

# HEBREW MIND vs. GREEK MIND

**Philippians 2:5** *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Messiah Yahshua"*

What kind of mind do you suppose Yahshua had? This will be the central focus of this paper. We are going to search the Book of Life to determine the great gulf fixed between the ways of the nations and the ways of YHWH (Yahweh). We will learn some Greek history as well as Hebrew history. I hope to show two different paths, two separate and distinct ways, of looking at life and the world around us, and how this directly influences how we look at Scripture.

There are a few things that need to be explained before we begin.

1. I will use the King James Version of the Scriptures for all quotations. This is not because I believe that this translation is any more accurate than others. It is simply because most reference material is still keyed to this translation. It makes it easier to trace the etymology (the study of the origins of words or parts of words and how they have arrived at their current form and meaning) of words, which we will do often.
2. A glossary has been provided at the end of this paper to help you with the terms used in this paper. Most of what you will read will be in English, however some words will be in Hebrew. Special words or phrases that are part of this paper will be transliterated or translated in the text. You might ask, **What is "transliterate"?** **"Transliterate"** is when you take a word from one language to another which involves "trans-lettering". This is taking each corresponding letter from the original language and using the closest sounding letters in the target alphabet to duplicate the exact sound of the word. The meaning of the word is not involved in this transliteration process. **What is "translate"?** To "translate" is to carry over the meaning or interpretation of any word or phrase from one language to another. Not sounds but thoughts and ideas are transferred. What we might call gibberish or confusion is explained and rendered understandable when the sound from one language is equated with a similar idea or concept in another. It does not matter if the sound is written or spoken; the objective of translating a word is to convey or transfer the meaning of the word or concept, not the sound of it.

You will need to consult the glossary until you are used to the Hebrew. Names of books would be a good example. I will always use Yahshua instead of Jesus, Sha'ul instead of Paul, Yochanan instead of John, for example. Why? Because it is the Hebrew that best represents what YHWH's (Yahweh's) intention was, not because I like to toss around some sort of highbrow priest craft. Besides, that is what their name is!

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## THOUGHTS

One of the most popular books of the last ten years is entitled, "*Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*". It is popular because it reveals much about ourselves. In a very simple, realistic way this book shows us how different the genders are. There is a vast difference in the way men and women view the same set of circumstances, and how different our conclusions are, as well. It also teaches how those differences can be accepted and used to benefit a marriage relationship. But, as you are reading this book, you can begin to see how different the two thinking processes are. The focus of this paper is much the same. Eastern thinking is not like Western thinking. The major difference between this and the gender gap is that no where in Scripture does YHWH ever desire to unite His ways with the ways of the nations. There is no way that Hebrew thinking can ever be united or combined with Greek thinking.

What are we talking about when we say Hebrew thinking or Greek thinking? Let us begin by talking about thoughts and words. Another way of describing thoughts is 'meaning'. What is 'meaning'? With very strict observation, you will find that in practice we use the term in two principal ways: if someone asks me 'the meaning' of a word in another language, I give him a word in his language which best expresses the same thing as that word. You may observe that we never, therefore, know 'the meaning' directly, but only through a symbol - a word or linguistic expression. Hence, I have no way of knowing your meaning except by the language you use to express it. I cannot possibly tell what you mean except by what you say. In other words, I, as opposed to YHWH, cannot read your mind. Being human, I am relegated to understanding thoughts and intentions by the symbols used to represent that thought or intention. That is really all that language is. When I want to express a thought I arrange letters in a certain way to form words, which also, when placed in a certain order, reveal my thoughts. Different languages use a different combination of letters and symbols to express thought. This is precisely what this paper is about. We will be concerned with language or expressions that reveal thoughts about marriage, children, government, education, the nature of man, the nature of YHWH, what is right or wrong, good or bad, holy or unholy. We will see how very different the Western world views these subjects from the world in which the Scriptures were written.

## FROM THE BEGINNING

**B'reshith (Genesis) 1:1** *"In the beginning Elohim [God] created the heavens and the earth..."*

From the start we see that Elohim separated. In the beginning He separates mass from spirit, visible from invisible. He then goes on to separate night from day, light from darkness, waters from waters, earth from seas, the greater light from the lesser light, beasts from humans, man from woman. In **B'reshith (Genesis) 2:9** He places two different and distinct trees in the garden. In **B'reshith 3:24** He separates man from Himself. He goes on to make a clear distinction between the seed of the serpent and the

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seed of the woman. He puts a difference between Abel's offering and Cain's offering. He removes Noah's (Noah) family from the rest of the world. He drives Avraham (Abraham) away from Ur of the Chaldees and the worship practices of his father, Terah. In **B'reshith 17:11** He separates Avraham (Abraham) from his foreskin. In the books of Sh'mot (Exodus) and Vayikra (Leviticus), He reveals what is clean and what is unclean, holy and unholy. In **Sh'mot (Exodus) 11:7**, He makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. In **Sh'mot (Exodus) 19:5** He separates Israel from the rest of the nations, commanding them to obey Him that they might be a 'peculiar treasure' unto Him. The Tehillim (Psalms) reveal the vast difference between YHWH's ways and the ways of the nations.

In the Tanach (Old Testament) we see YHWH giving His instructions for life to Israel and warning them not to mix with the nations. Why? Was it the people themselves that were unclean or was it their customs, their ways, their worship, and their practices? In the Tanach (Old Testament) we find the contrast between YHWH's people and the nations or gentiles. In the Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) we find the general term Greek used to represent ways contrary to Scripture. Many times, this is seen in the word 'the world' (**Yochanan (John) 1:10, Acts 17:6, Romans 12:2, Ephesians 2:2**). This is because at this time the world outside of Jerusalem was still influenced by Alexander the Great's brilliant psychological tactics, not to mention his military genius. The Scriptures of the Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) draw this contrast several times.

**Romans 1:16** *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."*

**Acts 14:1** *"... both of the Jews and also of the Greeks, believed."*

**1 Corinthians 1:22** *"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom."*

**1 Corinthians 1:24** *"But unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."*

**Acts 19:10** *"And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."*

When we add these accounts to the several occasions in which Sha'ul (Paul) reminds us that in the body of Yahshua there is no difference between Jew and Greek, we begin to see that there WAS a difference. This is the very reason why Sha'ul had to teach us that there is now no difference. This will become much clearer later in this paper. Sha'ul's (Paul's) letters are specifically aimed at other than Semitic nations i.e. the Greeks. I might remind you that I am not referring to the continent of Greece and its inhabitants, but rather the Greeks as they represent western culture. In the same way that Babylon is symbolic of all false religion and pagan practices. The Greek or Hellenistic culture was dominating the 'uttermost parts of the earth' at the time the Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) was penned.

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The Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) makes several references to Grecians and what had become commonly known as Hellenism. What is Hellenism and what influence did Hellenism have on the culture of Yahshua's time? The term "Hellenistic" was invented in the nineteenth century to designate the period of Greek and Near Eastern history from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. to the death of Cleopatra VII, the last Macedonian ruler of Egypt, in 30 B.C. The early Hellenistic period saw the emergence of a new form of relationship, compounded from Macedonian and Near Eastern traditions, which became the dominant political, religious, and social structure in the eastern Mediterranean after Alexander's death. The "Helen" of Hellenism comes from the writings of a blind poet by the name of Homer. Most Greek scholars are not convinced that this man actually lived, but for someone who may not have existed, he certainly was very influential in the shaping of Greek art, science, philosophy, religion, and social justice. His alleged writings were called "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey". These were epics set in the 12th century B.C. about a war between Greece and the city of Troy. This is where the Trojans come from. This is not a paper on Greek history, but we need to get the background of where Greek thinking comes from. It did not burst onto the scene with Alexander. There was a gradual process that spring-boarded the influence of Greek thinking on the known world at that time. The retrospective story of the Trojan War that the Iliad tells symbolizes the aims of this society as reflected in the literature of a later age. The heroes of Homer's poem sail far from their homes in Greece to attack the citadel of the Trojans in western Anatolia. Their announced mission is to rescue Helen, the Greek queen whom the son of the king of Troy had lured away from her husband. This is essentially where the term "Hellenism" comes from. Most of the anti-Biblical, pagan cultures we are familiar with, Greek, Babylonian, Persian, etc., have a woman or Goddess-type mother that represents that culture. Isis, Astarte, Ishtar, or Gaia are some examples. Greek culture was no different. However, this way of thinking has a background as well. **The background of Hellenism is from Egypt**, no less. Some nineteenth century scholars wish to downplay or deny any significant cultural influence of the Near East on Greece, but that was plainly not the ancient Greek view of the question. Greek intellectuals of the historical period claimed that Greeks owed a great deal to the older civilization of Egypt, in particular, to religion and art. Recent research agrees with this ancient opinion. Greek sculptors in the Archaic Age chiseled their statues according to a set of proportions established by Egyptian artists. Greek mythology, the stories that Greeks told themselves about their deepest origins and their relations to the gods, was infused with stories and motifs of Near Eastern origin. The clearest evidence of the deep influence of Egyptian culture on Greek culture is the store of seminal religious ideas that flowed from Egypt to Greece. Rather than looking for a nonexistent origin of Greek identity, we will identify, as many as possible, the various sources of cultural influence that flowed together over a long period of time to produce the Greek culture we find recorded in the Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) times. "Hellenistic" also conveys the idea that a mixed, cosmopolitan form of social, and cultural life combining Hellenic (i.e. Greek) traditions with indigenous traditions emerged in the eastern Mediterranean region in the aftermath of Alexander's conquests. This provides some of the background for the term "Grecian", or 'Hellenist', as applied to many Jews at the time of Yahshua. These were a mix of Hebrew ethnicity with Greek world views. The very

