., it possesses all of the original organs, and any defects are repaired.⁷ Yet, it must also be the case that different understandings of an afterlife experience, one including the body, another asserting the afterlife of the soul alone, ran side by side in various Christian communities. The latter view, in continuity with Second Temple Jewish texts

noted earlier, obviously asserted that there was no resurrection of the body and that the soul passed straight to heaven (so, Setzer 2005: 156). This is likely to be the reason why Justin launches such a sharp polemic against those who disagree with his formulation to the extent that the heterodox will suffer eternally by fire: “we know from Isaiah that the members of those who have transgressed shall be consumed by the worm and unquenchable fire, remaining immortal; so that they become a spectacle to all flesh” (*Dial.* 130.2).⁸ There is a similar exposition in Justin’s *First Apology*. On Christ’s parousia, he will “raise the bodies of all men who have lived and shall clothe those of the worthy with immortality, and shall send those of the wicked, endued with eternal sensibility, into everlasting fire with the wicked devils” (*Apol.* 1.52).⁹ The model for the re-constitution of the body is Ezekiel’s valley of dry bones and that for the punishment of the wicked is, as *Dial.* 130 makes clear, the worm and fire of Isaiah 66.¹⁰

When we turn to Irenaeus, we see a similar, although more complex framework of thought (on Irenaeus see esp. Evans 1970). Some of the orthodox, argues Irenaeus, are ignorant and have been led astray by heretics who reject the salvation of the flesh and believe that the soul alone passes into the heavens to return to the Father. As such, these heretics reject a resurrection affecting the whole person (*universam reprobant resurrectionem*). Irenaeus argues that if this were the case, then the soul of Christ must have departed, leaving his body on the earth; yet, this cannot be the case, for Christ must have risen physically from the dead in order to show his body to the disciples along with the nail marks still in his hands. Christ must thus have ascended physically into heaven. For the believer, however, they shall go away into the “invisible place allotted to them by God, and there remain until the resurrection, awaiting that event; then receiving their bodies, and rising in their entirety, that is bodily, just as the Lord arose, they shall come thus into the presence of God” (*Haer.* 5.31).

Interestingly, this is similar to the framework of thought that we have seen in Second Temple Judaism and have argued for in Paul. On death, the *soul* of the believer departs to some other place, to be kept safe until the end times, when it receives a physical bodily form and enters into the presence of God. Irenaeus appears to imply that this is the original earthly body or is in continuity with it.¹¹ However, the risen Jesus is different and unique for he alone ascended body and soul. Irenaeus is led to argue in this way in order to be consistent and to hold firmly to the resurrection narrative of Luke. So, Irenaeus attempts to hold together two traditions: he affirms a framework of thought found in Second Temple Judaism and Paul, and yet also affirms the physically resurrected Christ observed in Luke. The only way that he can do so is to posit a different and unique resurrection scenario for Jesus: he alone was resurrected body and soul while other believers will receive a body only at the eschaton.

Irenaeus devotes much time and space to combating a variety of second-century heretics (e.g., Valentinus, Marcion, and others), whom, he suggests, are able to

“[craft] elaborate exegesis” and he does this by “showing that Paul, after all, does not refute the resurrection of the flesh.”¹² He subjects the Pauline text of 1 Corinthians 15 to an extended exegetical analysis, arguing that the body is essential in the plan of God, for if only the soul is raised then the resurrection is only partial in nature (see Setzer 2004: 132–50). For Irenaeus, the text of 1 Cor 15.50 (“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God”), is the favourite expression of the heretics who make “perverse and crooked interpretation” of it (*Haer.* 5.9, 13). In short, he moves towards an anthropology that holds the body and soul side-by-side: the soul is an essential part of the body and not simply an element that is released as the body dies (so, Bremmer 2001: 50 [citing, *Haer.* 1.6.1], and see Van Eijk 1971: 517–29).

In general, the texts of this period demonstrate multivalent understandings of the afterlife: the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* stresses the resurrection of both body and soul after death; for Ignatius, the unbeliever will have a disembodied existence; and, for Justin, the wicked will have their same bodies united again to their spirits which are now to undergo everlasting punishment. Other texts such as *1 Clem.* 26, *2 Clem.* 9, or *Trall.* 9 could either refer to a resurrected body following death or the reward of the flesh at the eschaton. Irenaeus, on the other hand, stands in continuity with Second Temple Jewish texts except for the uniqueness of Christ’s resurrection. Elsewhere, Athenagoras (c. 133–90), in his work *On the Resurrection* argues vigorously that the resurrection must include the body as God’s judgement will fall upon both body and soul together after the two are re-united.¹³ His treatise is written for those Christians who disbelieve or doubt such a concept, and who, from his perspective, appear to be the intelligentsia (*Res.* 1, 3). Conversely, Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215) conceived the afterlife in terms of the immortality of the soul which goes to its reward or punishment immediately after death (so, Collins 2002: 357–77).

MINUCIUS FELIX AND TERTULLIAN

Marcus Minucius Felix was one of the earliest of the Latin apologists for Christianity, now exclusively known through his work *Octavius*, a dialogue on Christianity between the pagan Caecilius Natalis (perhaps a foil for a typical ‘heretic’ of Minucius’ day), and the Christian Octavius Januarius. Minucius Felix stands between the two disputants and details their respective arguments. Caecilius notes that the Christians look forward to the future conflagration of the whole world, the resurrection of the body, and to the blessed eternity of the righteous; but that the wicked will be consigned to an eternity of “extreme punishment.” For Caecilius, such a proposition is nothing more than “old women’s fables [. . .] lies [and . . .] a double evil and a twofold madness” (*Oct.* 11), and confirms his opinion that the Christians are, for the

most part, “untrained and illiterate” (*Oct.* 5). In whatever way death comes, he argues, it means the end of the body, and he asks of Octavius:

Yet I should be glad to be informed whether or not you rise again with bodies; and if so, with what bodies—whether with the same or with renewed bodies? Without a body? Then, as far as I know, there will neither be mind, nor soul, nor life. With the same body? But this has already been previously destroyed. With another body? Then it is a new man who is born, not the former one restored.

(*Oct.* 11)

Octavius argues that it is a “vulgar error” not to believe that the world would be destroyed and that even the Greek philosophers Pythagoras and Plato have delivered the doctrine of the resurrection: “for they will have it, that the bodies being dissolved, the souls alone both abide forever, and very often pass into other new bodies” (*Oct.* 34). Yet, Octavius also argues that as humans were first of all formed by God, so they can be re-formed and restored: “Every body, whether it is dried up into dust, or is dissolved into moisture, or is compressed into ashes, or is attenuated into smoke, is withdrawn from us, but it is reserved for God in the custody of the elements.” Because of this, he argues, “tortures most unjustly inflicted for the confession of Christ’s name are spectacles worthy of God; a comparison instituted between some of the bravest of the heathens and the holy martyrs” (*Oct.* 37). We see here, as Caroline Bynum has argued, that as well as the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh being formed through polemical debate with various Gnostic or docetic groups, it was also formulated within the context of early Christian martyrdom:

We now know that the question of the nature of the resurrected body continued to come up in important ways for hundreds of years and did not always entail the same issues [. . .] Many of these early Christians had a specific death in mind—that of the martyr. We should not find it surprising that early exhortations to martyrdom stress God’s promise of a body both transformed and “the same,” both impassible and identical with the flesh of earth.

(Bynum 1995: 43, 45)

Hence, for Caecilius, Christians are of low status and uneducated and their concept of bodily resurrection is not only nonsense and ignorant of classical ideas, but demonstrates an absence of reason (*Oct.* 5.3–4; 8.3–4; 11.8; 12.7). Furthermore, they are anti-social, showing no respect for the values of their cultural milieu, but are arrogant in the sense that they denigrate life in this world and believe that they alone will be saved from the conflagration at the eschaton (*Oct.* 11.3; 12.6; and see Setzer 2005: 169–72).

In the writings of Tertullian (160–225), we see the continuity of the thinking of both Irenaeus and Justin.¹⁴ Like Irenaeus, he presents an extended analysis of 1 Corinthians 15 (most likely dependent upon that of Irenaeus), arguing that it is impossible that Paul could have meant the exclusion of flesh and blood from the kingdom of God when Jesus, as both fully *man* and God, is sitting at the Father's right hand.¹⁵ Hence, for Tertullian: "The flesh is already risen in Christ" (*Res.* 2). At the same time, certain Gospel pericopes detailing the resurrection of the dead performed by the earthly Jesus—particularly the raising of Lazarus in John 11—is proof of a resurrection of body and soul (*Res.* 38, 53). And like both Justin and Irenaeus, he appears to be "under pressure of his opponents, who, denying the resurrection of the flesh, believed solely in a spiritual resurrection" (Van Eijk 1971: 522).¹⁶ Tertullian thus offers a similarly astute apologetical defence of orthodoxy against the likes of Marcion, Basilides, Valentinus, and other heresies (*Res.* 2).¹⁷ He admits that "a great many" Christians claim that resurrection means the departing and ascent of the soul from the body, a point made earlier by Polycarp when he asserted that there were "many" who denied the physical resurrection of Christ (for him, heretics, whom he describes as the "first-born of Satan");¹⁸ but Tertullian insists that resurrection must mean that of body and soul in order that the whole person can be either rewarded or punished (*Res.* 17; and see Bynum 1995: 35). Elsewhere, he argues against those who see the 'resurrection' as the post-baptismal state for believers and the knowledge of special truth (*Res.* 2, 19, 63), or that 'Resurrection of the Dead' means the moral change of a new life (*Res.* 19).

In summary, during the second century CE, the resurrection of the body became a major point of controversy among Christians and between Christians and their pagan critics, and yet by the time of Irenaeus and Tertullian this had changed in that the resurrection of the flesh was set forth as "authoritative Christian teaching," and had become the orthodox view (so, Bynum 1995: 21; Grant 1948: 128–30; Justin *Dial.* 80 above). As Grant notes:

In that period no distinction was yet made between the resurrection of the flesh, of the body, and of the dead. Yet the phrase "resurrection of the flesh" is not scriptural and it may have been an attempt to conform to biblical usage which caused the substitution of "resurrection of the dead" in creeds and baptismal confessions after the middle of the fourth century.

(1948: 130)

The main argument in favour of this change was that the soul was perceived as unable to suffer any form of punishment alone, and so the body was required to make this effective. It was held that the 'justice' of God was only upheld in doing so (Tert. *Res.* 17; Athenagoras, *Res.* 21.4).¹⁹ A vital stepping stone in the concept of the physically resurrected Christ, found

frequently in the period, is the passion narrative of the Gospel of Luke, a key text for the Church Fathers from the time of Irenaeus onwards. Luke provided the “conceptual framework” of resurrection and helped inform the writers of the second century of a framework of orthodoxy (Morgan 1994: 13).

ORIGEN AND BEYOND

When we move into the third century, the major work is that of Origen (c. 185–254 CE; see Carrier 2005; Decock 2012). From the second century onwards, the topic of the resurrection, and more specifically the nature of the resurrection ‘body,’ became not only a central issue in the internal struggles within Christianity, but also between Christians and both Gnostics and pagans.²⁰ The internal debate is clear when Origen’s interlocutor, Celsus, notes that some Christians do not hold the doctrine, and, as can be seen from the following quote, pagans also began to employ the doctrine of the resurrection as an argument with which to critique Christianity:

For what sort of human soul is that which would still long for a body that had been subject to corruption? Whence, also, this opinion of yours is not shared by some of the Christians, and they pronounce it to be exceedingly vile, and loathsome, and impossible; for what kind of body is that which, after being completely corrupted, can return to its original nature, and to that self-same first condition out of which it fell into dissolution?

(C. *Cels.* 5.14)

Celsus criticizes this Christian “doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, which has been preached in the Churches, and which is more clearly understood by the more intelligent believer” (C. *Cels.* 5.18). Yet, Origen retorts that “Neither we nor the sacred scriptures say that ‘those who died long ago rise from the earth and shall live in the same flesh’ without that flesh having undergone a change for the better” (C. *Cels.* 5.18; cf. 2.19.12). As such, Origen follows Paul and his argument in 1 Corinthians 15, in that what is raised is neither the same ‘flesh’ nor ‘body,’ but some form of transformed ‘body’ (C. *Cels.* 5.18; 8.49; 2.19.12).²¹ However, as Jan Bremmer notes: “During these debates, the ‘resurrection of the dead’ became even more sharply formulated as the ‘resurrection of the flesh’ thus leaving no doubt whatsoever about what kind of resurrection the Christians meant” (2002: 51), and, for this reason, it appears that the early church found the writings of Origen so unorthodox that he drew accusations of heresy and his works were infrequently copied and may even have been suppressed (Grant 1948: 192, 204). For C.F. Evans (1970: 11):

Exposition in the third and fourth CE took the form of either bitter opposition to Origen for spiritualizing the doctrine away to the point

of Neo-Platonism (so, Methodius, Adamantius, Eustathius, Epiphanius, Jerome), or a partial or whole-hearted use of Origen (so, Cyril of Jerusalem, Hilary, Gregory of Nyssa). Revealing, is the line of Synesius of Cyrene, who, when pressed to be bishop, agreed on condition that he was allowed to retain his Neo-Platonist convictions and to interpret the resurrection of the flesh allegorically (*Ep.* 105).²²

The pagan criticism of Christ's apparent resurrection noted by Celsus centres on the parallels with Greco-Roman mythology; that a father of the gods allows one of his offspring to die, only to raise them back to life. So, too, Celsus asks the awkward question that if Christ actually possessed divine miraculous power, why did he not appear also to outsiders and opponents, and especially the people as a whole:

While he was alive he did not help himself, but after death he rose again and showed the marks of his punishment and how his hands had been pierced. But who saw this? A hysterical female, as you say, and perhaps some other one of those who were deluded by the same sorcery, who either dreamt in a certain state of mind and through wishful thinking had a hallucination due to some mistaken notion—an experience which has happened to thousands—or, which is more likely, wanted to impress the others by telling this fantastic tale, and so by this cock-and-bull story to provide a chance for other beggars.

(*C. Cels.* 2.55)²³

Celsus' questions are difficult for Origen to answer for a number of reasons: he cannot offer unambiguous historical proof of the resurrection (*C. Cels.* 1.42); he is aware of allegations that the texts of the Gospels have been tampered with (2.27); and he is also aware that they contain discrepancies (5.55–56; so, Stanton 1994: 83). Further, Celsus asserts that Christians are uneducated and of low-status and that their claim of bodily resurrection is a manifestation of their lack of reason (*C. Cels.* 7.28, 32, 42–45; 8.49). Finally, bodily resurrection offends reason: the soul is entrapped and weighed down by the body and the thought of its return is ridiculous and distasteful (*C. Cels.* 2.55; 4.60–61; 5.14; 8.53). In some senses then, Origen mitigates the pagan distaste for bodily/fleshly resurrection with his 'sort-of-bodily continuity;' bodies which will, "become like the bodies of angels, ethereal and of a shining light. They will be without age or sex" (so, Bynum 1995: 67).²⁴

Other relevant third-century texts would include the *Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas* (c. 203 CE), in which one Saturus had a vision whereupon both he and Perpetua put off the flesh and are carried to the east by four angels. There, they are taken to a garden and to the throne of God, at which point Perpetua declares that she is happier now than when she was in the flesh (see Bremmer 2001: 58–59; Droge 1995: 155–69). In the *Martyrdom of Carpus, Papyrus*

and Agathonike found in Eusebius' *Church History*, the author notes that, on death, all three gave up the soul to heaven: "Papyrus gave up his soul [. . .] and Carpus did the same [. . .] as did Agathonike" (4.15.37–48).²⁵ Christian martyrs in particular were said to ascend to heaven immediately on death (e.g., *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 14.2; *Passio Scill.* 15; *Passio Fructuosi* 5), and the *Shepherd of Hermas* (3.2.1; 140 CE) notes that although all Christians on death gain immediate entry to heaven, the martyrs sit at Christ's right hand while the others are placed on the left (Bremmer 2001: 58).