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nature of 'the ways of the nations' in Scripture is a mixture of various ideas and views of how to live life. The Greek perspective provides us with a background as to the nature of a god or gods that desire to be worshiped, entertained, adored, and revered, but not necessarily obeyed. In Greek mythology, the gods were to be revered and celebrated, but the intellect was to guide man in this life. This is precisely why Sha'ul tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:22** that the Jews require a sign but the Greeks seek wisdom. The Greeks are also known for their philosophy. We will discuss Aristotle and others later. The poet Homer's poems set the stage for the creative writing of the Greek myths of ancient gods and goddesses. This would provide the background for the ultimate mind of all the gods called the *logos*. This *logos*, as we will learn later, is a mixture of religious concepts from several cultural sources, which are generally represented scripturally by Jezebel, Babylon, the queen of heaven, and many other names which will be mentioned as we go. The nature or essence of Greek philosophy will be studied in detail later on in this paper. Right now we are trying to establish the fact that this philosophy made a major impact on the thinking process of the populations that Sha'ul encountered, and that this influence has stayed with the 'church' for two thousand years.

The following is a quote from the book "Alexander the Great" by N. G. L. Hammond. Mr. Hammond is considered to be the foremost expert on ancient Macedonian history. Macedonia is the ancient name of the kingdom of the Balkan Peninsula, which generally covers the area of Greece, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. "In 342 B. C. Philip (Alexander's' father) hired Aristotle at a handsome salary to teach 'philosophy', which embraced both practical and theoretical knowledge. Lessons and seminars were held usually in the open air in the sanctuary of the Nymphs near Mieza, a beautiful place with natural grottos in the limestone, which was visited by sightseers in Plutarch's day and still is so visited. The influence of Aristotle on Alexander was profound. Alexander accepted as correct Aristotle's views on cosmology, geography, botany, zoology and medicine and therefore took scientists with his army to Asia, and he was fascinated by Aristotle's lectures on logic, metaphysics, the nature of poetry, and the essence of politics. Above all he learned from Aristotle to put faith in the intellect. In their personal relationship the boy's admiration developed into a deep affection, and they shared a special interest in establishing the text of "The Iliad". Homer was the major influence of Aristotle. It was Homer who introduced, at least from the view of literature, the whole idea of mythology and hero worship. This lies at the core of Greek society. The era called the dark age of Greece (900-700 B.C.) was the beginning of the construction of gymnasiums. These were Greek arenas that housed athletic games, with great crowds cheering the participants and the gods, particularly Zeus. The gymnasium was a place where nude athletes would appease the gods by their great feats. The word *gymnos* is the Greek word for naked. This period also began the great city-state called the *polis*, which was designed to confine the social elite. These cities were erected to honor the gods. Within these city-states, smaller arenas, later called theaters, were erected. Theaters began with the Greeks, and were intended to host two particular events. At the beginning, they were primarily used to provide a place for the production of comedies and later, Greek tragedies. But by the later Archaic age, these were used to host the great philosophers and their famous debates. These debates were originally created to provide a place for the great thinkers and

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intellects to have a place to out-intellectualize each other. These places would soon produce Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

## THE ATHENIAN HISTORY

We have now come to what is known as the Athenian age in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War around the 4th century B.C. This episode in Greek history produced the famous Socrates. According to most current encyclopedias, Socrates was the most influential thinker in the Western world. Socrates, although he wrote nothing of his own, was the progenitor of the philosophy that man's evil actions are caused by ignorance. He developed, what is called today, the Socratic Method. This is called inductive reasoning - that is, by reasoning from particular facts to a general idea. In theory this seems logical, but all the reasoning depended upon what was considered a fact. Life was based upon thoughts and ideas to be debated. Many of the testimonies of his students attested to the fact that there were rarely any conclusions drawn, but everyone looked forward to the next debate. Socrates lived in poverty and disdained material possessions. He believed that no one knowingly did evil. Although Socrates was a thorn in the flesh of conventional Greek thinking, he none the less separated himself from any instructions of the gods and taught to rely on, after careful scrutiny, our own moral intellect to lead a happy life. Socrates, like many before him, sought wisdom no matter where it came from. Every culture had a part to play in the collective mind as long as moral knowledge was the goal.

Socrates' student, Plato will be the one who introduces the world to the demiurge. We will discuss this during our next lesson. Meanwhile I would like you to read **Mizmor (Psalm) 119:1-9**

As we begin to enter the "Hellenistic" era of the evolution of Western thought, we come to the basic fork in the road. Socrates' most famous student is going to take Greek philosophy to its most respected heights. Socrates was not adept at winning friends and influencing his enemies. Actually, up to this time, Greek thinking was rather tame and friendly with Scriptural thinking. But Plato is about to take it to a new level. This is where we will spend some time revealing what we really mean when we speak of Greek thought.

Plato lived from 428-348 B.C. Most history books and encyclopedias credit Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle for being the most influential people in Western history. Their philosophical views sprang forth from Homer's great mythical heroes. This led to the ultimate philosophical goal of excellence which led to the various social structures of Greek life. Plato, of course, was a member of the social elite. This was part of the background of his most powerful contribution to religious thought, the dualism of man. Plato taught that man consisted of two parts, the "soul" and the "flesh". He taught that only the soul was good and good is what all men seek. The flesh was evil and could do no good. The body was only one passing phase of our cosmic existence. Only the soul was involved in the future, and only the soul could do any good, so what the body did was

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virtually irrelevant. The people who were able to grasp this concept were in the highest class called the "guardians". These were the educated class which were trained to live in shared houses, to eat in the same mess halls, their children were to be raised as a group in a common environment by special caretakers (public schools). Only this ruling class possessed the knowledge to determine policies and make decisions determining who is allowed to mate with whom to produce the best children, with intellectual excellence as the goal. Plato brought to the world the nation of 'thinkers'. Knowledge was the key to everything. This, we will see, led to the era of Gnosticism which continues today under other names. Multitudes of mystery cults would come forth from this philosophy. Life was intellectualized, and only for the initiated. Life became abstract, metaphysical conceptions. This is why I am personally very skeptical of turning simple commands of God into abstract concepts. Why? Because one cannot prove or disprove these concepts. This is why the students of Plato would argue for days in the great theaters with no results. They would stand by themselves in empty theaters and argue against fictitious opponents with imaginary audiences. These great debates were designed to cause our minds to conceive the demiurge, or ultimate mind, around us and to ignore the realities of the world we live in.

The demiurge was the dualistic god that created the world. He was the cruel god of battles and bloody sacrifices. The world was cruel and could not have been created by a "good" god, since all matter is evil. So this cruel demiurge sent a son called the *logos* who was the good god. The Tanach (Old Testament) was a cruel book of laws, judgment, and death. The Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) was the result of the incarnation of the god of the gods, the mind of the gods, called the *logos*. We will get into much more detail on this later. This demiurge, literally 'worker of the people', was whimsical and could change his mind or desires at any time. He would require certain demands on his creation at any time and withdraw them at any time. Laws and commands were spontaneous. The whole idea of the one God was no different than the images of all the gods. They were always subject to limitations and foresight. And, of course, 'god' was only interested in the invisible, spiritual world as the physical world was evil. When the body performed an evil act it was simply seen as the natural thing for an evil, material body to do. This thinking would eventually lead to some of the same kind of behavior we see today. Quoting Plato from his Symposium: *"I believe that the greatest good for a youth is to have a worthy lover from early on and, for a lover, to have a worthy beloved. The values that men need who want to live lives of excellence lifelong are better instilled by love than by their relatives or offices or wealth or anything else . . ."* In the Greek social life of his time, homosexuality was common love. Greeks, by this period, found it 'natural' for an older man to be sexually aroused by the physical beauty of a boy. Physical immorality was not to possess eternity, only the soul.

Plato also began the era of the 'sophists'. These philosophers continued in Plato's teaching that matters of the physical are matters of human relativism. Matters of family, government, education, customs, or law, were all relative because they were all outside of the soulish area. Truth was determined by persuasiveness. Whoever had the best argument was the purveyor of truth. Truth was determined by man's own will. Since the

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gods were to be worshiped and revered and had no instructions for man, man was left to determine them for himself. Therefore, some things were good and some were bad, some things were good and bad at the same time. When potential governors would debate, the same subjects would be argued year after year, for there was no absolute. Sound familiar? Plato introduced the world to many philosophies that shaped the world we live in today. He would soon produce another student who would be the most influential man in Alexander the Great's life. We will discuss this man next.