The controversy over the nature of Christ's resurrected form lasted into the fifth century at least, and, for Gregory Riley: "That the ancients could easily interpret the very resurrection texts themselves in non-physical terms is missed by some modern interpreters. The counterargument of the Church took the form of a virtual justification of the flesh" (Riley 1995: 63). Jerome (347–420), in the early fifth century, was writing against "the foul cisterns of the heretics," those "noxious vipers and deadly pests," who question whether the resurrection body is the same as the earthly. Here, the 'heretic' employs the writing of Paul in 1 Corinthians, in that "the [resurrected] bodies that we shall have in heaven will be subtle and spiritual according to the words of the apostle: 'it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body'" (*Ep.* 108.23).²⁶ Jerome rejects the seed metaphor of 1 Corinthians 15 as it expressed too much change between earth and heaven (*Contra Joannem* chs 23–26), and he goes on to employ the resurrection narratives of Luke and John to argue that the bodily resurrection of Christ was "real and not merely apparent:"

the Lord Himself said, "reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless but believing," and in another place, "behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken he shewed them his hands and his feet." You hear Him speak of bones and flesh, of feet and hands; and yet you want to palm off on me the bubbles and airy nothings of which the stoics rave!

(*Ep.* 108.24)

Augustine partly agrees with Jerome, and disagrees with those who rejected the resurrection of the flesh, castigating them as heretics. For him, resurrection of the *flesh*, or the *body*, complements the immortality of the *soul*—together, they are the "new and specific Christian hope" (so, Van Eijk 1971: 529).²⁷ Augustine differed from Jerome only in advocating greater change between Christ's earthly and heavenly body, although together they viewed resurrection as the restoration of the original bodily material. Like Jerome, Augustine rejected Paul's seed metaphor of 1 Corinthians 15 for a metaphor of reassembled vessels or buildings (so, drawing upon 2 Corinthians 5; see Bynum 1995: 94–95). Other relevant texts which demonstrate the on-going

discussion of the resurrection of the body include Methodius, Basil, and Gregory of Nyssa: all exponents of the resurrected body (see Bynum 1995: 59–82). Conversely, for the Christian apologist Arnobius, the body is a “disgusting vessel of urine” and “bag of shit,”²⁸ and for Ambrose, the body was a wretched prison for the soul, which aches to escape from pain (*De excess Satyri* bk. 2, ch. 20).²⁹ Even by the end of the sixth-century, the debate continued. Eustratios, who flourished in the 590s, critiqued the view that the souls of the departed sleep until the resurrection and argued that the soul lives actively in the afterlife.³⁰ Gregory the Great (c. 540–604), too, was aware of some who still doubted or rejected the resurrection of the flesh (see Bynum 1995: 60).

SUMMARY

In summary, the period following the writing of the New Testament up to the sixth century CE, was one of multivalent and contrasting ideas concerning the resurrection of the physical body. Even among orthodox Christians, it appears that the doctrine generated puzzlement and confusion, and certainly amongst the pagan critics of Christianity fomented incredulity and opposition. The context for many Biblical scholars who write on the resurrection is in the desire to see consistency within the New Testament; yet, as we have seen, Paul, on the one hand, and the later New Testament writers (particularly Luke, and followed by John), on the other, are approaching the nature of post-mortem existence from very different directions. Paul is aligned with Second Temple Jewish texts which lay an overwhelming emphasis on the afterlife of the soul alone; but Luke and John, some decades later, and with a now radically re-formed and largely Gentile dominated Christ-movement, are more attuned to Greco-Roman traditions, which emphasized the importance of the physical body in the process of immortalization and deification.³¹ In the tumult of the fight against various ‘heresies’ which engulfed the Church of the second-century church and beyond, the Church Fathers polemicized this even further to make the doctrine of the physically resurrected Christ a point of theological orthodoxy. So, for instance, the phrase ‘resurrection of the dead’ (still retained in the Nicene Creed) was superseded by ‘resurrection of the flesh’ to combat Gnostics and others who appealed to 1 Corinthians 15. Epiphanius argued in a similar way against the Valentinians who saw themselves as being faithful to apostle’s teaching (*Panarion* 31.7.6). However, between the time of Polycarp and Tertullian, those asserting the Pauline position were clearly the majority (Polycarp, *Ad. Phil.* 7; Tertullian, *Res.* 2.2; 17; 53.12).

NOTES

1. Discussion of the effects of rising numbers of Gentiles will be left to the conclusion of this chapter.

2. On texts relating to the deprecation of the flesh, see Grant (1948: 188).
3. See also, Bedard (2012: 453), who writes, "It is common to make the generalization that a disembodied spiritual afterlife is a Greek concept and that a bodily resurrection is a Jewish concept . . . [this] ignores the fact that the concepts of a disembodied spirit and a bodily resurrection were competing and co-existent even within Jewish traditions."
4. Cf. 12.2, [I greet all of you] in the name of Jesus Christ and in his flesh and blood, his suffering and resurrection (which was both physical and spiritual), in unity with God and with you." See also *Smyrn.* 5.2, where he notes that blasphemy is not confessing that Christ was clothed in flesh: "Anyone who does not acknowledge this thereby denies him completely and is clothed in a corpse."
5. Some also cite *The Epistle of Barnabas* 5.6, although this is more likely to refer to the fleshly earthly ministry of Christ.
6. See, Grant (1948: 188–208); Lehtipuu (2009); Setzer (2004); Van Eijk (1971: 517–29).
7. *1 Apology* chs. 18–21, 51–52, 66; *Dialogue with Trypho* chs. 80–81, 107.
8. Cf. *Apol.* 1.8, "And Plato, in like manner, used to say that Rhadamanthus and Minos would punish the wicked who came before them; and we say that the same thing will be done, but at the hand of Christ, and upon the wicked in the same bodies united again to their spirits which are now to undergo everlasting punishment; and not only, as Plato said, for a period of a thousand years."
9. Cf. *Apol.* 1.18: "we expect to receive again our own bodies, though they be dead and cast into the earth, for we maintain that with God nothing is impossible."
10. *Apol.* 1.52, "And in what kind of sensation and punishment the wicked are to be, hear from what was said in like manner with reference to this; it is as follows: 'Their worm shall not rest, and their fire shall not be quenched;' and then shall they repent, when it profits them not."
11. See the general thrust of *Against Heresies* 5.1–15 (esp. chs 7, 9).
12. Lehtipuu (2009: 148), citing, Irenaeus *Haer.* 5.9–14; Tertullian *Res.* 48–50.
13. *On the Resurrection* 3, 12, 13, 15, 18, 21–22. On Athenagoras see, Barnard (1976, 1984); Evans (1970: 7–8); Grant (1954: 121–29); Marcovich (1979: 375–82); Setzer (2005: 165–69).
14. On Tertullian, Grant (1948: 188–208); Lehtipuu (2009: 147–68); Setzer (2004: 133–43). Relevant texts are, *De Resurrectione Carnis* 2, 15–19, 22, 38, 48, 53, 63
15. *Res.* 48.
16. See also, *Res.* 2.2; 18; 19.2–7; 22; 38.3; 53.
17. On Marcion see Paget (2012); Vinzent (2011). On Valentinus see Thomassen (2009).
18. *Res.* 2.2; 17; 53.12; Polycarp, *Ad. Phil.* 7. See, Riley (1995: 60).
19. Riley maintains that it is against these Christian proponents of physical resurrection that the *Book of Thomas* is written (1995: 163).
20. Likewise, the debate over the resurrection of the flesh is also found in the *Gospel of Philip*. See, Collins (2002: 357–77); Lehtipuu (2009).
21. See Grant (1948).
22. Cf. Van Eijk (1971: 523).
23. Translation by Chadwick (1965: 109). See also, Alsup (1975); Lapidé (1983: 42); Setzer (2005: 155–75).
24. She also notes that Origen seems "to sacrifice integrity of bodily structure for the sake of transformation" (68).
25. The tradition of Eusebius has their martyrdom c. 155–65, so at the same time as Polycarp and Justin Martyr; another tradition has their deaths c. 261 during the persecutions of Decius.

26. See also, Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 25. On Jerome, see Grant (1948); Bynum (1995: 86–9).
27. On Augustine see, Bovon (2010: 389–40); Chilton (2000: 235–36); Grant (1948: 207–08); McDannell & Lang (2001: 54–8).
28. Origen, *C. Cels.* 5.24; Arnobius, *Adversus nations* ed. A. Reifferscheid, CSEL 4, bk 2 ch. 37, pp. 77–8.
29. On the theme of the body as prison (also trap and tomb) of the soul see Courcelle (1975: 2.345–414).
30. *On the Condition of Souls after they have departed from the body* [*De statu animarum post mortem*, CPG 7522]; see, Bovon (2010: 358).
31. See the piercing questions asked by Richard C. Carrier on the disjuncture between Paul and the Church Fathers in (2005: 114, 123).

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8 *What the . . . ?*

Developments of Hell in its Jewish and Christian Contexts¹

To conclude our investigation of afterlife in antiquity it will be of interest and relevance to plot the development of the category of ‘hell’ in the sense of an afterlife environment of (perpetual) torture and retribution. This begins to take on a dominant role within the Gospels and, thereafter, amongst the writings of the Church Fathers. It is further accentuated within the medieval period and beyond. Although its doctrinal or theological authority within contemporary western Christendom has largely waned, within non-western contemporary Christianity it has a high level of enduring influence. In antiquity, as Christianity spread eastward in the post-apostolic age—as had Judaism before it—and especially in the development of Byzantine culture, the early Medieval doctrine of hell as a place of eternal punishment for the wicked also had a powerful influence on Islam, for the Quran is replete with vivid descriptions of hell as a place of perpetual suffering.

AFTERLIFE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE AND SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM²

Hell, as a place of eternal suffering and punishment, does not exist in the Hebrew Bible. As noted in Chapter 2, early Israelite thought on death simply assumed that it marked for all people the end of worth-while existence. The underworld realm was Sheol or the Pit, synonymous with ‘death’ and the ‘grave,’ or the ‘places of the dead;’ it was a place for the soul/shade and is reflected upon simply as an undesirable abode and a place of no return. Yet, Sheol was not a place of punishment for the wicked, it was simply the place where the souls of all the dead go.³ As we move into the period of Second Temple Judaism, the reception history of the ‘afterlife’ texts of the Hebrew Bible within the Maccabean period show an interesting development. There is continuity in that, on death, the soul/spirit heads to Sheol, a place in the lowest regions of the earth where it remained for a while or forever.⁴ Yet, there is also sharp discontinuity. One of the earliest and clearest expressions of this change is found in Dan 12.1–3 where the various crises of the period generated ideological reflection upon an afterlife which, to the lament of

the Hebrew Bible, saw no distinction between the righteous and the wicked. How could the righteous heroic Jew, put to death for refusal to compromise Torah, comport with those who were all too willing to Hellenize and forsake the traditions of Israel?⁵ The texts of this period, of which Daniel is a part, demonstrate a conceptual shift to take cognisance of the deaths of these righteous martyrs, and, henceforth, for the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature, the souls of the righteous would head in a very different direction to those of the wicked.

In the Apocrypha, we find the author of Sirach noting that “it is easy for the Lord on the day of death to reward individuals according to their conduct” (11.26), and for Tobit, the (righteous) spirit is released to an eternal home (in a positive sense, 3.6). The texts that make up 1 Enoch (second century BCE) are perhaps the earliest within Second Temple Judaism which provide an expression of the concept of explicit divisions *within* Sheol for the righteous and the wicked.⁶ Here, Sheol is conceived as a place of punishment and suffering in a number of ways: unbelievers will be “thrown into the judgment of fire, and perish in wrath and in the force of the eternal judgment” (91.9b; cf. v. 14); or sinners will burn in torment “in blazing flames worse than fire” (100.9; 108.5, 14);⁷ or the destruction of the wicked will come at the hands of the righteous (98.10–13).⁸ Further references to the fires of hell are found in 1 En. 54.1–2; 63.1, 5–8; 56.8; and the idea of eternal torment in 1 En. 22 and 10.6–13 (see further Räisänen 2012a).

This theme continues amongst other Second Temple Jewish texts. For the author of the Apocalypse of Abraham, God has enkindled “a fiery Gehenna” (15.6) in which will be burned those who humiliated and mocked his people and ruled over them; he has prepared the wicked to be “food for the fire of Hades” and “the contents of a wormy belly” (31.3). Henceforth, “they shall putrefy in the belly of the crafty worm Azazel and be burned by the fire of Azazel’s tongue” (31.5). According to the Psalms of Solomon, “the destruction of the sinner is forever and he will not be remembered [. . .] Their lawless actions shall pursue them below into Hades” (3.11–12; 15.10; cf. 13.11), which may imply continuous suffering (see 2.34). So, too, in 14.9 the inheritance of sinners is “Hades, and darkness and destruction.” The book of Judith employs the fire and worms of Isaiah 66 in the sense of endless torment (16.17), while in Pseudo-Philo, there is a “place of fire” in the underworld (23.6; cf. 16.3). In the Apocalypse of Zephaniah hideous angels cast the souls of the wicked into eternal punishment (4.7), and Zephaniah sees the abode of Hades as a “sea of flame like a slime which casts forth much flame and whose waves burn sulfur and bitumen” (6.2). Similarly, for the sectarian community at Qumran, God will destroy the idolaters and wicked from the earth (1QpHab 13; 1 QS 5.13), where there will be torment followed by annihilation (1QS 4.12–14). Here, the wicked will be punished by destroying angels and will experience eternal torment and damnation in “sorrowful mourning and in bitter misery and in calamities of darkness until they are destroyed without remnant or survivor.”

Conversely, 1 Enoch maintains that the souls of the righteous shall live in peace all their days: “Be not sad that your souls have gone down into Sheol in sorrow,” for there is the promise of restoration (102.4f.). This is further accentuated in the Wisdom of Solomon (first century BCE): “The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God [. . .] they are at peace [. . .] their hope is full of immortality [. . .] they will govern nations and rule over peoples [. . .] the Lord will reign over them forever [. . .] they will stand with confidence [and] will receive a glorious crown” (Wis 3.1, 7; 5.1, 15). For the wicked however, their spirits will wander about in torments and, for them, “there will be no resurrection to life” (4 Ezra 7.80–99; cf. 2 Macc 7.14). Elsewhere, Pseudo-Philo (first century CE), even quotes God himself to confirm the same: “At the end of the lot of each one of you will be life eternal, for you and your seed, and I will take your souls and store them in peace until the time allotted the world be complete” (22.13). Hence, all souls are held in Hades until the day of judgement, and the souls of the righteous are kept in what are called ‘chambers,’ where they are guarded by angels, and where they rejoice that they have now escaped what is mortal.

As we have seen, from the perspective of Josephus, once the righteous soul is released from the treasury it then undergoes a transformation into the glorified splendour of angels. For the wicked, however, things are very different. Josephus notes that they are to be detained in an everlasting prison where their souls are subject to eternal punishment (*War* 2.163; *Ant.* 18.14). 2 Baruch confirms the same: “After the appointed day, the wicked will be changed into startling visions and horrible shapes; and they will waste away even more. Then they will go away to be tormented” (cf. 51.1–6). That this section of 2 Baruch speaks of the afterlife of the soul and not the body comports with 49.1–3 where the author looks forward to the soul’s release from its evil chained members, i.e., the body.

For some authors, the souls of the righteous will be given garments of glory where the righteous will shine like the lights of heaven (*1 En.* 51.1–2),⁹ and others concur with Josephus in that resurrected souls will become like angels (see Cavallin 1974: 203–205; Sim 1996: 142–45). For Philo, Abraham left the mortal realm to be “added to the people of God [. . .] having received immortality, and having become equal to the angels [. . .] for the angels are incorporeal and happy souls” (*Sacr.* 1.5). In the Ascension of Isaiah, too, the writer describes the seventh heaven, where he saw Enoch and all who were with him “in their robes of the above, and they were like the angels who stand there in great glory” (9.7–8). As for 1 Enoch: “the righteous and the holy ones from among (the risen dead), will all become angels in heaven [. . .] The righteous will shine like the lights of heaven” (*1 En.* 51.1–2; cf. 104.2).

In summary, the reception of the Hebrew Bible’s concept of afterlife within Second Temple Jewish texts demonstrates both continuity and yet discontinuity. There is continuity in the sense that the afterlife experience is for the soul alone, not the body. The body, as many comparative texts of the ancient Near East recognize, simply decomposes (see Brandon 1967;

Tromp 1969). The dramatic change within Second Temple Judaism rests in the demarcation of righteous and wicked souls after death and their final place of abode. The righteous soul departs to a place of blessing, the wicked to a place of torment. This sharp disjuncture emerges within a context of ideological reflection within the Maccabean crisis and is made for a number of polemical or apologetic reasons.

HELL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

So how does this comport with the concept of a tortuous afterlife in the New Testament? Within the earliest writings of the New Testament, which are the genuine letters of the apostle Paul, there is no Hades, no Gehenna, no ‘pit,’ and no ‘hell.’ There will certainly be a day of wrath when vengeance will be inflicted on the unbelieving, but there is no concept of an eternal suffering in the fires of hell.¹⁰ In this sense, Paul simply assumes that sinners and unbelievers will have a different fate to believers; i.e., only the dead in Christ are raised (1 Thess 4.16; 1 Cor 15.23). Although the apostle is unspecific, it would appear that deceased non-believers are not resurrected at all (perhaps being annihilated after judgement). As argued above, in the Corinthian correspondence (esp. 1 Cor 15; 2 Cor 4–5) we find Paul in continuity with Second Temple Jewish texts in that he envisions an afterlife comprised of the soul, although he can confusingly employ *body* language. As noted there, at this point he does not mean an existence of flesh-and-blood (1 Cor 15.50), but some kind of anthropomorphic entity capable of housing the spirit. His revelatory experience was of the new post-mortem existence of Christ in the form of christophanic glory similar to theophanies noted of Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible, of which no author uses the term ‘body.’¹¹ What Paul appears to mean in terms of the glorified Christ is actually a new entity stripped of its natural flesh and blood.

Along with the weight of Second Temple Jewish texts discussed above, and particularly the writings of Josephus, Paul most likely construes Jesus’ death being followed by his soul raised from Sheol (i.e., from the dead); and, as Josephus, being taken up to heaven. From there the now glorified Christ returns from the heavens to reveal himself in successive christophanies. Whereas for Josephus, the soul will “at the end of the ages” enter a new habitation, for Paul, his revelatory encounter with the risen Christ functions as some kind of proleptic experience, a depiction of the first-fruits and an image of the splendour awaiting believers. At the end of the age, when there is a new or re-creation, the righteous will be transformed into some new existence which Paul describes (in 1 Cor 15) as a *resurrection ‘body’* or, later (2 Cor 5), as a dwelling from heaven, a house/building from God eternal in the heavens. So, the ‘chaste body/new habitation’ of Josephus can be seen to stand in correlation to the new heavenly ‘form’ that Paul experienced—within the perspective of Luke, in any case—on the Damascus road.

In sum, the reception of the afterlife scenarios of the Hebrew Bible within the Pauline corpus, like those of other Second Temple Jewish texts, demonstrate both continuity and discontinuity. Paul is in continuity with an emphasis on the afterlife of the soul/spirit and not a resurrected physical earthly body (and so is consistent with other Second Temple texts), and yet he stands in discontinuity with the Hebrew Bible in his affirmation of a day of wrath and distinctions of afterlife scenarios for the souls of the righteous as opposed to the wicked. He stands in continuity with other Second Temple Jewish texts when they speak of a positive afterlife for the soul of the righteous and when they speak of eternal punishment for the wicked (2 Thess 1.9).¹²

It is only in the Synoptic Gospels (and James 3.6) that, for the first time in the Biblical literature, we see the construct of what is normally understood as Hell (the translation of the Greek, *Gehenna*).¹³ In Mark 9.43 it is placed on the lips of Jesus: “If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better to enter life maimed than to have two hands and go to hell.” It is repeated in 9.45,

If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell.

and in 9.47,

If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell.

In this section of the Markan text there are numerous textual variants: in particular, the identical statements of vv. 44 and 46 (“where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched”), are omitted by a large number of significant manuscripts and should not be read (so, Lane 1974: 346; Metzger 1994: 86–87). At Mark 9.45 the textual apparatus of the UBS4 details the textual variants found alongside the Greek phrase εἰς τὴν γέενναν (into hell) which is also found at 9.43. These include:

- εἰς γέενναν (lacking the definite article)
- εἰς τὴν γέενναν, τοῦ πυρὸς (into the hell of fire)
- εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον (into the unquenchable fire)
- εἰς τὴν γέενναν, εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον (into hell, into the unquenchable fire)

A likely scenario for these textual changes would be that the original text was simply: “it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, with two feet to be thrown into hell,” which would then parallel vv. 43 & 47. Yet, such a reading gives no sense of either the type of punishment to be administered

in hell, or the temporal longevity of that punishment. In these instances, the various textual variants, through scribal additions, can be seen to determine and accentuate the nature of Gehenna: it is now the “fire of hell” or the “unquenchable fire,” where “their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched” (v. 44). These various additions assert unambiguously that Gehenna will be a place of *eternal* punishment (so, Raisanen 2012a: 369).

Furthermore, Mark 9.49 is found in three major textual forms: “For everyone will be salted with fire;” “For every sacrifice will be salted with fire;” and “For everyone will be salted with fire and every sacrifice will be salted with fire.” The various additional minor textual variants with these phrases are even more diverse and are not found in the Synoptic parallels of Matthew or Luke (see, Lane 1974: 346–47; Metzger 1994: 87). Especially interesting is that Matthew, who employs γέεναν more extensively than Mark or Luke, omits Mark’s εἰς τὴν γέεναν in his parallel of Mark 9.43. It would thus appear that the various scribal additions to Mark appeared in the later textual history of the Gospel with the sole purpose of accentuating the horror of Gehenna.

In a similar way, the extensive use of Gehenna in Matthew may be for apologetic or polemical reasons where he follows the (original) Markan tradition, yet extends and intensifies it as part of a sustained anti-Jewish polemic (see Stanton 1992). This is certainly clear in Matt 23.15, 33 (and possibly 5.22 and 10.28) where he employs Gehenna in the context of a sharp attack on the Pharisees. Indeed, throughout his Gospel, Matthew repeatedly undermines the authority of the Pharisees and criticizes their behaviour:

- 5:11–12. God’s favour rests with a faithful minority ‘persecuted for righteousness sake’ who are contrasted (5:20) with the unrighteous Pharisees.
- ch. 6 highlights the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes.
- 8.5–13, the faith of the centurion and the messianic banquet at which the Jews are rejected.
- The parable of the vineyard (21:33–46). The Kingdom of God will be taken away and handed over to other tenants/nation (Gk, *ethnos*). The Pharisees realize that he is referring to them. Both of these points are Matthean additions or alterations to Mark.
- ch. 23 contains the most sustained polemic. The sustained denunciation of the Pharisees; attribution to them of the death of prophets, wise men, and scribes.
- Matthew’s use of ‘Jews’ indicates an ideological break (28:15). This is also evident in Matthew’s use of “their” synagogues (4:23; 9:35; 10:17; 12:9; 13:54). In the last two texts, Matthew has added these to his Markan source (and cf. “your” synagogues in 23:35).

Elsewhere in Matthew there are those who will be thrown into “outer darkness” or into the “furnace of fire” where there will be “weeping and gnashing

of teeth.” Six of the seven New Testament occurrences of this phrase appear in Matthew.¹⁴ These are found in the pericopes of the banquets of Matt 8.12 and 22.13 where the unwelcome guests are cast out; in 13.42 (the Parable of the Tares) and 13.50 (the Parable of the Dragnet), where punishment is made against the wicked and those who commit lawlessness; and finally, in 24.15 (the Parable of the Faithful Servant) and 25.50 (the Parable of the Talents), where punishment is served on the hypocrites and worthless slaves. In the latter, the final scene of judgement has the slave cast into the *eternal fire* (25.31–46).

Matthew 7.13 also claims that the narrow gate and difficult road for the few is contrasted with the wide gate and the easy road for the many which leads to destruction (ᾠλώλεια). In 10.28, Matthew has a dramatic use of *Gehenna* when he asserts: “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” The Lukan parallel to this text is of interest for while Luke 12.5 omits the language of the soul, he does, like Matthew, have a single dramatic use of *Gehenna*: “But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!” That said, the parallel to various Matthean texts in Luke 13.28, has the evildoers being cast out and who then suffer “weeping and gnashing of teeth,” and Luke also has a vivid description of a rich man being tormented in Hades and suffering agony in the flames. Here it appears that the soul of the poor man is carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham (as Job in *T. Job* or Adam in *Apoc. Moses*), while the body of the rich man is buried and his soul descends to the underworld. Interestingly, the torment begins immediately on death.¹⁵

Elsewhere in the Gospels, *Gehenna* is used consistently to refer to a place of punishment prepared for the wicked. These include: the devil and his angels (Matt 25.41; Luke 8.31); the hypocrites and disobedient;¹⁶ and those who reject Jesus, or God, or the prophets.¹⁷ For the Synoptic writers, *Gehenna* may be pre-existent (Matt 25.41, where it has been ‘prepared’ beforehand), and its punishment is eternal (Matt 25.41, 46). It stands as both the place of judgement for the soul of the wicked immediately after death (Luke 12.5), and for the judgement of the wicked in a reunited body-and-soul after resurrection and judgement (Matt 10.28).¹⁸ Predictably, its location is understood by Jesus to be in the depths of the earth (Matt 11.23; Luke 10.15), and, as noted, there is an emphasis that individuals sent here will be in the body.¹⁹ Finally, it seems that Jesus taught that hell would involve an eternal, conscious punishment, with such images as the “undying worm,” the “fire that is not put out,” and the emotive picture of “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”²⁰ Räisänen remarks that “Several of Jesus’ hell sayings bear an embarrassing harshness towards members of the in-group (Mark 9.43–47; Matt 5.29–30); such threats are warning exhortations to the in-group, sometimes in drastic hyperbolic language” (2012: 376).²¹

So, the language of the afterlife placed upon the lips of Jesus in the Gospels vis-à-vis the demarcation of the righteous and the wicked stands in

continuity with Second Temple Judaism but not with the Hebrew Bible. Yet, such language also stands in *discontinuity* with Second Temple Judaism in its assertion that postmortem judgement will be made in a bodily form. As we have seen, this is part of a trend towards the end of the first century CE and beyond where discussion took place over the punishment of the wicked and the necessity of the presence of the body. As it was thought that the immortal soul could feel no pain, a physical aspect to post-mortem existence was necessary in order for suitable punishment to take place.²²

Hence, the textual history of the Gospel of Mark, and subsequent additions and changes in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, demonstrates the editorial activity of various later scribes in order to accentuate the horrors of the afterlife for the wicked. As noted, this may be part of a polemical or apologetic move during the late first and early second centuries as the Christ-movement came into increasing conflict with both Judaism and Roman imperialism (particularly with regard to the Roman Imperial Cult²³), and even from intra-Christian conflict(s) concerning various schismatic groups.²⁴

AFTERLIFE IN THE LATER NEW TESTAMENT AND POST-APOSTOLIC LITERATURE²⁵

Descriptions of the afterlife in the later New Testament and post-apostolic literature continue the trend established in the Gospels. Hell is now a place of eternal punishment for the wicked described in language which becomes increasingly horrific.²⁶

For Jude and 2 Peter, the end of the wicked is “destruction” (2 Pet 1.12; 2.1, 3; 3.16), where the destruction of Sodom is an example of fiery judgement (Jude 7; 2 Pet 2:6–10; cf. Matt 10:15; 1 Clem. 11.1–2). God will rescue the righteous from the fire as he did Lot, whereupon he will then destroy both heaven and earth in a fiery conflagration (2 Pet 3.7–12). The author of the pseudonymous text of 2 Thessalonians describes the parousia of Christ being revealed in flaming fire, “inflicting vengeance” on the unbeliever and the disobedient: “These will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction” which means the separation “from the presence of the Lord” (1.7–9). The explicit sense here is of an eternal retributive punishment. The later New Testament also offers a picture of Christ descending into Hell during the time between his death and resurrection to preach to the spirits in prison (1 Pet 3.19; 4.6; Eph 4.9–10), a doctrine which was firmly established by the second century in the works of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus.²⁷

The most sustained and graphic picture of the horrors of the afterlife in the later New Testament is found in the book of Revelation. Here, the final abode for both the wicked angels and the unrighteous is the “lake of fire,” where, “The smoke of their torment goes up forever” (14.11; cf. 19.20;

20.10–15). Räisänen notes that as the smoke goes up in the presence of the lamb, “it seems that he is pleased with the spectacle” (2012: 370). The fire or burning sulphur is common in a range of extra-Biblical apocalyptic literature where it is equivalent to Gehenna.²⁸ Certainly, the beast and false prophet, followed by the devil, death, and Hades, join the wicked in being cast into this fiery lake (20.10, 14–15, 20; 21.8). The book of Revelation also employs the language of the Abyss, a bottomless pit, from which the beast emerges to make war on the saints (9.1–2; 11.7; 14.18; 17.8; 20.1–3, 7).²⁹ Interestingly, Rev 20.13–15 also notes the significance of the resurrection and final judgement which takes place at the eschaton, but one which, for some, is followed by punishment. Like Matthew, the emphasis on the punishment of the unbeliever in Revelation may also be for an anti-Jewish or anti-Roman polemic (Rev 2.9–10, 14, 20; 3.9; Friesen 2001; Pagels 2012).

The picture of Hell in the later New Testament is continued into the post-apostolic age with the language of “unquenchable fire” in Ignatius (35/50–98/115),³⁰ “burning hell” and “eternal destruction” in the Shepherd of Hermas (95/100),³¹ and, in Polycarp (69–155 CE), the fire of coming judgement and eternal punishment reserved for the ungodly—an eternal fire which is never extinguished.³² The author of 2 Clement (17.5–7), quoting Isaiah 66, notes that the righteous will see how the apostates are “punished with grievous torments in unquenchable fire [. . .] their worm does not die [. . .] and they are a spectacle to all flesh.”³³ Justin Martyr (100–165 CE), too, employs the language of the “fires of hell” for apologetic purposes in that if Christians believe wickedness leads to the eternal fires of hell, they are highly motivated to live as good citizens (Justin *Apol.* 1.12, 17). Interestingly, he also makes a polemic against the Imperial Cult and asserts that eternal punishment awaits those not offering worship to God (1.17). In the writings of Justin Martyr, “eternal fire” was certainly intended to intimate everlasting suffering (*Apol.* 1.8, 52.).