## Aristotle

Greece, in the fourth century B.C., produced a second thinker whose intellectual legacy achieved monumental proportions. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), Plato's most brilliant follower, earned his enduring reputation in science and philosophy from his groundbreaking work in promoting rigorous systems of logical argument. He taught that truth was discovered by systematic arguments based on 'premise to conclusion' concepts. One first begins with a premise and then sets down a system of steps to come to an ultimate conclusion. The problem with this is that it still relied on human reasoning which was, of course, limited by human experience. The gods would not and could not supply truths, for they were to be idolized only. The block logic of Hebrew was considerably different than this type of thinking, but none the less, it was Hebrew logic that the Scriptures were written in. We will discuss this much later in this paper. Aristotle's religious beliefs were much the same as Plato. The gods were still to be worshiped and revered and excellence was still the goal, (*telos* in the Greek). He was deeply critical of democracy, but only because it meant the rule of the majority and the majority was uneducated and poor. Only the elite had the capacity to rule. Only the academies could train children to succeed. Fathers and mothers were incapable of properly training Greek children.

During the years of Aristotle came the military rule of Philip of Macedonia, a land just north of Greece. Philip was a great conqueror, but not as great or popular as his son Alexander. The main thrust of Alexander's reign was that it happened so quickly. This is the primary reason why Greece is referred to as a leopard in the book of Dani'el (Daniel). With lightning fast speed, the greatest mortal hero of Greece defeated the known world. Alexander was not only a great military leader but was savvy and wise as well. His strategy was for Greece to dominate the world by conforming the world to Greek thinking. He knew that this could only be accomplished by language. He knew, almost supernaturally, that if you change a people's language, you change their whole view of life. **Alexander, because of his brilliant tactics, was revered as a god, and he considered himself the son of Zeus.** His belief in the superiority of Greek civilization was absolute. His most treasured possession was "The Iliad" of Homer, and he had the plays of the three great tragedians sent to him in Asia, together with poems, and the history of Philistus. They were his favorite readings. He admired Aristotle as the leading exponent of Greek intellectual enquiry, and he had a natural yearning for philosophical discussion and understanding. His mind was to some extent cast in the Aristotelian mold. He educated his future leaders in Greek letters and weaponry and established schools

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throughout his conquered regions. At the same time, he organized traditional Greek festivals to honor the gods in the most lavish fashion. He taught that the deities made their wishes known through natural phenomena and through omens and oracles, which were interpreted through great speakers in the theaters and arenas. This is why Sha'ul (Paul) and Barnabas were called Jupiter (Zeus) and Mercury (Hermes). These were the Roman names for the Greek gods. Although Rome conquered Greece, they took upon the same system of philosophy, only the names were changed.

The story of Alexander is a story of a major change in thought, so much so that he named a city for himself, Alexandria, Egypt, and the Tanach (Old Testament) was translated into Greek at this city. Alexander trained his successors in the Greek language. A most interesting twist occurred at Alexander's death. Instead of appointing his son to take over, he remained basically silent in the matter. His four top generals took over the reign of the known world instead of his son. These four men were Antigonus, his son Demetrius, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. These four men would soon divide up the known world and begin what would eventually be called the Hellenistic age. Antigonus and Demetrius took over Macedonia and Greece, Seleucus in Syria and the Old Persian Empire, and Ptolemy in Egypt. Israel would end up being under the domain of Ptolemy. All four of these kings carried on the Greek religion and thought process. Eventually all four kingdoms would fall to the Romans. All four kings forced the 'koine' Greek language on their conquered territories. As I said before, this was a very wise move, for **language shapes, molds, and defines a culture**. Hate will soon turn to loyalty if one can change the meaning and purpose of words and traditions. Greek had become the international language of the eastern Mediterranean coast lands. Even in Afghanistan, King Asoka, a convert to Buddhism, used Greek in his public inscriptions to announce his efforts to introduce his subjects to Buddhist traditions. Literature in these Hellenistic cultures began to shift more and more to mythical dramas and comedies, yet worship and adoration of the gods remained as strong as ever. Human behavior and truth were becoming irrelevant as long as the gods were pleased through public attestation.

Greek philosophy in the Hellenistic period reached a wider audience than ever before. Fewer thinkers were concentrating on metaphysics and more on logic, physics, and ethics. The Epicurean and Stoic schools were now becoming popular. This is also a result of the Greek concept of the gods. The Greek gods were not infallible to their minds. They all had the ability to change, to fail to give in to emotions, and to vacillate. It is because of this that philosophical schools came and went as well. The bottom line at this time was how to deal with negative, outside forces. So we now have the rise of the Stoics and Epicureans. The Epicureans took their name from its founder, Epicurus (341-271 B.C.). Basically, Epicurus believed that humans should pursue pleasure. The best way to achieve this is to stay away from distasteful situations by congregating with friends and like minded people. One should avoid the everyday mundane existence of the common people. The gods take no notice of human affairs, so humans have no fear of them. The Stoics, on the other hand, recommend a different, less isolationist path for humanity. A man named Zeno of Citium founded this philosophy. Their goal was the pursuit of virtue and a resignation to fate. They believed that fate was responsible for everything that

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happened, basically denying free will. Stoics believed in shunning all emotion, which is how our culture uses that term. Through endurance and self-control one attains tranquility. Dozens of other schools, such as the Sceptics and the Cynics, popped up to help explain life to the Greek world. The gods had not the foresight to guide life in any absolute way and were not interested as well. This brought about the infusing of various cultic and religious philosophies in concert with the reverence of the gods. The Hellenistic age can be summed up in one word, mixed. What was wrong today, may be right tomorrow, what is distasteful to one generation may soon become the banner of the next generation.

During the second and third centuries B.C., Hellenism and the perpetuation of the Greek language quickly dominated the entire Western world. The Macedonian kings from Greece took their Egyptian influenced culture back to Egypt through the Ptolemy family. Around 260 B.C. the language and thought processes of Greece had so changed the Eastern culture that King Ptolemy put forth the decree to translate the entire Hebrew Bible into Greek. This was later known as the Septuagint translation of the Scriptures, or the LXX. The Septuagint was so named allegedly because it was accomplished by 70 scholars, but there is some uncertainty about that. None the less, Yahshua quoted from it quite often. This version of the Scriptures is one of the most awesome pieces of evidence of the reliability of itself. Virtually every scriptural and secular scholar agrees that the Scriptures, with the exception of Esther, were translated from Hebrew to Greek in or around 250 years before the birth of Yahshua. Do you realize what that means? It means that the 333 prophetic utterances of Yahshua's birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection are, at the very least, written 250 years before they happened.

One by one the generals of Alexander began to fall to the Roman Empire. Philip IV of the Antigonid Empire began the decline by challenging Rome in the first place. The Seleucid dynasty was still going strong in 163 B.C. when Antiochus IV ruled Jerusalem. Antiochus, as did his predecessors, carried the Greek-Egyptian traditions and culture into his reign. The books of the Maccabees record much of this period of Greek history, especially as it permeates the Hebrew culture. The story of Chanukah is the best example to date of how scriptural thinking and culture can be dramatically altered. Normally a change in thinking processes occurs very slowly over a long period of time. But the account of the Maccabees happened comparatively quickly.

This is a quote from **1st Maccabees 1:11-14**:

*"In those days [i.e. of Antiochus Epiphanes] lawless men came forth from Israel, and misled many saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles round about us, for since we separated from them many evils have come upon us. This proposal pleased them, and some of the people eagerly went to the king. He authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem [for Greek education], according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined themselves with the Gentiles and sold themselves to do evil."*

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The first thing done in Greek thought is to build an education center to train captives in Western thinking. To conquer with the sword is only temporary, and still maintains an enemy. Conquer the mind and you have a friend and an ally. Change the language and you change the meaning of things, for words are only symbols. If you change the symbol, you change the meaning and create a whole new set of parameters. Paradigm shifts in any society are created over time in gradual increments. This is primarily why people, especially church people, see the instructions of YHWH (Yahweh) as antiquated, obsolete, and almost impossible to grasp. Our whole thinking process has been so far removed from YHWH (Yahweh) that it is almost unrecognizable.

Let's continue on with 1<sup>st</sup> Maccabees 1:41-49:

*"Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, and that each should give up his customs. (What he really meant was for the captives to give up their customs.) All the Gentiles accepted the command of the king. Many even from Israel gladly adopted his religion; (see what I mean!) they sacrificed to idols and profaned the Sabbath. And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane Sabbaths and feasts, to defile the sanctuary and the priests, to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, so that they should forget the law and change all the ordinances."*

This is the perfect description of apostasy, the abandonment of YHWH's (Yahweh's) instructions. This will indeed happen again according to **Mattityahu (Matthew) 24**. More on that later. Many people in Israel at that time gave in to the king and abandoned the covenants and feasts. These were the forerunners of the Grecians. Over generations, these Hebrews MIXED Western thought with their own ancestry. But many of these people did not. Some were executed for their tenacious trust in YHWH (Yahweh). Others escaped and followed the Maccabean brothers in the desert to eventually return and take back the temple. This is, of course, the facts of the Chanukah story. The point is that YHWH's (Yahweh's) way defeated the Western way by standing strong in His words and not giving in to the Greek influence.

Between the time of Antiochus and the birth of Yahshua, the Roman Empire had defeated all of the kingdoms of the Macedonian empire. Rome's culture is now prevailing at the time of the so-called birth of Christianity.