Between the late second and mid-third centuries CE, the descriptive language of Hell becomes more acute. For Hippolytus (212 CE):

the lovers of evil shall be given eternal punishment. The unquenchable and unending fire awaits these latter, and a certain fiery worm which does not die and which does not waste the body but continually bursts forth from the body with unceasing pain. No sleep will give them rest; no night will soothe them; no death will deliver them from punishment; no appeal of interceding friends will profit them.

(*Against the Greeks* 3)

In the thought of Minucius Felix (226 CE): “clever fire burns the limbs and restores them, wears them away and yet sustains them, just as fiery thunderbolts strike bodies but do not consume them.” They would prefer to be

annihilated rather than be restored for punishment.³⁴ Equally, for Cyprian of Carthage (252):

An ever-burning Gehenna and the punishment of being devoured by living flames will consume the condemned; nor will there be any way in which the tormented can ever have respite or be at an end. Souls along with their bodies will be preserved for suffering in unlimited agonies [. . .] The grief at punishment will then be without the fruit of repentance; weeping will be useless, and prayer ineffectual. Too late will they believe in eternal punishment, who would not believe in eternal life.

(*Demet.*24)

Finally, for Clement of Alexandria (d. 217) and Origen (d. 254), the punishments of hell are conceived of as pedagogical and remedial, and so are temporary. For both, ideas of eternal suffering are incompatible with God's nature and hell is similar to what would later be established as purgatory, where punishment is restorative and is followed by eternal life in God's presence. For Origen, in particular, God does not have the human characteristic of revenge for that would imply repaying evil for evil; instead, a fiery hell is some kind of metaphor.³⁵

Two key texts of the second and third centuries are the Apocalypse of Peter and the Apocalypse of Paul (Latin, *visio pauli*) both of which provide extensive accounts and vivid descriptions of eternal torment in the fires of hell (see, Bernstein 1993: 282–305; Czachesz 2009: 208–209; Nicklas 2012: 461–74). In the Apocalypse of Peter, blasphemers hang by the tongue suspended over fire; female adulterers hang by the hair and male adulterers by the head or feet, both over fire. Murderers are smitten by worms, snakes, or beasts; and those who persecuted the righteous are cast into a dark place where they are beaten by evil spirits, and their inwards eaten by restless worms. The author continues:

And near those there were again women and men gnawing their own lips, and being punished and receiving a red-hot iron in their eyes: and these were they who blasphemed and slandered the way of righteousness [. . .] And over against these again other men and women gnawing their tongues and having flaming fire in their mouths: and these were the false witnesses [. . .] And in a certain other place there were pebbles sharper than swords or any spit, red-hot, and women and men in tattered and filthy raiment rolled about on them in punishment: and these were the rich who trusted in their riches and had no pity for orphans and widows, and despised the commandment of God [. . .] And in another great lake, full of pitch and blood and mire bubbling up, there stood men and women up to their knees: and these were the usurers and those who take interest on interest.

(*Ap. Peter* 20–33)

The author of the Apocalypse of Paul narrates the terrors of hell in an even more horrific way and includes details of the punishment of those omitted by the Apocalypse of Peter (*Ap. Paul* 31–44). As in the Apocalypse of Peter, terrible punishments are inflicted upon the wicked (sorcerers, adulterers, and the like), but the Apocalypse of Paul also includes gruesome punishment on a list of others: wayward church ministers (priests, bishops, deacons, and readers); those who profited from usury or who mocked the word of God; those who broke a fast before the appointed time; or women who attended church wearing make-up. Interestingly, however, the severest punishments are reserved for those who either deny that Christ came in the flesh—or was borne by the Virgin Mary—and for those who deny that Christ was resurrected in the physical flesh (*Ap. Paul* 41–42). The vivid imagery of these apocalypses fuelled the literature and art of the medieval period.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HELL IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The conceptions of hell described by the writers of the second and third-century church continued to be embellished into the Middle Ages. Roman Catholic thinkers in the period developed a series of levels in hell, all with no Biblical basis:

- Infernus, the place of torment for the unrighteous damned and the demons. This is, in popular imagination, the place most often associated with the concept of hell.
- Purgatory, where the saved souls go to be purged of the temporal effects of their sins.
- Limbus Infantium (Limbo of the Infants), a place of perfect, natural, subjective happiness for those who died before Baptism but who have not committed personal sins, and so do not warrant punishment.
- Limbus Patrum (Limbo of the Patriarchs), a place for the righteous who lived before Christ came to earth. It is this part of hell that, for some New Testament texts, Christ descended into. In Catholic theology it no longer exists.

A key feature of the period was the concept of Purgatory which began to take a defining influence in the latter half of the twelfth century (see esp. Jacques Le Goff 1984).³⁶ Le Goff outlines its beginnings:

When, in the fourth century, the greatest Fathers of the Church conceived of the idea (shared with minor differences by Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine) that certain sinners might be saved, most probably by being subjected to a trial of some sort, a new belief was born, a belief that gradually matured until in the twelfth century it became the belief

in Purgatory. Until the end of the twelfth century the noun *purgatorium* did not exist: *the* Purgatory had not yet been born.

(1984: 3)

For the Church Fathers, the foundations of this belief were key texts of Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament. These included: 2 Macc 12.41–46 (prayer and atonement offered for the dead so that they may be delivered from their sin); Matt 12.31–32 (sin can be redeemed in the next world); 1 Cor 15.29–30 (prayers on behalf of the dead); and 1 Cor 3.11–15 (a man's work may be burned but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire). Le Goff notes that the latter text “played a crucial role in the development of Purgatory in the Middle Ages [. . .] The idea of Purgatory as fire preceded its idea as a place” (1984: 43). The concept of Purgatory became part of Catholic doctrine between the middle of the fifteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century when it was affirmed at the Council of Florence in 1439 and then at the Council of Trent in 1562.

The artistic and literary representations of purgatory and hell in the late Medieval and early Renaissance periods enhanced and gave suitable expression to a theology of the afterlife within Catholicism (see Hughes 1968). Three of the key works of the period are the *Hortus Deliciarum*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and the later Renaissance fresco, the *Last Judgement*, by Michelangelo.³⁷ As a preface to a discussion of the influence of any form of art in the late Medieval to high Renaissance periods, it must be remembered that a singular truth bound together almost everyone alive in late medieval Europe: unconditional and total belief in Christianity and with it concepts of heaven and an eternal torment in hell. As Robert Hughes notes: “the prospect of Heaven and Hell was, for more than fifteen hundred years, the chief religious obsession for most of the population of Europe” (1968: 7). The *Hortus Deliciarum* (Garden of Delights) provided visual expression to the latter. Compiled by the Abbess Herrad of Landsberg between 1167 and 1185, it is an illuminated manuscript designed as a pedagogical tool for young nuns at Hohenburg Abbey in Alsace. It was one of the most celebrated illuminated manuscripts of the period for it stood as a compendium of twelfth-century knowledge, containing poems, music, and 336 illustrations, the most well-known of which is a depiction of hell (folio 155).³⁸

The image is strikingly graphic with a jagged border, black background (unique in the period), and accented by red tongues of fire and rivers of flame that divide the four registers of the scene into distinct levels of hell. The demons are a bluish-grey colour which serves to highlight them from the black and red of their surroundings (see Griffiths 2007; Spencer 1927). The sinners represented in the image suffer a variety of torments: some are strung up and tortured in various ways; others are force-fed coins; while still others are boiled in large cauldrons (these are clearly identified as Jews and knights). In the deepest register, the lowest level of hell, Satan (chained at the neck, Rev 20.1–3) is seated upon a throne of beasts with a human antichrist



Figure 8.1 Depiction of hell. Folio 155 from the Hortus Deliciarum.

in his lap. In this level stands a fully clothed clergyman (in colour), being led towards Satan by a devil.

Herrad's concept of hell developed into the refined literary visions that we read of in Chaucer as well as in the works of the poet Dante (1265–1321). Indeed, from the period, the primary images of hell we have today come from

Dante's *Divine Comedy* in which the reader is taken through three realms of the afterlife: Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. The poet expounds literary places for every type of person, allowing him to editorialize about people's actions in the world of his day. In the process, he creates vivid scenes of all three realms. Le Goff notes of Dante: "The concept of Purgatory benefited from an extraordinary stroke of luck: the poetic genius of Dante (b. 1265) carved out for it an enduring place in human memory. Dante's work makes a vast symphony out of the fragmentary themes; the noblest representation of Purgatory ever conceived" (1984: 334; and on Dante's work, pp. 334–55). These, then, became the basis for virtually all of the artistic depictions of hell in the Middle Ages and our modern conceptions of afterlife with demons, eternal torment, and fire. All of it originates from Dante's artistic imagination; none derives from the Biblical texts.³⁹

In Michelangelo's *The Last Judgement*⁴⁰ (1536–41), the well-known fresco spanning the entire altar wall of the Sistine Chapel, the artist provides a fitting summary of reflection upon death, resurrection, and the afterlife in the period of the High Renaissance. Christ, centred, with Mary on his right, is surrounded by the saints, while a group of angels (centred below him) announce, with trumpets and open books, the judgement of all people. From the viewer's perspective scenes on the bottom left show the righteous leaving their graves and, some with the help of angels, rising to join the elect with Christ. Other righteous souls return to physical bodies and some, shrouded in burial cloths or as ghostly skeletons, sit between the forces of heaven and hell.

In contrast, scenes of hell on the bottom right show Michelangelo's influence of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, with Charon, the ferryman of the underworld, beating and casting the wicked from his boat, who are then dragged down by demons into the depths of hell (for fuller details see Mancinelli 2000). Another figure from Dante is Minos, the mythological king of Hell, seen as the most prominent figure in the bottom right, and painted in the likeness of one of Michelangelo's fiercest critics, the Pope's master of ceremonies Biagio da Cesena. It is said that when Cesena complained to the Pope of the image, the pontiff joked that his jurisdiction did not extend to hell, so the portrait would have to remain.

The commissioning of the work was done by Pope Clement VII (1523–34), the second of the Medici popes and the ruling family of Florence, who many believe abused their power and in some senses were thought to have 'bought' the papacy. The first Medici pope, Leo X (1513–21) is best remembered for granting indulgences for those who donated to the reconstruction of St Peter's Basilica, a papal offer which was critically challenged as part of Martin Luther's 95 Theses in 1517. The turmoil of the Reformation during Clement's papacy saw Protestant armies, fuelled by religious hatred of the Catholic Church, sacking Rome in 1527 and engaging in a spree of killing, burning, and looting. It was in this context that Clement commissioned the *Last Judgement* in order to reassure Catholics of papal authority and of the



Figure 8.2 *The Last Judgement* by Michelangelo.

Roman Catholic Church as the only faith which could assure eternal salvation.⁴¹ Those considered to be outside the Church, indicated vividly in the fresco, were doomed to an eternity in hell.

CONCLUSION

The reception history of the Hebrew Bible's concept of the afterlife can be seen to have been multivalent. Within Second Temple Judaism an emphasis upon the afterlife of the soul remains, yet this is transformed for various apologetic and polemical reasons into scenarios in which the righteous soul departs to a place of blessing and the wicked soul to place of torment. The

rising influence of Hellenism within the period, and particularly the conflict under Antiochus Epiphanes and the ensuing struggles of the Maccabees, fomented a conceptual change wherein the faithful Jew would be rewarded and the apostate Jew condemned. In the period of the New Testament, the earliest writings of the apostle Paul demonstrate continuity with Second Temple Jewish texts but which, along with post-Biblical Judaism in general, place him in tension with the Hebrew Bible.

Significant changes begin with the Gospels and later New Testament for not only is there development away from an emphasis on an afterlife for the soul alone—toward an afterlife which comprised of the body and soul together—but the concept of *Gehenna*, the underworld place of torment and fire takes precedence. This was begun within the Maccabean period but accentuated in the later New Testament, which begins a trend continuing into the post-apostolic age with further emphasis upon the horrors of hell. These changes derived from apologetic or polemical impetus as the early Christ-movement attempted to define and defend itself both against first-century Judaism and Greco-Roman paganism. The Church Fathers, in particular, employed the fear of hell for ideological purposes in asserting ethical priorities in the early church. Finally, further literary emphasis in the late medieval period was compounded by visual modes of expression. In the case of the *Hortus Deliciarum* this was done for pedagogical purposes, and for the *Last Judgement* for apologetic reasons within the religious and socio-political turmoil of the early Reformation.

Overall, the development of Sheol/Hell can be construed as an ideological construct stemming from notions of religious authority: it was the Jewish religious hierarchy in Second Temple Judaism who demarcated the righteous from the wicked and asserted the victory and blessing of the faithful righteous Jew in the face of encroaching Hellenism; it was the religious leaders of the early Christ-movement or the post-apostolic ecclesiastical church who held the keys to heaven and hell and who, similarly, were able to differentiate the wicked from the righteous; and within a medieval framework which believed fundamentally in the truth of Christianity, it was the Papal office alone which held the keys to heaven and the certainty of a blessed afterlife.

NOTES

1. Some of this chapter is taken from my work, Finney (2013). In general see also, Bernstein (1993); Räisänen (2012, 2012a); Van Rensburg & Van Eck (2008).
2. On the following section see Bauckham (1992, 1998); Cavallin (1974); De Boer (1988); Longenecker (1998); Lunde (1992); Schürer (1979: 2.539–546 (and bibliog. 2.539, n. 90)); Wedderburn (1987); Wright (2003).
3. 2 Macc 6.23; 1 En. 102.5; 103.7; Sib. Or. 1.81–84; Ps.-Phoc. 112–113; 2 Bar. 23.4; T. Ab. resc. A 8.9; 19.7.
4. Wis 1.14; 12.1; Tob 3.6, 10; 5.12; 13.2; Sir 38.16–23; Bar 2.17; 4 Ezra 2.45; 4 Macc 17.2; 18.23.
5. Barrett (1987: 306) writes of the literature of the Maccabees, “In these circumstances, martyrdoms took place, perhaps for the first time in religious history.”