In the times of Yahshua and Sha'ul (Paul), there were many thinking groups that would fall under the banner of Gnosticism. The nihilists and the libertines would be two of these. Both of these groups would also be classified as antinomians or 'against the law'. This would be the definition as it is commonly known in the English. However, in the Hebrew the word for 'anti' is *tachat*, which means 'instead of' or 'in place of'. You see, no one is really against laws, they simply deny YHWH's (Yahweh's) Torah (Laws/Teachings/Instructions) and replace them with other laws (Man-made laws not

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written in the Scriptures). Every society, large or small, has rules. One may think he is free when unrestrained by law but he soon comes up with his own. Since the rise of Gnosticism, I believe the 'church' has been theologically duped into believing that liberty is freedom from law. The only way that one could claim to be a 'Christian' and hold this theology is to allegorize or spiritualize the text. This allegorization sprang forth from the early Gnostics, and Gnosticism is Hellenistic thought at its best.

So, what is Gnosticism? Literally the word *gnosis*, a Greek word, means 'knowledge'. This way of thinking was also a religious sect at the time of Yahshua. However, more appropriately it is a way of thinking. Notice I said it IS a way of thinking, not it WAS a way of thinking. There is no way to define this word in a few sentences, so we will define it as we go. The whole idea of Gnosticism dove-tails with the whole philosophy of the holy psyche or soul, and the evil body and physical world. There are degrees, if you will, of this philosophy. Much of what is taught in modern Christianity is very pale compared to some extremes of people like Simon of Samaria (Acts 8), Saturninus, Cerinthus, Valentinus, or even Marcion. If you begin with a relatively small, unscriptural doctrine/teaching, it soon leads to a big one. Many of these men (circa 1-2nd century A.D.) concluded that Yahshua was not a man, but the spirit of the Messiah. Why? Because the "deity" would not have an evil body since the flesh is by nature wicked. Marcion taught that Yahshua's body was a 'phantom'. Many early church fathers stood against this doctrine/teaching for a time, except for Clement and Origen, who were sympathetic to this doctrine/teaching. Fundamental to clearly Gnostic systems is dualism, which opposes the transcendent God and an ignorant demiurge. (Remember, this was the caricature of YHWH). In some systems, the creation of the world resulted from the presumption of *sophia* (Gk. - wisdom). The material creation, including the body, was regarded as inherently evil. Sparks of divinity, however, had been encapsulated in the bodies of certain pneumatic or spiritual individuals, who were ignorant of their celestial origins. The transcendent God or demiurge sent down a redeemer (Christ), who brought them salvation in the form of a secret *gnosis* or knowledge. To the Gnostics, salvation was not dependent upon faith or works but rather knowledge of one's nature, so there was much indulgence in licentious behavior. There were no rules for the body since the *logos* or ultimate knowledge was not interested in physical or material things. This also meant that marriage was held in contempt as well, for procreation involved the body. A "unisex" being was held in hopeful reverence. The two main religious ordinances of these sects were baptism and the Eucharist. The bottom line of Gnosticism is an 'other worldly' existence. Many New Testament doctrines are used to support this thought which we will put back into context later. **Gnosticism, historically speaking, is simply the logical progression of Greek or Hellenistic thinking. This philosophy, several centuries later, led to the monastic system and eventually to the Papal system as well.**

We will reveal much, much more about this teaching as we get into the comparisons between the Hebrew and Greek minds. We are going to take several subjects and discuss them from these contrasting points of view. I think you will soon see how and why the modern Church believes and teaches some of the doctrines it does. You may begin to see why our culture is in the condition it is and why many other cultures collapsed as well. It

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may become clearer why so many 'Christians' struggle with sin and cannot seem to conquer anything in their lives. The conclusion will be simple. The Greek/Gnostic thinking of 'inwardness' only sounds holy, good, and scriptural. The problem is this. Our mind and our bodies are created by YHWH and have natural needs and desires. These needs and desires are anticipated by our Creator, so He has rules for the mind and the body. If our theology denies these rules (the reason is really irrelevant), our mind and body will satisfy them some other way. This is why in much Christian theology the Laws of YHWH (that is, the Old Testament "where there is no Holy Spirit"), are superseded by the 'law of Christ' where there is the Spirit. God, who lives in the transmudane, is only interested in the spiritual and has no interest in the mundane cares of the world.

Next we will begin to compare these two contrasting world views. I will take you back to some more details of Greek philosophy as they apply.

We are now going to begin to take several concepts and discuss them from a scriptural (Hebrew) view and a gentile or world view. These are the two contrasting views of life. These are very general terms to describe what can be broken down into more precise views, but most perspectives, other than scriptural, fall under the gentile umbrella. I think it is imperative that we begin with the nature of Elohim (God) first. I will continue to use the term 'Greek' to describe the western, Hellenistic world or gentile point of view. The term 'Hebrew' will generally describe the view of the writers of the Scriptures.

## GREEK VIEW

As we have discussed previously, in Greek literature there were and are many gods. Sha'ul (Paul) touches on this in **1 Corinthians 8:5**, *"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there are gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one Elohim . . ."*. We have already discussed some of the names of these gods. The Greek gods, though they resided in the heavenlies, were also in the likeness of men. Many great Greek heroes, such as Alexander, were looked upon as gods. The gods to the Greeks had the same characteristics of man. They could love, kill, hate, have pity, burst into fits of rage, do evil, and exact revenge at every whim. When the gods changed, so did the worshipers. Each generation was subject to the changing tides of the gods. To the Greek mind there was so much diversity to be seen that there could not be just one God. This is why there could be just as much change and diversity in ethics and morals as well. There were no foundational guidelines for moral behavior. Behavior changed as the times changed, and each philosopher was no more or less correct than the last one. This is not to say that there were no morals in Greek culture. Morals were generated democratically, a concept which Plato hated. Why? Because Plato disdained the working class, and the working class was in the majority. To rule democratically was to rule by the people. Because there were no moral guidelines from the gods, the people were to rule themselves according to what the majority of the population dictated. This is, of course, what our nation has become.

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## HEBREW VIEW

The Scriptures are very specific about the nature of Elohim. He is one. "*Sh'ma Yisrael, YHWH Elohenu YHWH echad*". Hear, O Israel, YHWH is Elohim, YHWH is one. The Scriptures are replete with proclamations about the one Elohim (**D'varim** [Deuteronomy] 6:4-5, Yeshayahu [Isaiah] 44:6-8, 43:10, 45:5-7, 22, 46:9, 1 Corinthians 8:4, Yochanan [John] 17:3). Take the time now to read **M'lakhim Alef** [1<sup>st</sup> Kings] 8:56-61. As you can see, the result of Israel obeying Elohim is that all the people of the earth may know the "*YHWH is Elohim, and there is none else*". When there is only one Elohim then there is only one source of moral behavior. There is only one moral compass and guideline. There is only one measuring stick. There may be much diversity in our dress, hairstyle, looks, physical abilities, interests, and talents, but we are all measured by His Word. When the world sees unity in morals and behavior, they see a unified source and none else. This is one reason why Elohim is adamant about His oneness. This is why the *Sh'ma* is so sacred to Jews, and proceeds forth from their lips three times a day. The *Sh'ma* asserts that YHWH is one. The unity of Elohim implies several things. First, Elohim is unique. None other is like Him. Second, Elohim is one alone, there are no others. Third, Elohim is the ultimate; all being, all life, begins with Him. There is no reality beyond Him, no power above Him, and no other source of vitality. This stands opposed to the majority of religious thought in the world, which means it also stands against the majority of thinking among most people living on the earth as we speak. Christian teaching from the first century has taught that there is but one Elohim, however, much Christian theology betrays this intellectual proposition about Elohim. The early disciples, all Jewish, remained faithful in every way to the *Sh'ma*. All doctrine in the book of Acts attested to this fact. In the middle of the second century the church was dominated by gentiles, and gentile thought began to flow naturally into Greek thinking. While continuing to 'confess' that YHWH was one, they had to contend with what appeared to be different doctrinal positions declared in the Old and New Testaments. At this time an influential teacher named Marcion was fueling the controversy. Marcion, Philo, and others were steeped in Hellenistic thinking as this was the culture they were immersed in. As we have discussed before, Marcion taught the *demiurge* of the Old Testament as opposed to or replaced by, the *logos* of the New Testament. Although this thinking was rejected by most notable 'fathers' of the church, many did carry on his theology, while denying his assertion of more than one Elohim.

## The Dabar of 'Elohim or the Logos of God?

One of the most fundamental backgrounds in understanding words is to know a little history behind those who use them. It is generally agreed by all that the language of the Tanach (Old Testament) is Hebrew. It is also generally agreed that the Tanach is very 'Jewish', and full of concepts, idioms, and phrases that are viewed as Hebraic. Scriptural writers of the Tanach spoke, taught, and thought from this perspective. Until the time of the Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament), the 'Word' of 'Elohim was everything that He had spoken. All scriptural thought was seen through the Hebrew language. But several hundred years before 'Elohim would take on flesh; the world was already

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experiencing some dramatic changes in language and culture. Behind the scenes, the Greek view of the world, and all that is in it, was brewing.

The word '**word**' from the Tanach (Old Testament) has been redefined over time. We will now see how this word changed in time, from the thoughts and commandments of Elohim, to the Logos. But first, we need to look at some quotes from Edwin Hatch. He is eminently known for dozens of Greek works in the 19th century. Perhaps his greatest work is the Concordance to the Septuagint. The following are several excerpts from his book entitled: "The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages Upon the Christian Church". 1895. Williams and Norgate.