6. Glasson (1961: 12), suggests that such an idea came from the Greeks.
7. Cf. 102.1; 103.7–8.
8. Cf. 94.6–10; 96.6; 98.14; 99.1, 9, 11.
9. Cf. ch. 22; 62.13–16; 103.3–4; 104.2.
10. On the day of wrath: Rom 2.5, 8; 3.5; 5.9; 9.22; on the destruction of unbelievers: ‘destruction’ (where Paul employs ἀπώλεια; forms of ἀπόλλυμι), Rom 2.12; 9.22; 1 Cor 1.18; 2 Cor 2.15; 4.3; 1 Thess 5.3; Phil 1.28; 3.19. Cf. 2 Thess 1.7–8, ‘when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.’
11. Although theophanies in the Hebrew Bible can be described in anthropomorphic terms (Gen 32.28–30), they are normally described in terms of the supra-natural (Exod 13.21–22; 24.9–11; Judg 13.21–22; Isa 6.1).
12. A later pseudepigraphal text does assert that the wicked “will pay the penalty of *eternal destruction*, away from the presence of the Lord” (italics, mine). As such, the text stands in continuity with other texts of the later New Testament (see below).
13. Statistics of the use of ‘Gehenna’ in the four Gospels is Matt (7); Mark (3); Luke (1); John (0).
14. Matt 8.12; 13.42, 50; 22.13; 24.51; 25.30. Luke has the phrase at 13.28.
15. Räisänen (2012: 370), notes that there is no need to see this as an interim state.
16. Matt 5:22; 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; 25:30; 18:8–9 // Mark 9:43–47; Matt 24:45–51//Luke 12:41–46; 23:15, 33; John 15:6; 5:28–30.
17. Matt 11:20–24// Luke 10:12–15; cf. also Matt 8:8–12// Luke 7:6–9 with 13:28–29; Matt 22:1–14; 25:41–46; Matt 23:31–33; Luke 16:29–31.
18. Interestingly, while Luke 16.23, 26 and Rev 20.13f. note that all of the dead will be in Hades, 1 Pet 3.19 has only the spirits of the wicked there.
19. Cf. Matt 5:29–30; 10:28; 18:8–9; Mark 9:43–47 (unquenchable fire); cf. also Luke 12:4–5.
20. Matt 25:46; Mark 9:48; cf. Isa 66:24; Matt 8:12// Luke 13:28; Matt 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; cf. *Sib. Or.* 2:305; Mark 9:48; Matt 25:41. However, the use of the verb destroy (ἀπόλλυμι; Matt 10:28), and the frequent image of “burning” has been understood by some to imply annihilation (e.g., Matt 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; John 15:6; cf. 4 Ezra 7:61; 1 En. 10:13–14; 38:3–6; 90:26–7; 91:9; 108:3).
21. Räisänen (2012: 376).
22. Riley (1995: 161); Athenagoras, *Res.* 21.4.
23. A topic of increasing recent interest, see Friesen (2001); Kraybill (2010).
24. E.g., the “Jews” of the Fourth Gospel and secessionist group of 1 and 2 John.
25. See especially, Shogren (2000).
26. On the history of the development of the character of Satan in the period, see Pagels (1991, 1994).
27. Goppelt (1993: 260–63). On the harrowing of hell, see esp., Bernstein (1993: 272–82).
28. Perhaps paralleled with the Acherusian lake of fire found in Greek sources.
29. The Apocalypse of Zephaniah (6:15, 1st CE) connects the abyss to Hades.
30. Ignatius, *Eph.* 16.1–2; see also, 2 *Clem.* 5.4, “fear him who, after you are dead, has power to cast soul and body into the flames of hell.”
31. *Hermas*, *Vis.* 3.7.2; *Hermas*, *Sim.* 6.2.4
32. Mart. *Pol.* 11.2 ; 2.3. See, Bernstein (1993); Czachesz (2009: 207–30); Nicklas (2012: 461–74).
33. The third CE Gospel of Philip (66.27–67.1), also employs Isa 66 in a similar context and in a similar way.
34. *Octavius* 34:12–5:3.
35. Further on Origen’s concept of hell, see Bernstein (1993: 305–13).

36. On the influence of the *Apocalypse of Paul* see Le Goff (1984: 35–7).
37. On the visual imagery of hell in art see especially, Camporesi (1991); Hughes (1968).
38. The image is in the public domain, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hortus_Deliciarum_-_Hell.jpg (accessed May 15, 2015). Contemporaneous with the work was Torcello's *Last Judgement* which also features knights and priests (here, being harried into hell by angels), and Satan seated on a throne with the antichrist in his lap. Others would include Giotto's, *The Last Judgement* and Taddio di Bartolo's *Hell* (c. 1320).
39. The most extensive illustrations made of Dante's text are those by Gustave Doré between 1832–83; see Dore (1976, 1976a). Contemporaneous with Dante's work was Nardo di Cione's fresco, *The Inferno* (Sta Maria Novell, Florence, 1354–57), which, as Le Goff notes, is the only major fresco of Hell which minutely followed Dante's programme in the *Divine Comedy* (1984: 159).
40. The image is in the public domain, <http://maitaly.wordpress.com/2011/04/04/michelangelo-sistine-chapel-the-last-judgement/> (accessed May 15, 2015).
41. A clear and unambiguous depiction of the white-haired and bearded St Peter stands on Christ's left, looking over to the saviour and holding out the keys (to heaven and earth) in his left hand.

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Conclusion

In Chapter 1 we saw that there were distinct changes in Greek reflection on the afterlife from the Homeric period onwards. For Homer, the afterlife for the vast majority was an eternity spent as a disembodied yet conscious soul in Hades; while for the very few, there was physical immortalization and transformation into a deity. Although later Greek thought would include additional options such as the soul being reincarnated into a new body or ideas of astral immortality, the notion of immortal flesh held strong attraction and was still current during the emergence of nascent Christianity. In this sense, reflection upon Christ from a Greco-Roman perspective would have located him within an established Greek tradition: he existed on earth as a son of a god; he was originally mortal (evidenced by the fact that he died on a cross); and the Christian tradition that after death he was resurrected and left the ordinary world was clear evidence that he was made immortal by the gods. These were all in agreement with a pattern seen repeatedly in Greek thought and which included, of course, the Christian dogma of the late first century and beyond, that Christ had gained *bodily* incorruptibility. Here, the assertion of bodily continuity was imperative and became an essential aspect of Christian thought: Christ's body was not left to rot and decompose on either the cross, a common grave, or in a tomb; rather, the immortalization of the body happened quickly, soon after death. The disappearance of the body from the tomb is also consistent within a Greek tradition of the body being made incorruptible and re-located somewhere else for a time.

Within a Greek tradition, the nature of Christ's death is also marked by the fact that the legs were not broken, for this would have meant that he would have to suffer such an ailment forever within his immortalized body. Yet, the fact of bodily continuity before and after immortalization is evidenced by the wound in his side and the stigmata which would persist for all time. Hence, what happened to Christ was entirely plausible to a Hellenistic audience, a point noted by Justin Martyr when he writes: "[when we say] that he, Jesus Christ, our teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, we propose *nothing new* from what you believe about those you consider sons of Zeus" (1 *Apol.* 21.1, italics mine).

When we turned to the Hebrew Bible in Chapter 2, we found quite a different perspective on the afterlife, for it was argued there that the afterlife, for all, both righteous and wicked, was simply the descent of the soul into Sheol. There were no exceptions. In this sense, the ancient Israelites shared the perspective of other ancient Mesopotamian cultures that there was no return from Sheol by a living person (although in the Hebrew Bible, the soul or shade of the prophet Samuel is called up out of the underworld to converse with Saul). Hence, those texts of the Hebrew Bible written about or by those who claim to be near Sheol, or in Sheol, or needing deliverance from Sheol, concern those who are simply near death, or suffering persecution or harm, or—often in the case of the Psalmist—poignantly reflective of difficult circumstances. In the case of the prophet Ezekiel, it is made in a context of longing for national restoration. The myths of descent and return are simply poetic fancy. To be in the region of death meant to be in death's power.

Yet, the stories and myths of the ancient Israelites provided a vivid framework for explaining the working of their tribal god through a series of crises and of explicating a future hope. These told stories of future national restitution of future glory and honour, when the Israelites would occupy as much as the Promised Land as they desired, when they would flourish and live in peace, and when nations would come streaming to Jerusalem to pay them tribute. Yet, at the time of Deutero-Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others, national restoration was both practically impossible and, without a supreme divine act by the national god, conceptually inconceivable. In this way, the most suitable metaphor for such hope was the use of another conceptually inconceivable category: the language of 'resurrection.'

The crises of the Maccabean period generated further ideological reflection upon concepts of an afterlife which, to the lament of the Hebrew Bible, saw no distinction between the righteous and the wicked. How could the righteous heroic Jew, put to death for refusal to compromise Torah, comport with those who were all too willing to Hellenize and forsake the traditions of Israel? The texts of this period (including the book of Daniel), demonstrate a conceptual shift to take cognisance of these righteous martyrs and, henceforth, for the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature, the soul of the righteous would head in a very different direction to that of the wicked. Some trajectories from the Hebrew Bible did remain: on death the soul/spirit was released from the body to Hades, a place in the lowest regions of the earth, the place of the dead, where it remained forever. Yet, beginning in the writings of the apocrypha, profound differences also begin to emerge: the soul of the righteous is rewarded with a place of blessing and peace whereas the souls of the wicked wander about in torment. Such sentiments, alien to the Hebrew Bible, would be further developed within the pseudepigraphal and apocalyptic literature.

The analysis of Second Temple Jewish literature in Chapter 3 found that there were no texts up to and beyond the First Jewish War which speak unambiguously of the resurrection of the physical body. Rather, there was

an emphasis on the demise of the body (in the sense of its decomposition), together with an assertion of an afterlife experience of the soul or spirit alone. It was argued there that many of those texts commonly espoused to articulate a physical resurrection have been misread or misunderstood or are open to alternative interpretations. In the three texts employed most frequently to argue for the resurrection of the physical body, Josephus says nothing of a physical resurrection, there is a flight of fancy in 2 Maccabees, and 2 Baruch is a late work (certainly, later than most of the New Testament). What is most clear is the overwhelming emphasis upon the afterlife of the soul/spirit. Indeed, Josephus argues that the concept of an immortal soul was actually a Jewish doctrine (*C. Ap.* 1.162, 165).

From the fact that such a substantial amount of Jewish tradition did not entertain a bodily resurrection, but, rather, asserted a continued spiritual existence, it was argued in Chapter 3 that this was the dominant motif of reflection on the afterlife in Second Temple Judaism. Hence, the oft-repeated idea that Jews believed in the resurrection of the body and Greeks the immortality of the soul appears not only incorrect, but erroneous to the point that actually the opposite is true: Greek tradition required the presence of a physical body while Jews of the Second Temple Period emphasized the afterlife of the soul. This central difference between the two may stem from reflection upon the actual nature of the 'divine.' For the Greeks, the gods had physical attributes to the extent that they could have sex with humans, or be hurt or wounded; for the Jews however this was anathema: God was spirit. This summary also has implications for a broader understanding of Jewish anthropology in that perhaps for too long this topic has been read or understood in the shadow of the New Testament's, or early church's, reflection on human constitution and the afterlife.

The same was seen to be true within the writings of the Dead Sea community and, in part, that also of rabbinic literature. As a preface to a study of the New Testament, it was argued that Second Temple Jewish texts and the Scrolls allow us valuable insights into post-mortem existence, particularly in areas which are developments away from those of the Hebrew Bible. In continuity with the Hebrew Bible, these texts assert that the body is made from dust and after death returns to dust; the soul is seen as immortal. In discontinuity with the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple Jewish texts delineate perspectives whereby the souls of the righteous and wicked go to very different places. Those of the righteous go to be with God, and so achieve a sense of bliss and peace; those of the wicked are sent to an everlasting prison where they are subject to eternal punishment. In many texts, the souls of the righteous become like angels or stars in the heavens and apart from one late text (Josephus), there is no unambiguous concept of a physical bodily afterlife (although precisely what this *is* remains unclear). Here, the reconstitution of a physical body is undertaken in the last days as part of God's re-creation or reconstitution of the physical world. This is not to say that one can presume to see the perspective of Josephus developing automatically from his Jewish

background (that would have to be argued); it could be asserted that such notions stemmed from his Greco-Roman milieu. The Jewish authors of the post-Biblical texts stand in discontinuity with the Hebrew Bible most likely following reflection on the afterlife following the Maccabean wars. In the later rabbinic writings, while for some rabbinic texts, there is an unambiguous framework of an afterlife which involves a physical body, elsewhere there are diverging views and debate, and many texts have an emphasis on a conception of an afterlife conceived of more in terms of the soul.

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND BEYOND

The analysis of the New Testament began with the writings of the apostle Paul where it was argued that Paul construes Jesus' death being followed by the raising of his soul and its ascension into heaven. What Paul understands by this is never made explicit. It could mean that Jesus' soul descended first to Sheol (and hence, perhaps pointing to the later traditions of the descent of Christ's *spirit* to the underworld, 1 Pet 3.18; 4.6; cf. Eph 4.9–10), before being raised to the heavenly realm, or it could imply continuity with other Second Temple Jewish texts which suggest an immediate ascent to heaven. In either of these scenarios, this is followed by the transformed and glorified Christ returning from heaven to reveal himself in successive christophanies. Whereas, for Josephus, the soul will 'at the end of the ages' enter a new habitation, for Paul, his revelatory experience is a depiction of the first-fruits, an image of the splendor awaiting believers. At the end of the age, when there is a new or re-creation, the righteous will be transformed and will have some kind of new existence which Paul describes (in 1 Cor 15) as a *spiritual* 'body' or, later (2 Cor 5), as a dwelling from heaven, a house/building from God.

Further, it is of interest and relevance that neither of the two major Jewish writers of Paul's day, Josephus and Philo, construed the immediate afterlife in terms of the physical body. In some sense, Josephus' chaste body/new habitation can be seen to stand in correlation with the newly transformed form of Christ similar to that of Paul's revelatory experience. And for Philo, his account of the afterlife of Moses agrees considerably with the perspective of Paul in that the double nature of Moses' body and soul is transformed into a single entity. In that the physical body is only of secondary importance (if that) to Paul, he appears to have little interest in what happened to Jesus' post-crucifixion body and may have been unconcerned if his physical remains had been found. This would simply have been the bare seed that was sown; the husk that was sloughed off allowing what is within to emerge from the soil. Indeed, perhaps the seed metaphor actually derived from the knowledge that Jesus' physical body was 'sown' in the earth. Certainly, such a perspective agrees with much of the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Jewish texts in that on death the body decomposes into the dust of the earth while the soul departs elsewhere; for the Hebrew Bible to Sheol, for Second

Temple Judaism to be with God (for the righteous) or an unpleasant place (for the wicked), or to the heavens as stars.

If this reading of afterlife in Paul is placed in direct continuity with the analysis of Second-Temple Judaism made above, then all of this makes perfect sense: a simplistic purview of the resurrection of the newly immortalized physical flesh-and-blood Christ is rejected by Paul and in its place stands a nuanced concept of Christ's soul now housed within a new glorious frame. Yet, while standing in continuity with post-Biblical Judaism, such a reading also places Paul in tension with other Biblical traditions which assert a resurrection of Jesus' earthly physical body (particularly the Gospels of Luke and John).

As argued in Chapter 6, following the earliest writings of the New Testament (the primary Pauline corpus and the Gospel of Mark), the general tenor of the much of rest of the New Testament on the post-resurrection state of Christ appears to follow a trajectory away from that of Paul and towards an emphasis on the *physicality* of Christ's post-mortem existence. Nevertheless, there are tensions within these later texts when they overlap with earlier motifs which adhere to a model of the divine exaltation of Christ's soul. These are seen, for example, in the visionary experiences of Stephen and others outlined by Luke, who can, at the same, time hold to a very clear emphasis on Jesus' post-resurrection physical body.

As was also argued in Chapter 6, in searching for the primary category in which the risen and glorified Christ was experienced, it appears that *supernatural vision* is the key. Certainly, Paul's experience of "seeing the lord" derives from his heavenly revelation as vision (1 Cor 15.8). The progressively physical nature and experience of the risen Christ take this initial visionary experience into a new direction and the narratives of the empty tomb and subsequent outworking of this in the Gospels is a later tradition. One can say with certainty that the key figures of Peter and Paul (perhaps James and John also) held to 'vision' as the primary vehicle of revelation of Christ to both themselves and the nascent Christ-movement. Further, that it is these figures, each with a propensity to altered states of consciousness and visions, who were the founding fathers of the initial community and an essential part of its early development—and who played a determining role in the theological shaping of this community—is not to be underestimated.