"In a similar way we shall find that the Greek Christianity of the fourth century was rooted in Hellenism. The Greek minds which had been ripening for Christianity had absorbed new ideas and new motives;"

"We have ample evidence in regard to the state of Greek thought during the ante-Nicene period. The writers shine with a dim and pallid light when put side by side with the master-spirits of the Attic age;"

"We have ample evidence also as to the state of Christian thought in the post-Nicene period. The fathers Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cyril of Jerusalem, the decrees of general and local Councils, the apocryphal and pseudonymous literature, enable us to form a clear conception of the change which Greek influences had wrought."

"Education was no longer in the hands of "private tutors" in the houses of the great families. It entered public life, and in doing so left a record behind it."

"But when the product of one generation spreads its branches far and wide into the generations that succeed, its roots must be deep and firm in the generation from which it springs. No lasting element of civilization grows upon the surface. Greek education has been almost as permanent as Christianity itself, and for similar reasons. It passed from Greece into Africa and the West. It had an especial hold first on the Roman and then upon the Celtic and Teutonic populations of Gaul; and from the Gallican schools it has come, probably by direct descent, to our own country and our own time."

This process took several centuries to saturate the known world, but it indeed took root and has never let go. So let's trace one simple word for now.

The English word '**word**' that we read in our Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) is translated in most occurrences from the Greek word logos. The 'o's are pronounced as the 'o' in log, not as in low. Its fundamental meaning is much the same as is dabar. It means thought, thing, something said, or utterance. This is the dictionary definition. However, its colloquial meaning in the centuries before and after Yahshua's time was

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quite different. Among the religious Greeks of that time the logos was the "god of gods", the divine mind of the gods. He or it was the "supreme knowledge", also known as gnosis. He was right thought, right mind, right purpose, and right creed. In other words the logos was right BELIEF. Knowledge was salvation: say the right things and believe the right things. And so we have the very subtle shift from Yahshua being the "instructions of 'Elohim become flesh" to the divine "knowledge of the god of gods". Salvation became an intellectual pursuit, with structured creeds as its evidence. Edwin Hatch said it better, again, when he said,

". . . the word faith came to be transferred from simple trust in God to mean the acceptance of a series of propositions, and these propositions, propositions in abstract metaphysics . . . The proposition followed: Belief in God came to mean the assent to certain propositions ABOUT God."

Theophilus also stated that the logos had two aspects, thought and speech. So, the teachings of YHWH in the Tanach concerning marriage, government, children, relationships, disease, clean food, unclean food, handling of criminals, waste management, health, money, and love evolved into a creedal system. **The WORDS of 'ELOHIM' soon became an abstract, undefined concept that could be obtained by saying the right things, to the exclusion of doing the right things.** The Jews of the so-called "dark ages" knew this concept very well. When confronted with the Crusaders, they simply stated that they believed that "Jesus was the Savior", and were promptly released. Most 'confessing' Jews of that time secretly returned to their underground synagogues, knowing that the evidence of a Christian was a good confession.

This would not be all that critical if the actual 'Words' of 'Elohim were impotent and ineffectual. In the book of **Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) chapter 14** in referring to Hasatan (The Deceiver/Satan) it says, "Who made the world like a wilderness, and destroyed its cities, who opened not the house of his prisoners?" Is it any wonder how easy that would be for him if Elohim's Word, designed to produce a land full of milk and honey, to prosper our cities, and to set the captives free, was rendered irrelevant by a Torahless (Lawless) religious culture? Is it a coincidence that the devil (**2 Thessalonians 2:8**) is called the lawless one? **When you redefine Elohim's words, you redefine life and all that it means.**

## GREEK VIEW

According to the Greeks, the gods were constantly changing, and were unconcerned with the mundane affairs of man. One reason is because life in their view was seen as linear. Time was an endless point in the past and continued to an endless point in the future. History was on this time line as a pointless series of events, one after the other. Ages came and ages went. Man was progressing, or evolving, and needed to change as he progressed. Each age was distinct and exclusive from the other, and the past was, for the most part, irrelevant, except for the purpose of man learning from his mistakes. The gods were still worshiped and revered and praise for them continued to flow from their lips.

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## HEBREW VIEW

In Hebrew thought, however, Elohim never changes. He is immutable (unchangeable) and is not like man (**Mal'akhi [Malachi] 3:6, Sh'mu'el Alef [1<sup>st</sup> Samuel] 15:29, Mizmor [Psalm] 102:26-27, Ivrim [Hebrews] 6:17-19, Ya'akov [James] 1:17**). This is one of the most important attributes of Elohim, and it cannot be separated from scriptural faith. One of the biggest pillars of trust is the confidence that what you are trusting in is immutable, unmovable, and unchanging. This is primarily because man does change, and by nature, adamic that is, wants to change his theology as well. This results in a changed god, who changes his theology. Man is constantly evolving and progressing and 'God' must change with him. Hebrew thought teaches no such thing. Elohim knows the end from the beginning and can speak, direct, and instruct from the beginning with eternal application. He does not change with the times or evolve with respect to His essence or His theology. The Elohim of scriptural thought is cyclical not linear. He brings to His creation cycles, cycles of righteousness and instruction. You can see this clearly in His creation. The celestial glories go through their cycles. The moon passes through its phases every month. As a matter of fact, this is the background for understanding the Renewed/New Covenant. The moon is RENEWED every month. The word for moon is "chodesh" which is the cognant of the word for new which is "chadash". The idea is something 'renewed'. Elohim placed the seasons in their cycles. The woman has her monthly cycles. The sun, moon, and stars are cyclical and are placed in the heavens for signs (*le'otot* or times) and for seasons (*mo'ediym* or Appointed Festivals). The guideline for mankind's times and feasts are cyclical just as His Sabbaths and Feasts are cyclical. In these Sabbaths and Feasts, Elohim is constantly and cyclically reminding man of who He is and who man is. This is a big part of what it means to be unchanging. Elohim is not linear and He is not flippant.

There are many aspects of the nature of Elohim that differs in these two contrasting cultural views. The two most important ones with respect to scriptural doctrine are found in His Oneness and His Unchangeableness. **In Hebrew thought, His Nature is intimately tied to His Commands and Instructions. Many religions may 'confess' that He is one and unchangeable, but they betray that confession doctrinally. This is because Greek thinking is embedded in our own thought process, and a mere confession of beliefs about Elohim is truly missing the mark. Believing things about Elohim is not the same as believing Elohim.**

It should be quite obvious that the subject of the nature of Elohim cannot be discussed or compared in this short paper. We have taken just two aspects and compared them. Actually, everything we will discuss is part of the nature of YHWH in one form or another. We are now going to look at some of the doctrines or practices of 'religious' life and see the difference between the way the one YHWH of the Scriptures designed them and how the 'anti-' or 'instead of' culture sees them.

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## THE GREEK VIEW OF WORSHIP

Worship is at the very heart of Greek culture. Many great coliseums were built to accommodate the throngs of worshippers gathered to idolize and revere the gods. These gatherings were thought to please the gods and cause them to cast favor upon the people. Different gods were worshipped for different reasons in that each god was hovering over a different aspect of the world. Songs were sung, instruments were played, and nude dancing was common. Singing songs, playing, and dancing to the gods was worshipping, and this worship is what unified the people. Homosexual acts were quite common in that the body is irrelevant to the gods. It was the state of mind that the gods were interested in. The Stoics however, would have nothing to do with this kind of activity. Worship to them was equally a state of mind; however, a proper state of mind does not succumb to the writhing pleasures of the body. The Greek concept of worship, (*proskuneo*), was seen as a specific act of reverence or homage. Modern worship is also seen from the Greek point of view. We worship on Sunday morning. Praise and worship teams are popular today, as those who lead in Sunday morning worship time. Praise is seen as upbeat with a faster tempo and worship is when the tempo is slowed down and more serious adoration is displayed. When the weekly, mundane, cares of the world go through their cycle, then Praise and Worship begins again with the next Sunday morning. There are also special occasions for Praise and Worship as well, that generally take place on anniversaries or semiannual events. To the western mind, worshipping is an event and not part of the daily Greek lifestyle. When the event was over both the worshipers and the worshipped were pleased and content.