As such, the assumption of a physically resurrected Christ is unnecessary for these initial revelations, and what perhaps is of greater interest are the doctrinal battles in the emergence of 'unorthodox' theologies which gives rise to the 'whys' and 'wherefores' of the subsequent development of the 'physical' Christ. The assertion of such physicality did, of course, arouse considerable resistance from early Christians (although not pagans). In this context, one could also ask the vital question of whether the story of the empty tomb was new with Mark and whether the women at the tomb, apparently ignoring the command to go and tell the disciples, is an apologetic foil meant to explain why the empty tomb tradition was not known

before Mark. And certainly, the notion that ideas of ‘resurrection’ could be adequately expressed in terms of an empty tomb is certainly shaped by Greco-Roman traditions of the translation and apotheosis of exceptional human beings. As noted, concepts of an empty tomb and ‘missing’ body were essential in the Greco-Roman tradition for pointing towards the physical immortalization of the hero; and this would appear to be a significant reason for the move from the primitive Pauline kerygma of Christ’s resurrection as one of the soul alone, towards one of his full physicality: the rise of Greco-Roman gentiles entering the early Christ-movement (perhaps also alongside the general rejection of the gospel by first-century Jews).

In this way, the Gospel by Luke is pivotal, and makes perfect sense within a context of Greco-Roman resurrection narratives: Christ died (Luke 23.46), following which the women at the tomb find that his body has disappeared (24.3), and learn that it has been taken elsewhere (24.5, 7, it has been raised); and which then returns to earth physically immortalized like the gods, and whereby Christ is able to vanish from sight (24.31) and miraculously re-appear (24.36). At this point he is able to provide unambiguous proof of his newly immortalized physical body (24.39–43), before finally returning to the heavens (24.51). For Luke, like Matthew, it is vital to assert to his Hellenistic audience that Jesus’ body had been taken elsewhere and not left decomposing in the tomb; otherwise the assertion of deification and physical immortality would have been impossible to defend. This is highlighted again by Luke in Acts when Peter asserts that Jesus’ flesh, “did not see corruption” (Acts 2.25–28).

Hence, we may argue that Luke is making a concerted effort to establish a framework of resurrection belief more aligned to Greco-Roman thought. And beginning with Luke, one could argue that this is why early Christianity began to abandon the Second Temple Jewish emphasis on the afterlife of the soul alone and assert an afterlife which held the body as a central component. Simply put, this was more attuned to Hellenistic thought, and significantly, well before the end of the first century CE it was Greco-Roman gentiles who were now dominant within the early church. So, too, the fact that this physically resurrected Christ was also proclaimed as the model for a similar resurrection of all believers was perhaps a welcome surprise: thoughts of an eternity in Sheol were now superseded by anticipation of a glorious afterlife like the Greco-Roman heroes of old. Yet, as Paul’s travel partner, Luke cannot have been unaware of Paul’s own reflection on the afterlife of the soul, and we see in Luke-Acts the author’s attempt to reconcile two disparate traditions. Such thoughts also prompt further reflection on Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians 15, for if such nascent thoughts were already mooted within the Christ-movement by the 50s CE, then the context of the misunderstanding between Paul and his Hellenist interlocutors in Corinth is all too easy to understand.

The period following the writing of the New Testament up to the sixth century CE, was one of multivalent and contrasting ideas concerning the resurrection of the physical body. Even among orthodox Christians it appears that the doctrine generated puzzlement and confusion, and certainly

amongst the pagan critics of Christianity fomented incredulity and opposition. The context for many Biblical scholars is in the desire to see consistency within the New Testament over the nature of the resurrection; yet, as we have seen, Paul, on the one hand, and the later New Testament writers (particularly Luke and John), on the other, are approaching the nature of post-mortem existence from very different perspectives. Paul is aligned with Second Temple Jewish texts which lay an overwhelming emphasis on the afterlife of the soul, but Luke and John, some decades later, and with a now radically re-formed and largely gentile dominated Christ-movement, are more attuned to Greco-Roman traditions which emphasized the importance of the physical body in the process of immortalization and deification. In the tumult of the fight against various 'heresies' which engulfed the church of the second-century and beyond, the Church Fathers polemicized this even further to make the doctrine of the physically resurrected Christ a point of theological orthodoxy.

As noted, the key to the emergence of this theological orthodoxy and to the dramatic success of Christianity within the Roman world is the intertwining of both of these contexts around the influx of gentiles into the early Christian community. If Paul's experience of the resurrected Christ left uncertainty and ambiguity (so, 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians), then this was counteracted with the assured afterlife framework of Greek tradition imposed onto Christ: the hero, part-born of a god, living a dramatic and inspiring life on earth, being put to death, and then being raised immortal and eternal to dwell forever in the heavenly realm. For the Hellenist there was no doubt over this scenario for it is perfectly consistent within Greek tradition. For Paul, however, his revelatory experience appears to have fomented confusion as to how Christ's soul had been glorified before the eschaton, and from this perspective, the reason and importance of an imminent eschatology within his writings becomes clear. That is, within the context of his Jewish understanding of God, the resurrection of Christ can only make sense within the 'here and now' of the eschaton; the end *must* be happening now. But how and in what way? Paul's uncertainty is counteracted by gentile confidence that what happened to Christ is perfectly understandable, and it is the gentile framework of afterlife existence imposed onto the Christ-event which begins to guide and even drive understandings of his resurrection. Christ's afterlife form is not, as Paul, a (σῶμα) πνευματικόν (whatever Paul may mean by that), nor a dwelling from heaven (2 Cor), but, as in Luke and John, it is the raising and return of the hero, now physically immortalized and who will dwell eternally in the heavens. The success of gentile Christianity in the Greco-Roman world was because it was driven by a Christology which placed the resurrection of the flesh and a *physical* afterlife experience at the very core of its beliefs.

Yet, as it did so this also had a darker side. Unlike the Greek reasoning behind the importance of the physical body and the immortalized flesh as a vital part of a holistic eternal afterlife, Christianity saw the resurrection of the flesh as an essential aspect of the post-mortem punishment of the

wicked. The soul was impassible; the body not. Here, the early church transformed the Jewish *Gehenna* into the Christian *hell*; a place of unspeakable and unending tortuous horror. And what began in the later New Testament for apologetic or polemical reasons (even placed upon the lips of Christ), continued into the post-apostolic and early medieval periods with disturbing social consequences. The Church Fathers and later church leaders in particular, employed the fear of hell in a variety of ways and for a variety of ideological purposes: for it helped them in asserting ethical priorities; or in asserting their theological ‘domination’ over Christendom; or in demonizing opponents of all persuasions; or in putting to death those who were in theological disagreement. If the Papal office alone held the keys to heaven and a blessed afterlife, then the door was firmly shut for those of even slightly differing theological persuasions.

As noted in Chapter 8, the Christian construction of an afterlife denoted by the torture and horror of an eternal fiery pit persists into the modern period, with modern concerns and worries now labeled hadophobia and with the Internet full of discussion-boards and threads prompted by those with deep anxiety and fear over thoughts of a tortuous afterlife.¹ A traditional Christian reading of such a framework is defended and indeed insisted upon by those who undertake fundamentalist literal readings of the Biblical texts and yet the study here has hopefully demonstrated the ideological impetus behind such discourse. Perhaps the time is right for a (socio-theological) review of the social construction of hell together with a salient reminder that these texts *are* polemically and apologetically driven, and that understanding the social context(s) of their writing is vital. Being cognizant of divergent traditions in the Biblical canon and related literature and of the dramatic ideological transformation of the afterlife from Sheol as the destination for *all* in the Hebrew Bible to hell as the eternal tortuous destination for the wicked in the Church Fathers, and hence, raising some serious questions over what we actually *know* about the afterlife as opposed to the ‘authority’ of established dogma of church traditions could help alleviate the anxiety of such hadophobes. This may also be a cause of suitable pastoral reflection by those who can all too easily employ ‘hell’ as a tool with which to assert authority and to instill fear into non-believers, and even believers, of many religious traditions. At the very least, profound reflection and debate upon this ideological transformation together with how and why the picture of the afterlife placed upon the lips of Jesus in the Gospels places him in tension with the Hebrew Bible is worthy of very serious discussion.

NOTE

1. See, for example, <http://www.christianforums.com/t7605491/>; <http://recoveringfundamentalists.com/fear-of-hell.html>; <http://www.ex-christian.net/topic/7197-fear-of-hell/>.

Ancient Sources Index

HEBREW BIBLE

Genesis

2.7	40, 41
3.5	41
4.10	40
6.12	60
6.17	85
9.4	41
23.6	42
23.9	42
25.8	125
32.28–30	47, 174
35.29	125
37.35	41, 42, 96
40.19	40
42.38	41, 42, 96
44.29	41, 42, 96
44.31	41, 96
45.27	85
49.33–50.14	125

Exodus

2.13	118
3.1–12	138
3.6	125
13.21–22	119, 174
24.9–11	119, 174
32.32–33	43

Leviticus

15.1	140
17.11	41
17.14	41
21.1–3	28
21.11	28
26.29	40

Numbers

5.2–4	28
16.30	41, 42

16.33	41, 42
19.11–22	28
31.19–20	28

Deuteronomy

20.19	82
28.25–26	44
32.39	29, 42, 72

Judges

5.20	43, 67
6.11–14	138
13.21–22	119, 174

1 Samuel

2.6	41, 42, 44, 97
2.6–8	28
11.2	44
25.1	28
25.29	87
28	27, 41
28.3–25	29

2 Samuel

12.23	41
14.14	41
21	44
22.6	39

1 Kings

2.6	42
2.9	42

2 Kings

5.27	137
------	-----

Job

3.11–19	39
3.13	41
3.17–19	41

4.14	72	22.9	40
7.5	41	22.15	40
7.8	41	22.29	40
7.9	41, 42	26.2	40
7.9–10	42	28.1	40
7.17	41	29.4	42
10.9–12	97	30	44
10.10–12	92	30.3	27, 41, 42
10.11	41	30.4	40
10.19–20	41	30.9	40, 41, 42
10.22	41	32.3	72
14.7–22	42	33.18–22	44
14.10–14	39	35.10	72
14.12	41	48.7–9	40
16.10	44	48.14	42
16.22	41	48.15	42, 43
17.1–7	41	49	95
17.13	39	49.7–11	39
17.13–14	41	49.9–14	41
17.16	25, 39, 41, 42	49.15	42
19	40	50	141
19.3	41	51.8	72
19.26	42	54.15	42
20.11	25, 72	54.16	41, 42
21.13	41, 42	63.2	41
21.26	25, 41	64.3	60
25.6	41	69.28	43
26.6	41	71	95
28.22	41	73.24	42
30.17	72	85.13	42
30.23	42	86.88	44
30.30	72	87.5	41, 42
31.12	41	88.3–7	41
33.18–30	41	88.4	39, 41
33.21	40	88.5–6	41
33.22	42	88.5–7	40
34.15	40	88.5–10	41
38.7	43, 67	88.10	26, 27, 41, 42
38.17	41, 42	88.10–12	41
		88.11	41
Psalms		88.48	42
6	44	88.49	42
6.2	72	89.46–48	39
6.5	41, 42	89.48	41, 43, 45
6.6	41	90.3	42
7	44	90.10–12	39, 42
7.6	40	93.17	42
9.14	41	94.17	26
13	44	95.4	41
16	95, 131	103.14	40
16.10	39, 41, 42, 131	104.29	40
17.5–6	41	107.18	41
17.6	42	115.17	41
18.6	39	116.3	42

116.3–7	42	26.19	27, 28, 29, 31, 41, 42, 59, 68, 89, 118
139.8	39, 41	28.15	41, 42
143.3	126, 27	28.18	41
143.6	41	29.4	26
143.7	40	33.5–6	95
146.8	83	34.3	40
Proverbs		38.10	39, 41, 42
1.12	40	38.18	39, 41, 42
2.18	41, 42	40.5	61
2.19	41	44.23	41
5.5	41, 42	49.24–25	43
5.11	40, 42	49.26	40
7.27	41, 42	57.9	41, 42
9.18	41, 42	61.1–2	95
12.4	41	65.22	82
15.11	41	66	53, 147, 159, 166, 174
15.24	41, 42	66.24	41, 95, 174
17.22	72	Jeremiah	
25.3	41	7.33	40
25.15	72	20.19	72
27.20	41	29.18	44
30.15	41	34.17–20	44
Ecclesiastes		37	35
2.16	26, 27	51.39	41
3.16–21	42	Lamentations	
3.20	40	3.4	40
9.2–3	42	Ezekiel	
9.4	28	5.15	44
9.5	41	31.15–17	41, 42
9.7–10	39, 41, 45	31.16	40, 41, 83
9.9–10	42	32	39
12.7	40, 42, 87	32.5–6	40
Isaiah		32.17–34	41
1.18	141	32.23	41
5.13–14	20	32.27	41
5.14	41, 44	36.26–32	35
6.1	119, 174	37	40, 44, 60, 81, 82, 135, 140
7.11	41	37.5	44
8.19	27	37.1–14	28, 31, 36, 43, 44, 82, 91, 92
14	39	37.16–20	82
14.9–11	26, 30, 41, 42	43.7	28
14.11	41, 42, 44	Daniel	
14.15	40, 41, 44	3.88	41, 42
14.16	26	4.34–37	33
14.19	42	5.11–12	55
24–27	32	6.25–27	33
26	3, 33, 36, 81, 84, 87	7.9–10	137, 141
26.7–21	31		
26.8–10	31		
26.14	27, 31, 41, 42		
26.15	31, 44		

9.16	34	3.7	38, 160
10–12	44	3.10	54
10.7–9	141	3.13	52, 54
11.18	34	5.1	38, 160
12	3, 36, 40, 43, 84, 93	5.15	38, 160
12.1–3	28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 43, 59, 67, 68, 84, 158	8.19–20	70
12.4	34	9.15	70
Hosea		12.1	44, 173
13.14	41, 42	13.10	26, 27
Amos		15.8	50, 70
9.2	41	16.13	41, 42
		16.13–14	42
		16.14	70

Ecclesiasticus (Sirach)

Jonah		7.17	41
1.17	124	10.11	41
Zephaniah		11.26	38, 159
1.17	40	11.28	96
Zechariah		17.1	25, 96
2.17	60	17.27–28	27
13.9	44	19.3	41
Malachi		24.5	41
3.14–15	44	30.4–5	96
4.5	96	38.16–23	44
		38.21–23	96
		38.23	28
		39.9	96
		41.4	96
		41.11–13	96
		44.8	96
		46.12	96
		48.5	28
		51.6	27, 41

APOCRYPHA

Tobit	
3.6	25, 38, 44, 159
3.10	42, 44
4.19	42
5.12	44
12.22	118
13.2	42, 44

Judith	
16.17	41, 159

Wisdom of Solomon	
1.12–16	41, 49
1.14	44, 173
2.1	49
2.3	25
2.5	49
2.23–3.4	70
2.24	49
3.1	38, 51, 54, 160
3.4	43, 54