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF WORSHIP

Worship is also at the heart of the observant Jew/Israelite. The difference is how worship is defined and acted upon. The **Tehillim (Psalms)** are full of the worship and adoration of YHWH. All the writers of this book are singing, playing various instruments, clapping, shouting, and dancing unto YHWH. But there are several fundamental differences between the worship of the nations and scriptural worship. The first difference is in the actual meaning of the word worship. The Greek word used to translate worship has defined out some of the crucial focus of the Hebrew word. The Greek tends to separate worship from service, which is the background in Hebrew thought, to understanding worship. In the Hebrew culture the word *avodah* is understood as service, worship, or servitude. The Temple service, before Yahshua, was called *The Avodah* and a false worship is known as *avodah zerah*. A servant of YHWH was a worshipper of YHWH, and worship was a continuous act. It was not limited to set times, even though worship was part of the set times (Feasts, Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, etc.). Worship was intimately tied to work or service. Service to Elohim was not seen as secular and worship as religious or spiritual, but rather they were the same act. Why is this? Because everything is seen as theological to the Jew/Israelite. When a man goes to his job, he is going to worship and serve YHWH. He is worshipping YHWH when he tends to his wife's needs. HE does not separate out ordinary daily activities from his 'religious' duties, for they are one and the same. So, whatever he does he approaches it with the motivation, *kavanah*,

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that this is his worship and service to YHWH. All of life is a unity, just as he sees himself. We will talk more about this later. In Hebrew thought, all occupations are holy and sacred, and they are to be observed as such. One might ask, "So then is a bartender a holy and sacred occupation?" The answer is no. Well I thought you just said that all occupations are holy! That's right! But to the observant Jew/Israelite, a bartender is not an occupation. When everything you set out to do is understood to be worshipping YHWH your perspective changes dramatically. It would be very foreign to the scriptural mind to 'worship' YHWH for one to two hours a week, and then go back to the secular life for one week and repeat the process over again. I have read and come in contact with many observant Jews who are aghast when observing Christian worship. Many would say that our God is a part time God. They would observe that what goes on inside the walls is not practiced outside the walls and vice versa. For example, most westerners have no problem with jumping up and down and shouting at a sporting event, but would not dare jump up and down or shout in their assembly. I would think that YHWH has done more for them than the Broncos have. Many would also have no problem in kneeling and praying inside the walls of the assembly, but would not be caught dead doing that at work or at play somewhere else.

## THE GREEK VIEW OF SPIRITUALITY

This is one of the subjects that hits at the very core of differences between Western thinking and Scriptural thinking: "what it means to be spiritual". Unfortunately there are many 'eastern' religious ideas of spirituality that are very similar to the Hellenistic way of seeing this subject. When we talk about Eastern vs. Western thinking, we are using them as very general terms. The Scriptures are not 'eastern' per se. Scriptural thinking is Scriptural thinking. What is called the Middle Eastern culture is closest to Scriptural thinking. I only use the term 'eastern' to distinguish the thinking of Scripture from all other non-scriptural philosophies which are generally referred to as Greek, or gentile, ways of the nations, etc. The Scriptures consistently use these terms and they do not come from me. I will sum up the Greek idea of spirituality first and then we will get more specific. **To the Greek mind, true spirituality is "otherworldly". It is found in living outside of this world and this philosophy can and does lead to all kinds of "New Age" teachings and related religions including modern Christianity.** The gods lived outside of this world and so a truly spiritual man lived outside of the cares of this world as well. Denying the physical and condemning emotion was part of this philosophy. Right thinking and right ideas were the hallmarks of the spiritual person. Only the truly educated (the rich) could attain true spirituality, as the poor were destined to take care of the mundane, daily necessities. They were the ditch diggers, caretakers, farmers, and of course, carpenters. Worshipping was something you did with the mind and was not to be demonstrative. As I have mentioned before, this philosophy was easily blended into a young gentile church and launched the monastic (basic/simple) systems. Denying ones self was very spiritual, because the physical was evil. The sooner one entered the heavenlies the better. This is why suicide was a very noble thing in Greek thinking. Any Scriptures dealing with a heavenly citizenship was seen as advocating this otherworldly existence. Marriage was seen as of this world and was shunned. Abstaining from meat

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and certain foods was also promoted as obtaining a higher calling with the new *logos*. Since the *logos* was considered the mind of the minds, focusing on correct thinking was being "in the spirit". This would also lead to the correct path of receiving revelations from the *logos*. To have the mind of Christ (or the mind of the *logos*) was to have correct thinking. During the rise of Gnosticism, they would have been wearing bracelets that said WWJT (What Would Jesus Think) instead of WWJD (What Would Jesus Do).

Emotions were also looked down upon in Gnostic thinking. To show emotion was to demonstrate weakness and spiritual immaturity. When emotion was stoic and the body denied then the initiate was truly spiritual. The hair was seen as a worldly demonstration of haughtiness and pride, so the shaving of the very top of the head was a sign of unworthiness. Many times uncomfortable clothes were also worn to demonstrate the denial of the body. Many early initiates of Gnostic thought were vowed to silence, as there was nothing that a truly spiritual person could have to say. Early initiates would live together away from the 'other' people for a time in order to focus on their thinking. When they returned they were the truly spiritual people who only could communicate with the *logos*. This led to the great gulf fixed between clergy and laity. Yahshua more than likely referred to this thinking when He condemned the Nicolaitans. These men would take a vow of celibacy for life, as they were married to the Lord (the only true bride).

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF SPIRITUALITY

There is a very stark contrast between the Hellenistic view of spirituality and what it is in Hebrew thought. To begin with, true spirituality is earthly and not otherworldly. To the Hebrew, man was placed upon the earth and given responsibilities to take care of the earth. He is given instructions on how to take care of the body and how to love your neighbor. He is told how to plant crops and when not to plant crops. He is instructed as to when to celebrate, how and why to celebrate. He is told when to rest and when to work. He is told how and when to take care of the poor and how to handle money. To the scripturally spiritual man the 'other world' is the reward, not the goal. To be spiritual was to be involved in his world, to live life to the fullest according to YHWH's Word. This is not to say that we are to be "of" this world, but to be "in" this world. Yahshua said, "*My words are spirit and they are life*". YHWH came into His world and lived in His world. He suffered in His world, died in His world, was buried in His ground, and rose again IN HIS WORLD. True suffering was always a result of standing firm for the word of YHWH. It was not self-inflicted. Being a part of changing this world was to be spiritual. To be "in the spirit" was to act according to YHWH's Word, to celebrate life, spirit, soul and body. To be spiritual was to be in this world, fully aware and fully focused on your part in all that you do. Emotions are part of the nature of Elohim. Emotions are natural, but guided by His Word. In other words, there is a time and a place for emotions. In Hebrew thinking, the dying process is a time to mourn and weep. According to Schlomo (Solomon), there is a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. There is a time to embrace and a time not to, a time to speak and a time to be silent. There is a time to love and a time to hate. The **Tehillim (Psalms)** are replete with emotions. It is not that emotions are worldly, it's discerning the correct time and place for

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them. I would guess that hysterical laughing in the middle of a serious sermon is bad discernment. **Emotion is not the evidence of truth but rather a reaction to it.** Marriage is perhaps the most spiritual thing a man and woman do. All that is involved in a godly marriage is seen as spiritual to the Hebrew. Sex in the marriage is especially spiritual. It is seen as the fullest expression of the nature of Elohim. It is designed to be a physical pleasure, only touching the surface of what our union with the Messiah should be. In Hebrew thought, the *Ruach HaQodesh* (Spirit The Holy or The Holy Spirit) dwells between the marriage partners at those special times. The body is not evil, according to Scripture, Old or New Testaments. When the Scriptures speak of the flesh, they are speaking of the other nature in you, the one that wars with the spirit. This other nature is the very nature that we are talking about when we speak about Greek thinking. It is this 'worldly system' we are to come out from among. It is this worldly culture that stands against YHWH.

To Plato, the cosmos is dualistic and man is a picture of that dualism. The body is a prison for the soul. The immortal soul is incarcerated in an evil, defective, body and salvation only comes at death. Life is doomed, cruel and hopeless, and subject to the fate of the gods. The best man can do on this earth is to think his way into blissfulness, and to escape the body through esoteric knowledge. The Hebrew mind sees the body and his surroundings as good, and he understands that he is to humbly dedicate these to YHWH, as a responsible steward of the Creator's good gifts. He sees the human being as a dynamic unity, called to serve Elohim his Creator passionately, with his whole being. He sees the body as the vehicle for Elohim's grace and His conduit for justice and righteousness in the earth. *"So whatever ye eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God", 1 Corinthians 10:31.*

The whole idea of salvation to the Greek mind is wrapped up in the state or eternal status of the soul. As we have discussed before, in Greek dualistic thinking, only the soul or the domain of the *nous* or mind is 'godly', or can be godly. Salvation is right thinking and creedal in its nature. To 'believe' is to know the right things. This knowledge comes only from the gods. Many even believed that there would be 'doorkeepers' at the gates of the heavens and that secret codes would have to be declared before entrance. This could be where we get all the St. Peter jokes. Salvation, none the less, was confessional and directed at the soul. The following is an early example from the Gnostic document, The Gospel of Philip: *The Lord revealed to me what the soul must say when ascending into heaven, and how she must answer each of the upper powers: I have come to know myself, and I have collected myself from everywhere, and I have not sown children to the Archon but have uprooted his roots and have collected the dispersed members, and I know thee who thou art: I am of those from above. And thus she is released.* **To be 'saved' in Greek thought is to be released from this evil world.** Salvation is a matter of creeds and correct knowledge about the gods. In Gnostic thought, the concept of 'keys' are mentioned quite liberally. **Scriptural terms such as, 'believe', to 'know' or 'knowledge', 'word' or 'words', 'keys' and 'gates', 'confess' and 'faith', are all tied in with this esoteric knowledge given by the gods. These terms were easily transferred to New Testament teaching.** When Yahshua said *"I am the door... I am the good shepherd... I am the light of the world... I am the*

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*way, the truth, and the life...*", these were understood to speak of the *logos* or the *nous* come down from heaven to distribute this knowledge or *gnosis*. He came to bring the 'keys' of salvation. Let me remind you that in Greek thought the *logos* was the collective mind or *nous* of the gods. In order for the soul to be destined for heaven one must 'believe' certain propositions about the *logos*. The early 'church' remained very 'Hebrew' for the first two centuries and this is why there is no record of 'creeds' being established. The creeds come later when the church is dominated by gentiles and the 'Jewish believers' have been chased away by the Jews and the Christians.