1 Maccabees

2.62–63	41
2.63	40
7.17	40

2 Maccabees

2.8	118
3.22–28	118
3.25	118
6.23	41, 173
7	46, 68, 72, 79, 95
7.9	62, 72
7.9–11	61
7.12	72
7.14	44, 160
7.22	73
7.23	73
9.9	40, 41
12.41–46	169

12.43 41
 14.38–46 72
 14.46 72, 73

2 Esdras
 2.45 44
 7.80–99 38

4 Maccabees
 7.3 73
 9.17 40
 9.22 73
 10.8 40
 13.15 73
 13.17 73
 14.5–6 73
 17.2 44, 173
 17.12 73
 17.18–19 73
 18.16 83
 18.23 44, 73, 83, 173

SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH TEXTS

1 Enoch
 1–36 57
 9.3 57
 9.10 57
 10.6–13 159
 10.13–14 174
 21 52
 22 52, 57, 58, 71, 159
 22.1–5 58
 22.3 57, 71
 22.5 57
 22.7 57
 22.8–14 57
 22.10 57
 25.6 57–8
 27 73
 38–40 53
 38.3–6 174
 51 56
 51.1–2 52, 57, 66, 160
 51.2–5 66
 51.3 41
 51.10–12 66
 54.1–2 52, 159
 56.8 159
 63.1 159
 63.5–8 159

90.26–27 174
 90.33 57
 91 56
 91.9 174
 91.10 57
 92.3–4 57
 100.5 57
 102–103 53
 102.4–6 51, 57, 160
 102.5 41, 173
 103 57
 103.3–4 57
 103.3–7 57
 103.7 41, 173
 104.2 66, 160
 104.2–5 57
 104.7–8 53
 108.3 174

2 Enoch
 22.8 50
 22.8–10 119
 22.10 50
 23.5 70

2 Baruch
 3.10 66
 11.4 66
 14.12 65
 21.23 65, 66
 21.23–24 65
 23.4 41, 173
 23.4–5 65
 30.1–5 55
 30.2 73
 33.3 66
 42.7–8 66
 42.8 41, 65
 44.10 69
 48.49–51.5 64–65
 49.1–3 66, 160
 49.2–3 50, 55
 50.2 41, 65, 73
 51.1–6 51, 65, 67, 160
 51.5 73
 51.5–6 66
 52.7 65
 73.1–2 43

4 Ezra
 2.45 173
 4.35 51, 56, 66
 4.41 51, 56
 4.43 66

190 *Ancient Sources Index*

7.28–36	55	2.155	51
7.32	26, 41, 66	2.162–64	106
7.61	174	2.163	51, 64, 106, 160
7.75–101	51, 73	2.165	96
7.78	56	3.343–48	50
7.80–99	160	3.372	49, 50
7.94	66	3.374	50, 64, 106
7.95–96	51, 56	5.449–51	140
7.97	67	6.47	67
7.100	66	6.120	140
Apocalypse of Moses		6.290	118
13.3–6	51	6.292	118
13.37	51	6.293	118
Apocalypse of Zephaniah		6.296–98	118
4.7	159	7.304–406	140
6.2	159	7.337–55	50
6.15	174	7.340–57	63
10	62	7.343	70
Ascension of Isaiah		7.343–48	50, 70
9.7–8	50, 66, 160	Jubilees	
Josephus		23.31	63
<i>Antiquities</i>		Life of Adam and Eve	
6.329–34	42	13.3–6	60, 61
6.340–50	42	31.1	61
8.326	70	31.4	61
18.12–17	106	32.4	61
18.14	50, 51, 63, 73, 106,	38–43	61
	160	38.5	61
18.16–17	96	41.2	61
18.18	50, 55, 79	41.3	61
<i>Contra Apion</i>		43.3	61
1.162	70, 179	Philo	
1.165	70, 179	<i>Congr.</i>	
1.289	117, 118	47	68
2.54	117	57	68
2.203	49	<i>Contempl.</i>	
2.218	63	13	55
<i>Life</i>		<i>Fug.</i>	55
10–11	78	<i>Gig.</i>	
10–12	106	6–16	68
11–12	73	28–31	68
21	106	<i>Hypoth.</i>	
<i>War</i>		11.1–18	94
1.650	50	<i>Leg. All.</i>	
2.152–53	78	1.105–108	68
2.154	55	2.77	68
2.154–55	50, 79	3.161	68
2.154–57	64		

<i>Migr. Ab.</i>		104–15	59
2–3	68	112–13	41, 173
9	68		
14–17	68		
<i>Mos.</i>		Psalms of Solomon	
2.288	68	2.16	54
		2.32	159
<i>Mut.</i>		3.10–12	54
223	68	3.11–12	159
		13.11	54, 159
<i>Opif.</i>		14.2	54
69–77	67, 68	14.3	54
144	67	14.9	159
		14.9–10	54
<i>Quaes Exod.</i>		15.10	159
2.40	68	16.2–3	54
		16.12	54
<i>Quis. Heres.</i>		17.1	54
45	68		
<i>Post.</i>		Sibylline Oracles	
39	68	1.81–84	41, 173
		2.305	174
<i>Prob.</i>		4.152–78	60
75–91	94	4.175–84	60
		4.181–82	60
<i>Sacr.</i>		4.185–86	60
1.5	66, 140		
10	69	Testament of Abraham	
<i>Somm.</i>		20.9–11	51
134	68		
		Testament of Asher	
Ps-Philo		6.5–6	55
3.10	41, 55, 56, 69, 71		
15.5	69	Testament of Benjamin	
16.3	69, 159	10.6	72
19.12	55	10.6–8	56
22.13	51, 56, 160		
23.6	69, 159	Testament of Dan	
23.12–13	69	5.11–12	55
32.13	56		
43.7	69	Testament of Job	
44.9	69	39.11–12	58
44.10	69	40.3	58
62.9	56, 69	52.1	58
63.4	69	52.1–53.5	51, 58
		52.7–11	58
Pseudo-Phocylides			
102	67	Testament of Judah	
103–104	59	25.1	56
103–15	50, 67		
		DEAD SEA SCROLLS	
		1QH	
		2.17	80, 95

3.20	80	17.3	118
6.24	80, 95	18.8–9	174
9.20	80	22.1–14	174
11.13	95	22.13	164, 174
13	95	22.30–31	132
13.6	80	22.57–60	136
13.19	80	23.15	163
14.34	81	23.31–33	174
19.10–14	81	23.33	163
20.24	80	24.15	164
21.28–29	95	24.45–51	174
22.10	80	24.51	174
23.2	95	25.30	174
		25.31–46	164, 174
4Q181	84	25.41	174
4Q245	96	25.50	164
4Q385–91	81, 83	27.51–53	135
4Q386	81	27.57–60	136
4Q504	84	27.62–66	136, 139
4Q521	80–1, 83, 95	28	141
4QTestQah	84	28.2–4	136
4QVis Amr	84, 95	28.7	128, 130
4QPs-Dan	84	28.8	126, 127
		28.9	127, 130
1QS		28.9–10	125, 136
4.6–14	80	28.11–15	136
4.12–14	159	28.16	124
11.53–61	83	28.16–20	136
		28.17	118, 131

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew

4.1–11	137
5.22	174
5.29–30	164, 174
7.13	164
7.19	174
8.8–12	174
8.12	164, 174
10.15	165
10.28	164, 174
11.20–24	174
11.23	164
12.31–32	169
12.39–40	124
13.19	118
13.40	174
13.42	164, 174
13.50	164, 174
14.1–12	125, 139
16–20	136
16.4	124

Mark

1.10–11	137
5.22	133
5.42	133
6.14	125
6.14–27	125
6.16	125
6.29	139
8.31–32	126, 139
9.1	140
9.2	137
9.4	118
9.6	119
9.9	125
9.9–10	126
9.31–32	126, 139
9.43	62, 162, 163
9.43–48	72, 164, 174
9.45	162
9.48	174
9.49	163
10.34	139
12.18	85
12.18–23	96, 140

12.25	125, 140	24.33	124
12.26	125	24.34	118, 124, 129, 141
16.1–8	141	24.36–53	129, 130, 131, 182
16.2	124	24.37–39	118, 130, 132
16.5	136	24.38–41	131
16.6	125, 126	24.39–43	182
16.7	128, 129	24.40	129
16.8	119, 126, 127, 136	24.51	182
16.9	124		
16.12	131	John	
16.14	124, 126	2.19–21	139
		3.1	141
Luke		3.4	141
1.11	118, 141	3.9	141
1.38	140	5.28–30	174
2.15	140	7.50	141
3.21–22	129	10.28–29	118
4.1–12	137	11	133, 150
4.14	137	15.6	174
7.6–9	174	19.39	141
8.31	164	20.1	124
8.41	133	20.14	118, 131
8.54	133	20.17	136
8.55	133	20.19	124, 131
9.7–9	125	20.24–29	131
9.31	118	20.25	132
9.33	140	20.26	131
10.12–15	174	20.27	62, 130
10.15	164	21	129, 132
11.29–32	139	21.4	118
11.48	116	21.4–12	131
12.4–5	174	21.15–22	124
12.5	164		
12.41–46	174	Acts	
13.28	164, 174	1.18	125
16	129	2.3	118, 141
16.23	174	2.22–36	131
16.26	174	2.25–28	139, 182
16.29–31	174	2.31	117, 140
20.35–36	132	4.2	96
22.43	118, 141	7.2	118
23.15	174	7.26	118
23.46	128, 138, 182	7.30	118, 141
24	141	7.35	118
24.1	139	7.54–8.1	116
24.3	182	7.59	129
24.4	136	8.1	116
24.5	182	8.39	118
24.7	182	9	118
24.9	124	9.1–2	116
24.12	129	9.3–6	131
24.13	118, 131	9.8–9	132
24.13–53	136	9.17	141
24.31	131, 182	10–11	105

10.7	140
10.9–10	137
10.10	137
10.39–41	131
11.5	137
12.9	105
12.10	140
13.30–37	131
13.31	118
13.35	131
16	105
16.7–10	105
16.9	118, 141
17	117
17.31	131
18.8	105
21.20–24	104
22	118
22.6–11	131
22.11	132
22.17	105
22.20	116
23.6–8	85, 96
26	118
26.12–16	131

Romans

1.3	113
1.32	116
2.5	174
2.8	174
2.12	174
3.5	174
4.17	108
5.9	174
6.4	28
6.5	109
6.9	28
7–8	113, 117
7.18	113
7.24	119
7.25	113
8.3	113
8.8	113
8.9–11	119
8.11	119
8.19–22	104
8.23	106
8.26	117
8.35–36	104, 117
9.22	174
15.12	118
15.20	104

1 Corinthians

1.12	117
1.18	174
3.5–6	117
3.11–15	169
4.9–13	117
5.5	102
5.9–11	102
6.9–11	103
6.13	113, 132
6.14	109
7.12–13	116
7.26	116
7.29–31	116
8.11	102
9.1	117
9.24–27	105
10.6	102
10.7	118
10.20–21	102
11.6	102
11.30	102
14.13–18	117
15	97, 107, 110, 117, 118, 123, 124, 129, 133, 139, 161, 180

15.1–3	110, 119
15.1–11	110
15.3–8	117, 123
15.4	124
15.5	124, 126
15.6	116
15.8	137, 181
15.12–19	110
15.15	133
15.20	106, 133
15.20–28	110
15.23	106, 161
15.29–30	169
15.35	133
15.36	116
15.44	123
15.45	119
15.50	123, 148, 161
15.51–53	113, 118, 119
15.52	109
15.54–55	113
16.12	117

2 Corinthians

1.8–11	117
1.9	108, 114
1.15–22	116

1.22	106	5.14	118
2.15	174	6.18–19	117
3–4	104		
3–5	117	Philippians	
3.17	119	1.12–26	117
4–5	161	1.15–18	117
4.3	174	1.23–24	114
4.7–12	104, 117	1.28	174
4.14	109, 114	3.2–11	117
4.16–17	114, 119	3.5	106
5	49, 161, 180	3.7–11	117
5.1–5	114, 123	3.19	174
5.1–10	114	3.21	113
5.5	106	4.2–3	103
5.8	114	4.10–13	117
5.10	114		
5.16	114	Colossians	
6.3–10	104, 117	2.11	113
8.20	116		
10.6	103	1 Thessalonians	
10.10	101	1.10	108
11	117	2.1–6	117
11.4	117	4	108, 109
11.6	101	4.8	44
11.16	116	4.13	108
11.19	116	4.13–18	108, 116
11.21b–12.10	104	4.14	108, 133
11.23–29	117	4.16	108, 133, 161
12	104, 116	4.16–17	108, 113
12.2	118, 140, 141	5.3	174
12.4	118, 137, 140		
12.6	116	2 Thessalonians	
12.7	137	1.7–8	174
12.10	117	1.9	162
12.11	116		
12.20	103	1 Timothy	
		1.4	141
Galatians		1.13	101
1–2	118	3.16	118
1.6–9	117	4.7	141
1.11–17	117		
1.12	116	2 Timothy	
1.13–14	101	4.4	141
1.15–24	103		
1.16	116	Titus	
1.18	123	1.14	141
4.12–16	117	3.9	141
5.3	104		
		Hebrews	
Ephesians		5.7	135
1.14	106	6.19	134, 135
4.9	117	9.27	134
4.9–10	115, 165, 180	9.28	118

196 *Ancient Sources Index*

10.20	135
11.14–16	134
11.19	134
11.35	134
12	134
12.9	135
12.22	134
12.23	134
13.14	134
13.20	135
James	
3.6	162
1 Peter	
1.9	133
3.18	115, 180
3.18–20	117
3.19	165, 174
4.6	115, 117, 165, 180
2 Peter	
1.12	165
1.16	141
2.1	165
2.3	165
2.6–10	165
3.7–12	165
3.16	165
1 John	
1.1	132
4.1	132
2 John	
7	132
Jude	
7	165
23	118
Revelation	
1.14	137
2.7	140
2.9–10	166
2.14	166
2.20	166
3.9	166
6.8	41
6.9	133, 134
9.1–2	166
11.7	166
11.11	44
11.19	118
12.1	118

12.3	118
12.5	118
14.11	165
14.18	166
17.8	166
19.20	165
20.1–3	166, 169
20.4	133
20.7	166
20.10	166
20.10–15	166
20.13	41, 174
20.13–15	166
20.14–15	166
20.20	166
21.8	166

LITERATURE FROM THE
EARLY CHURCH

<i>1 Clement</i>	
11.1–2	165
26	145, 148

<i>2 Clement</i>	
9	145, 148
9.1	146
9.3	146
17.5–7	166

Ambrose	
<i>De excess Sat.</i>	
2.20	154

<i>Apocalypse of Paul</i>	
31–44	168
41–42	168

<i>Apocalypse of Peter</i>	
20–33	167

Athenagoras	
<i>Res.</i>	
1	148
3	148
21	150

Cyprian of Carthage	
<i>Demet.</i>	
24	167

Eusebius	
<i>Church History</i>	
4.15	153

Hippolytus
Against the Greeks
3 166

Ignatius
Eph. 16.1–2 175

Magn.
8.1 145
9.1 145
10.3 145

Phil. 2–4 145

Smyrn. 2–3 145

Trall. 9–11 145, 148

Irenaeus
Haer.
5.1–15 155
5.7 155
5.9 148, 155
5.13 148
5.31 147

Jerome
Ep.
108.23 153
108.24 153

Justin
Dial.
80 146, 150
80–81 155
107 155
130.2 147

1 Apol.
1.8 155, 166
1.12 166
1.17 166
1.18–21 155, 20
1.51 155
1.52 147, 155, 166

Martyrdom of Polycarp
2.3 175
11.2 175
14.2 145, 153

Minucius Felix
Octavius
5 149, 150
8 150

11 148, 149, 150
12 150
17 150
34 149, 175
37 149

Origen
C. Cels.
1.42 152
2.19 151
2.27 152
2.55 152
4.60–61 152
5.14 151, 152
5.18 151
5.24 156
5.55–56 152
6.2 18
7.28 152
7.32 152
7.42–45 152
8.49 151, 152
8.52 152