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF SALVATION

In scriptural thinking, salvation is not limited to the soulish area. This is because Elohim sees a 'person' as one or *echad* (a unity). Salvation involves the spirit, soul or mind, and the body. All three are seen as the one person. As far as life goes, there is no separation of these three. Salvation is relationship centered, as YHWH is seen as Father and not a collective mind separated from humanity. YHWH is seen as being involved in all areas of life, and so doing the right things as a result of trusting is part of salvation. Salvation begins with trusting in His words which leads to right action. Salvation is not LEAVING this world but becoming actively involved in changing what is wrong and sustaining what is right. 'Peace' in Greek thinking is to escape the pressures of life. 'Peace' in Hebrew thought is to actively take part in the 'completion' of what is good and righteous. Peace and salvation involve being a whole human being. YHWH gives instructions to guide us in our growth to be a full person, spirit, soul, and body, and to save us, spirit, soul, and body from whatever would desire to destroy any of these three areas. YHWH placed this pattern in the building of the Tabernacle in **Sh'mot (Exodus) 25-35**. But to sum up, YHWH has an order that He has designed. He must begin in the Most Holy place first. Then to the Holy place, followed by the court. Then, when approaching Him, man must begin in the court and proceed to the Holy place and finally the Most Holy place. This is the 'peace' that Yahshua came to give (**Yochanan [John] 14:27**).

As you read and search out salvation in the New Testament dictionary (the Old Testament), you will find that salvation is consistently deliverance from evil or contrary circumstances, not escape to paradise or some otherworldly existence. In Greek thinking, heaven is the goal, in Hebrew thinking, heaven is the reward. Deliverance in Hebrew thinking was being rescued from ways that were contrary to YHWH's ways. This is why the first words from Yahshua's mouth, and Yochanan (John) the immerser, was REPENT! They both cried these words to the Jewish leadership which had gone its own way and had strayed from His Ways. The word *Yahshua* means salvation or deliverance. Deliverance from what? From the direction they were going. Yahshua was a light to lighten the gentiles and the glory of his people Israel. In Greek thinking, the 'savior' was the coming of the 'mind of the minds', the 'god of the gods' to rescue the soul from this world. His mind was to bring us inner peace until that great day of deliverance. His words were our 'spiritual food' to feed our souls that we might grow inwardly. Laws or instructions concerning the physical things were only for the "weak in the faith" who needed such things to guide them, for they lacked inner maturity or *gnosis*. This doctrine

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quite naturally led to a distaste for the Jews or anything 'Jewish', and you can see how this would eventually lead to the destruction of those who were hindering the coming of YHWH. This might also explain why songs such as "I'll Fly Away" and "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" or "God's got a Mansion For Me" would be very popular songs.

## THE GREEK VIEW OF PRAYER

Praying or communicating with the gods was not an everyday, consistent event in Greek life. The gods were primarily called upon when something was wrong or someone was in need. Prayers were offered by the individual spontaneously. When celebrations in the great arenas were observed, this would be a time of group participation in communicating with the gods. This would be primarily to help with the success of the spectacles arranged to entertain the participants. Prayers would usually be lengthy and colorful. Leaders in the gatherings would usually offer up these prayers to the gods for the people. Communication with the gods was primarily help and request orientated. The success or failure of prayer was assigned to the gods. If fair weather was requested and it rained, then the gods were displeased. Why they were displeased was impossible to determine in that the gods were fickle and inconsistent. To please the gods was to adore and worship them.

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF PRAYER

In Hebrew thinking, prayer is both ritual and spontaneous. Prayer was usually communal and in the plural. In Hebrew thinking, prayer is usually blessing Elohim, thanking Him and speaking in the past tense. Prayer is much like the Feasts in that it is also assigned to 'set times'. Prayer is part of discipline, to train one to daily communicate with the Creator. Certain times of the day were consistently set aside for blessings and communication. This was designed to teach them to routinely give YHWH attention. In Hebrew thinking to pray 'continually' was to observe these periods during the day. Hebrew prayer is short, extremely frequent, and observed at the same times each day. This would also ensure that all of Israel was praying together, as each individual saw himself as part of one collective person. Prayers were seen as 'we', 'us', or 'our', rather than 'me' or 'I'. This is part of the reason why the so-called "Lord's prayer" begins with "Our Father . . ." rather than "My Father . . .". Most Hebrew blessings begin with the same preamble if you will: "*Baruch atah YHWH Elohenu melech haolam*" or "Blessed art thou O YHWH OUR Elohim, King of the Universe ..." Much of Hebrew prayer is thankfulness, thanking Him for what He has done. Acknowledging what He **has** done builds strength and trust for what He **will** do. Many times in the Tanach (Old Testament) you will see YHWH teaching this concept to His people. For example, in **D'varim (Deuteronomy) 20:1** YHWH says, "*When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses, and chariots, and a people more than you, be not afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.*" YHWH says this many times in the Scriptures. To have confidence in the future is to have a rock solid foundation laid in the past. This is how prayer was focused in Hebrew thinking. Prayer was also spontaneous and request

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orientated. It was and is the combination of daily ritual and spontaneity that made up Hebrew praying.

Many times today I do not see prayer as a personal activity in corporate settings. Most of the time someone is doing the praying for the masses and every one is encouraged to agree. Many times the prayer at the end of the service is another sermon couched in prayer-type language. I see the Praise teams singing for everyone, the minister praying for everyone, the Pastor studying the Scriptures for everyone, and distributing the wealth for the few. Greek thinking? Maybe.

## THE GREEK VIEW OF THE NATURE OF MAN

As we continue our journey in understanding Greek thinking, it will become more and more obvious what we are trying to teach. As we get more and more accustomed to this view, it will be very easy to detect the use of this thinking when we read commentaries or listen to most modern day sermons. How the very essence of man is seen is very important in understanding why modern Christianity has a difficult time teaching, believing, or accepting most of the Old Testament theology. As I have said before, most New Testament teaching uses the Old Testament stories as object lessons or to illustrate the contrast between law and grace. Most Christians do not know the teaching of the Tanach (Old Testament) nor do they want to. The modern day concept of the nature or essence of man springs forth from Greek thinking and teaching. To the Greeks, man is dual, as we have covered many times. He is made up of flesh (body, physical, material, that which is carnal) and soul (mind, spirit, invisible, eternal, that which is holy or godly). It is the soul which is considered eternal and redeemed by the gods. It is the soul that ascends to the heavens. Knowledge and right thinking or doctrine feeds the soul. Morals and ethics are intellectual concepts that by their very nature are for the soul. This is why commandments and laws from Scripture which primarily deal with the physical are irrelevant to the spiritual man. The Gnostic world has no need of higher governing laws, as laws are only for the weak. The Jews of the Tanach had not this esoteric understanding (i.e. no Holy Spirit) (a little sarcasm!) so they were in need of laws in order to sustain them in their 'weak' faith. To the Greek, the heart is good and the body is evil. When a 'brother' sins or commits atrocious acts, it is merely evil flesh doing what it does by nature. Since the flesh or body does not enter into the heavens, then it does not matter what the body does. Here is how **1 Corinthians 6:9 - 10** would be interpreted by Hellenistic or Gnostic thinking: *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* In Gnostic thought only the flesh or physical does these things, the REAL you doesn't. The body is doing what comes naturally. So all things are lawful, acknowledging that some things are not good to do. Man is, in reality, a spirit being, and operates only in another existence, and the things of the world are mundane and for the weak. The soul belongs to the gods and the body is the product of a fallen world and can do no good. The sooner the soul leaves the body the better.

# HEBREW MIND vs. GREEK MIND

The most natural result of this kind of thinking is the spiritualizing or allegorizing of virtually everything. Simple directions or instructions from the Scriptures become mystical typologies. Types in Scripture are valid, but the type is usually clear and does not appear contrived. The teaching of types also does not eliminate the plain, simple meaning of the text either. For example, it is obvious that the Passover was a picture or type of what has become known as the Lord's Supper. Much of the Passover Seder (telling) is clearly portrayed and acted upon by Yahshua the Messiah.

It must be stated here that Passover is NOT the same as Easter. These are two different things all together. Some in the Church teach that these are one and the same celebration of the death, burial and resurrection of Yahshua Messiah. However, Easter is the celebration of the fertility goddess Istarte. The Church has changed the name of this pagan festival to represent what the Feast of Passover represents. The Church should be keeping Passover and not Easter. This subject will not be covered in this paper.

Continuing, this is what true types are designed to do. But they are not designed to eliminate the observance of Passover. The text does not teach that the anti-type is to replace the type. The early anti-Nicene Church, with some exceptions, understood that Yahshua recognized the Tanach as inspired and truth. They could not nor would not exclude it from the recognized canon. But by the time these 'church fathers' were ready to canonize the written word, they had already concluded that the Old Testament had passed away and YHWH was starting something new and separate from what He had been doing. So what are they to do? Allegorize it, of course! This would be the natural flow of the spiritual man. The Tanach quickly became a collection of myths, legends, and stories designed to teach the 'church' valuable lessons. These allegories would show the 'church' how fortunate she was to live in the age of grace. Man's soul could now be placed in an eternal, spiritual state by believing the right things and confessing certain propositions about the *logos*. "What does God require of me?" was replaced by, "Who is the *logos*?".