Polycarp
Phil. 7 146

Shepherd of Hermas
3.2.1 153
3.7.2 175
6.2.4 175

Synesius of Cyrene
Ep. 105 152

Tertullian
Res.
2 150, 155
17 150, 155
19 150
38 150
48 155
53 150, 155
63 150

GREEK AND LATIN LITERATURE

Aeschylus
Agamemnon
565–9 21
1019–24 21
1360 21

<i>Eum.</i>			Ovid	
647	21		<i>Metam.</i>	
			10.48–49	21
Aristophanes			14.805–51	13
<i>Eccl.</i>			<i>Fast.</i>	
1073	21		2.481–509	13
Cicero			Pausanias	
<i>On Old Age</i>			<i>Descr.</i>	
21	21		1.34.2	15
Euripides			4.32.4	16
<i>Hel.</i>			8.2.4	15
1285–7	21		Philostratus	
Herodotus			<i>Vit. Apoll.</i>	
2.81	16		8.7.4	16
2.123	16		Pindar	
3.62	21		<i>Pyth.</i>	
Hesiod			3.1–60	21
<i>Opera et Dies</i>			Plato	
166	8		<i>Crat.</i>	
Homer			400c	17
<i>Iliad</i>			<i>Gorgias</i>	
5.330–32	6		524–25	10, 22
5.441–42	21		526b–d	10
9.408–409	7		493a	17
11.71–74	8		<i>Phaedo</i>	
22.362	7		64c	21
23.65–107	8, 21		79c–d	9
23.83	8		79e–80b	9
23.99–107	21		80c–e	10
24.549–51	21		81b–84b	10
24.550	7		81d	17
24.756	21		81d–e	17
<i>Odyssey</i>			81e	21
4.565	8		82b–c	17
10.495	7		82d–83d	17
10.521	21		108a–c	21
10.536	21		<i>Phaedr.</i>	
11.29	21		81c–d	21
11.38–41	8		248–49	21
11.49	21		250c	17
11.484–91	7		265b–266a	21
11.541	21		<i>Resp.</i>	
11.601–27	8, 14		114b–c	21
24.5	21		517b	21
Livy			608d	16
<i>Hist.</i>				
1.16	13			

Plutarch	
<i>Mor.</i>	
328e	17
1103d	21
1105a	21
<i>Pel.</i>	
16.5	15
<i>Rom.</i>	
27.8	19
28.7–8	19
Proclus	
<i>Chrest.</i>	
2	14
4.2.188–90	15
Pseudo-Apollodorus	
<i>Bibliotheca</i>	
2.7.7	15
3.10.3	22
Seneca	
<i>Ep.</i>	
24.18	12
Sophocles	
<i>Electra</i>	
137	21
Virgil	
<i>Aeneid</i>	
2.272–73	21
2.277–79	21
6	21
6.340–62	21
6.467–58	11
6.494–508	21

RABBINIC LITERATURE

Mishnah	
<i>Ber.</i> 5.2	86
<i>Ohol.</i>	
2.3	93
7.3	93
<i>Makk.</i> 1.6	96

<i>Mikw.</i> 1.4	93
<i>Nid.</i> 4.2	96
<i>Par.</i> 3.3	96
<i>Sanh</i>	
10.1	85, 86
10.3	86
<i>Sotah</i> 9.15	86
<i>Yad.</i> 4.6–8	96
<i>Yeb.</i> 16.3	86
Talmuds	
<i>bAZ.</i> 20b	96
<i>bBaba Bathra</i>	90
<i>bBer.</i> 28b	88, 97
<i>bKet.</i> 111	89, 90
<i>bSabb</i> 88b	87
<i>bSanh</i>	
11	95
90–92	90–92
90b	88, 90
91a–b	96
91b	91
92a	90, 93
92b	91, 93
<i>bShabb</i> 152b	87, 97
Other Rabbinic Works	
<i>t.Ber.</i> 60b	88
<i>t.Sanh.</i>	
12.11–13.2	88
13.6	88
13.9b	97
Tg. Jon.	87, 89
GenR	88, 92, 97, 145, 147
LevR	87, 89, 92, 97
EcclR 12.6	140

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Author Index

- Allen, C. 44, 45
Allison, D.C. 59, 74, 132, 141
Alston, W. 124, 141
Alsup, J. 140, 141, 155, 156
Anderson, G.A. 72, 74
Aus, R. 31, 42, 43, 45, 74, 87, 98
- Barclay, J.M.G. 119, 139, 140, 141
Barrett, C.K. 18, 22, 26, 42, 45, 95, 98, 145, 156, 173, 174
Bauckham, R.J. 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 65, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 96, 98, 173, 175
Bedard, S. 10, 21, 22, 70, 74, 155, 156
Bernstein, A.E. 6, 20, 21, 22, 167, 173, 174, 175
Blenkinsopp, J. 31, 45
Block, D.I. 36, 44, 45
Bolt, P.G. 6, 12, 21, 22
Bovon, F. 156
Brandon, S.G.F. 26, 45, 160, 174
Bremmer, J. 7, 8, 10, 16, 20, 21, 22, 62, 74, 148, 151, 152, 153, 156
Brenton, L.C.L. vii, 42, 45
Brooke, G. 32, 45, 82, 83, 95, 98
Brown, R. 140, 142
Brown, W.S. 46, 75
Bruce, F.F. 101, 108, 109, 120, 140, 142
Brueggemann, W. 33, 40, 45
Burkert, W. 6, 20, 21, 22
Bynum, C. 113, 114, 120, 149, 150, 152, 153, 154, 156
- Carmignac, J. 94, 98
Carnley, P. 115, 120
Carrier, R. 132, 136, 142, 151, 156
Cavallin, H.C.C. 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, 60, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 85, 87, 92, 96, 97, 98, 100, 120, 160, 173, 175
- Chadwick, H. 18, 22, 109, 120, 155, 156
Charles, R.H. 71, 74
Charlesworth, J.H. 71, 74, 75, 76, 77, 99, 120
Chilton, B. 73, 75, 84, 98, 135, 137, 140, 141, 142, 156
Christ, F. 71, 75
Clarke, M. 21, 22
Collins, A.Y. 8, 22, 32, 33, 126, 138, 141, 142
Collins, J.J. 31, 32, 38, 43, 46, 49, 53, 59, 60, 66, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 77, 84, 96, 98, 115, 117, 120, 121, 140, 142, 148, 155, 156
Collins, R.F. 118, 120
Conzelmann, H. 112, 120
Cotter, W. 21, 22
Courcelle, P. 156
Cox, C. 42
Crossan, J.D. 126, 142
- Daube, D. 85, 96
Davies, J. 9, 21, 22
Davies, P.R. 43, 46, 83, 85, 94, 95, 96, 98
De Boer, M.C. 33, 36, 40, 42, 44, 46, 49, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 81, 84, 95, 96, 98, 173, 175
Decock, P.B. 151, 156
De Jonge, H.J. 72, 75, 117, 118, 120, 132, 138, 141, 142
DiLella, A. 33, 43, 46
Dimant, D. 82, 83, 98
Dochhorn, J. 72, 75
Dodd, C.H. 112, 120
Doukhan, J.B. 43, 46
Dunderberg, I. 10, 21, 23
Dunn, J.D.G. 116, 120
- Eckstein, H-J. 129, 142
Eichrodt, W. 35, 44, 46

202 *Author Index*

- Elledge, C.D. 73, 75, 94, 98, 105, 113, 117, 120
 Endsjø, D.Ø. 3, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 32, 41, 43, 46, 62, 63, 67, 70, 71, 72, 75, 106, 109, 113, 118, 119, 120, 132, 139, 141, 142
 Evans, C.A. 31, 42, 46
 Evans, C.F. 73, 75, 118, 120, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 139, 142, 144, 147, 151, 155, 157
 Ferguson, E. 20, 23
 Finley, M. 7, 20, 23
 Finney, M.T. 45, 46, 173, 175
 Fiorenza, F.S. 132, 142
 Frey, J. 81, 98
 Funk, R.W. 127, 142
 Gillman, J. 140, 142
 Glancy, J. 104, 117, 120
 Glasson, T.F. 10, 21, 71, 75, 120, 174, 176
 Goldingay, J. 33, 43, 44, 46
 Goulder, M. 117, 120, 136, 141, 142
 Grabbe, L. 63, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 75
 Graf, F. 21, 23
 Grant, R.M. 72, 75, 113, 119, 121, 150, 152, 155, 156, 157
 Green, J.B. 41, 46, 47, 70, 72, 75, 176
 Guthrie, D. 21, 23
 Haenchen, E. 116, 117, 121
 Harrington, D.J. 66, 71, 73, 74, 75
 Harrison, R.K. 58, 72, 75
 Hasel, G.F. 43, 45
 Hays, C.B. 44, 46
 Hays, R.B. 119, 121
 Himmelfarb, M. 117, 121
 Hogeterp, A. 82, 98
 Hoover, R. 122, 129, 142
 Hubbard, B.J. 140, 143
 Hughes, R. 169, 175, 176
 Jaeger, W. 16, 23
 Johnson, D.G. 43, 46, 72, 76
 Johnston, P.S. 21, 23, 28, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, 47, 74, 76
 Kirby, P. 126, 143
 Kissane, E.J. 43, 47
 Klawans, J. 71, 76, 84, 98
 Klijn, A.F.J. 73, 76
 Knight, J. 134, 143
 Koester, K. 21, 23
 Kuhn, H.-W. 95, 98
 Lang, B. 156, 157
 Laurin, R.B. 94, 99
 Le Goff, J. 168, 169, 171, 175, 176
 Lehtipuu, O. 155, 157
 Le Moyne, J. 94, 99
 Lewis, T.J. 44, 47, 117, 121
 Lichtenberger, H. 70, 76
 Lied, L.I. 73, 76
 Lona, H.E. 43, 47
 Longenecker, R.N. 22, 24, 40, 41, 42, 45, 47, 48, 74, 98, 101, 121, 173, 176
 Lowder, J.J. 122, 140, 142, 143, 156
 Lowe, H. 44, 47, 73, 76, 85, 89, 93, 97, 99
 Lüdemann, G. 38, 47, 101, 108, 118, 120, 121, 126, 129, 130, 132, 138, 140, 142, 143
 Marrou, H.I. 20, 23
 Martin-Achard, R. 41, 47, 70, 76
 Martínez, F.G. 82, 84, 95, 96, 98, 99
 Mason, S. 73, 76, 77, 106, 121
 Mattill, A.J. 117, 121
 McDannell, C. 157
 Meier, J.P. 40, 47, 125, 139, 140, 143
 Metzger, B.M. 124, 128, 139, 140, 143, 162, 163, 176
 Milik, J.T. 71, 76
 Montefiore, C.G. 44, 47, 73, 76, 85, 89, 93, 97, 99
 Moore, G.F. 40, 41, 42, 44, 47, 76, 94, 96, 99
 Morray-Jones, C.R.A. 105, 117, 121
 Motyer, A. 30, 43, 47
 Mueller, J.R. 96, 99
 Neil, T. 21, 23
 Nickelsburg, G.W.E. 33, 34, 43, 47, 52, 53, 54, 58, 59, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 84, 96, 98, 99, 110, 121, 131, 132, 140, 142, 143
 Paget, J.C. 155, 157
 Pannenberg, W. 123, 143
 Park, J.S. 73, 76, 97, 99
 Pearson, B.W.R. 42, 47
 Peerbolte, B.J.L. 117, 121
 Perkins, P. 21, 23, 44, 47, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 119, 121
 Popović, M. 94, 99

- Porter, S. 9, 22, 23, 46, 47, 63, 65, 70,
72, 73, 76, 84, 95, 96, 99
- Price, R.M. 107, 122, 142, 143, 156
- Puech, É. 43, 45, 47, 57, 70, 71, 72, 77,
81, 84, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99
- Räisänen, H. 159, 163, 164, 166, 173,
174, 176
- Riley, G.J. 6, 9, 21, 23, 68, 73, 77, 123,
141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 153,
155, 157, 174, 176
- Robinson, J.M. 140, 143
- Robinson, S.E. 96, 99
- Rohde, E. 21, 23
- Sawyer, J.F.A. 42, 47
- Schmidt, B.B. 43, 47
- Schmitz, P. 31, 47
- Schubert, K. 94, 99
- Schürer, E. 40, 47, 99, 108, 118, 122,
173, 176
- Segal, A. 21, 23, 28, 33, 40, 42, 43, 48,
67, 71, 73, 77, 94, 96, 99, 105,
117, 122
- Senior, D. 139, 140, 143
- Setzer, C. 56, 57, 60, 72, 77, 96, 99, 145,
146, 147, 148, 149, 155, 157
- Shantz, C. 105, 117, 120, 121, 122
- Sheehan, T. 140, 141, 143
- Sievers, J. 63, 70, 73, 77
- Silva, M. 42, 48
- Sim, D.C. 73, 77, 160, 176
- Songe-Møller, V. 8, 23, 111, 122
- Spittler, R.P. 59, 71, 77
- Stanton, G. 127, 142, 143, 146, 152,
157, 163, 176
- Stemberger, G. 66, 70, 71, 73, 77
- Stenning, J.F. 97, 99
- Stone, M.E. 72, 74
- Stratton, K.B. 73, 77
- Stuckenbruck, L. 53, 71, 72, 77
- Thomassen, E. 155, 157
- Tigchelaar, E. 45, 82, 95, 98, 99
- Tromp, J. 20, 23, 26, 28, 40, 41, 44, 48,
161, 176
- Tromp, N.J. 42, 72, 74, 77
- Tuckett, C. 110, 117, 119, 122
- Tugwell, S. 16, 23
- Urbach, E. 85, 98, 99
- Van der Horst, P.W. 59, 71, 72, 77
- Vanderkam, J.C. 71, 72, 76
- Van Eijk, A.H.C. 148, 150, 153, 155,
157
- Vermes, G. 73, 77, 81, 84, 95, 99, 126,
143
- Vermeule, E. 21, 24, 62, 77
- Vinzent, M. 155, 157
- Wacker, T. 71, 77
- Wade, G.W. 43, 48
- Walker, W.O. 105, 122, 132, 143
- Wedderburn, A.J.M. 40, 43, 48, 117,
122, 173, 176
- Wilderberger, H. 43, 48
- Wilson, W.T. 71, 77
- Wintermute, O.S. 71, 77
- Wold, B. 95, 99
- Wolff, C. 112, 122
- Wolfson, H.A. 68, 77
- Wright, J.E. 10, 12, 24
- Wright, N.T. 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 40, 43,
48, 71, 73, 77, 81, 82, 83, 84,
85, 86, 92, 95, 96, 97, 99, 118,
122, 133, 134, 143, 173, 176
- Yamuachi, E. 20, 24, 41, 48
- Yonge, C.D. 74, 77
- Zimmerli, W. 35, 36, 44, 48