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF THE NATURE OF MAN

To the Hebrew, man is a unity. He is spirit, he is soul, and he is body, the one man. All is to be holy as YHWH is holy. All is to be righteous, all is to be good, all is to be redeemed and sanctified. **In Hebrew thinking, it is what man DOES and not what man thinks or believes. In Hebrew thinking, what a man trusts and follows determines what a man DOES.** The spirit, soul, and body are all considered to be a man's life, and YHWH's instructions were for the spirit, soul, and body. As you search the Tanach you will find that the Hebrew words for life, spirit, soul, and breath are used interchangeably. When a man's spirit left him, his life left him. The spirit, soul, and body are all treated as one life. This is imperative to understanding the very nature of the "Godhead" as well. The writer of **Ivrim (Hebrews)** reveals to us in **chapter 4 verse 12** that the 'Word' divides the soul and the spirit. This is true. There is a difference between these two, but they are both the ONE man. **The Hebrew knows nothing of the teaching that the spirit is redeemed and the soul and body are separate issues. He sees YHWH redeeming the whole man by beginning at the very heart of man and working outward to make him complete.** In Greek

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thinking, man is content in knowing that he has believed the right things. In Hebrew thinking, the journey has just begun. He searches YHWH for that which prospers his life. He searches for instructions for the heart, guidance for his soul, and directions for his body. He hungers to know HOW to love his neighbor, HOW to treat his loved ones, and HOW to take care of himself. He longs to know HOW to worship his Creator, HOW to celebrate Him, and HOW to follow Him. **The Hebrew man knows that YHWH's Torah/instructions will bless him in all his ways, and prosper him wherever he goes. He knows that his 'God' cares about every detail of his life, and is not above the mundane.**

## THE GREEK VIEW OF THE GENDERS

There are some major differences between earlier Greek thought and Aristotelian thought. The male was always considered superior to the female, but the reasons seem to shift as philosophy became more popular. Perhaps the most obvious difference between Greek and Hebrew thinking in this matter concerns the structure of the bodies. In Homer's time, the female gender was viewed inferior only with respect to how much work was accomplished, compared to the males. Plowing, wood cutting, and heavy agricultural duties were viewed as being more directly related to everyone's survival, and thus carried more weight (pun intended). Women, at first, were never viewed as having inferior intellect. Women and men were seen from a scriptural point of view before Homer's time. However, as time progressed, philosophy became more important in Greek everyday life. As more and more thinkers pondered life, the more inferior women became. The period of time between Socrates and Plato was the building of the *polis* or city/state. As the great cities became the places to live, the more the gender roles began to merge. This was a significant change in thinking. It was the philosophies of the time that generated these changes. Plato had created a utopia of city/state thinking. Male and female guardians lived in shared houses, ate in the same halls, and exercised in the same gymnasiums. Their children were raised as a group in a common environment by special caretakers. Today we would call these day care centers, for it takes a village to raise a child! This was seen as a freeing of the women to rule equally with men. Children were taught and raised by the state, and educated in mathematics, astronomy, and metaphysics to gain the knowledge that Plato in his "Republic" presented as necessary for the common good. He said that such a state was necessarily authoritarian because only the ruling class would possess the knowledge to determine its policies and make decisions determining who is allowed to mate with whom to produce the best children. Remember that, just like the gods, superiority is the goal. The means by which one achieves superiority is not a concern. The end justifies the means.

The eventual blending of the sexes helped to achieve the superior culture. Men would dress and groom themselves as women and vice versa. Sha'ul (Paul) addressed (pun intended) some of these issues in his epistles. Fathers and mothers were part of the ruling class and left their children to be educated by the state. The poorer classes, however, could not afford this education and were forced to teach their own children. Self-taught children could not hold or reach public positions, of course. Mothers who did not work and stayed home to teach their children were on the lowest rung.

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This changed somewhat during Aristotle's time. Aristotle taught that women were by nature inferior to men. Their inferior natures were not limited to the physical, but in virtually every area. He believed and taught that women were actually incomplete males. Shortly after this, the groups known as the Sceptics and the Cynics began to move Greek thinking back to the unisex ways of earlier thought. Since enlightened men and women were the same good sanctified souls, then there was no reason to express any differences on the outside, since the body was irrelevant anyway. Zeno taught that unisex clothing should be worn as a way to obliterate unnecessary distinctions between women and men. The Cynics ostentatiously rejected every convention of ordinary life. Whatever was natural was good and could be done without shame before anyone. Their teachings led to some of the most degrading public displays imaginable. By the way, the word 'Cynic' means 'like a dog'. Throughout most of Greek history, the female had gone from subservient roles, to virtually no distinction of roles, back to subservient, and back again to unisex. What is most ironic about all this is the Greek religious view of the female. The soul was seen as feminine, and much adoration was given to the various female goddesses. However, the goddesses were revered for their reproductive activities. This philosophy remained faithful to the other worldly view of the Greeks. Goddesses were put on a pedestal in the heavenlies and abused here on earth. And why not? All material things were evil anyway, right guys? What hypocrisy.

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF THE GENDERS

The scriptural view of the genders goes back to the garden. The male and female were seen as equal in purpose and importance with respect to their oneness in unity. Both man and woman were less than what they were created to be without each other. Man was not one unless woman was with him. Very few positive scriptural commands deal with 'bachelors' or single women. These roles were not meant to be. Male and female were both created with different functions. Neither function is ever mentioned as being lesser or greater than the other. The common stereotype of the Hebrew man or woman is simply a product of erroneous teaching. No God-fearing Hebrew ever considered the women to be inferior in any way. Motherhood was the most important function in the family unit. There was never any confusion as to male and female functions. The raising and training of children was of paramount importance in the family. Without the benefit of YHWH's infinite knowledge, man would be left alone to daily choose who is assigned to what function. The woman's role as caretaker of the future generations was the most important function in the home. The male, according to design, was to work by the sweat of his brow. Working was seen as a supportive role in the totality of the family structure. The father and the mother were responsible for the education of the children. Children were not left to be indoctrinated by educators who did not have their child's absolute best interest in mind. Attention was not to be divided. Knowledge in the Creator's words was paramount, and learning the father's trade was crucial. Males looked distinct from females. Different clothes, grooming, and social activity were observed. Women did not gather with the men. This kept men's eyes on their own wives, for example. When men led in religious observance or made decisions, it was always an expression of two minds as one. Men think differently than women, and only a decision based upon the

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combination of his mind and his wife's could be rendered justly. There was no blending or swapping of roles. Man's role was to rule, but man could not effectively rule without the woman. This is why an elder's qualification was to be the HUSBAND of one wife. There are distinct and time tested differences in the functions of men and women in Hebrew thinking. The church or the culture does not define the functions or change them. As you read the Tanach you will clearly see no problems or complaining about the different roles of the genders. It is only when YHWH's people are mixed with the nations do you begin to detect any protesting. When another culture or belief system enters the paradigm, only then do you see the shift take place. What was evil becomes good, and what was good becomes evil. What used to be shameful soon becomes acceptable for the sake of rights or freedom. What used to be holy and righteous becomes archaic, old fashioned and even absurd. The scriptural roles for women as mothers and wives were cherished because they were publicly and socially exalted and glorified. The education of children was shared equally between the father and mother. YHWH's Word was a daily part of living. It is only because of the emergence of the Rabbinical system, did the art of diligent study and knowledge shift from a family event to the sole possession of the Rabbi's. What used to be "go ask your father and mother" now became "go ask the Rabbi". The Rabbinical system retained much of Torah (the first five books of Moses), but this system rose to power in the height of Hellenism.

There are a lot of questions to be asked concerning the exchanging or blending of gender functions. Many of the most logical questions can be answered. The problem began long before there was any 'women's rights' movements. The answers are not easy because the whole subject is a giant sequential vortex. Our culture abandoned scriptural thinking long ago, and what we are experiencing is at least five generations removed from the causes. I believe that most of our cultural problems with sexual diseases, genders, homosexuality, divorce, and violent homes is based on an abandonment of scriptural gender roles and the proper distinction of men and women.

As we grow we see things from greater perspectives, and we must acknowledge along the way that we do not know everything yet, and that even the things we think we know we may see differently in the future. I do not want to seem too elementary here, but the facts are that YHWH does know everything, and He reveals many things that we have not learned by experience yet. We can learn and grow from these, if we are willing to concede this fact. For example, in a tiny baby's world, food comes from a breast. This is all he/she knows as reality and truth. As he becomes a crawler his reality shifts to a bottle. Food comes from a bottle. A little later he realizes that food comes from a jar. This is it! This is where food comes from. As he begins to walk, he discovers that the source of food is the big white box in the kitchen. At last, the source of food. One day his mother puts him in the car and they travels to a big store that is jam-packed with food. So this is where food comes from. His realities keep changing as long as he is willing to accept the new information. It is usually around the second grade before he finally realizes what he is eating and where it really comes from. Thank the Lord, that this was not revealed to him when he was crawling!

# HEBREW MIND vs. GREEK MIND

## THE GREEK VIEW OF EDUCATION

One of our realities today, so it seems, is our public education system, which comes straight from the Greeks. One of the main reasons for the creation of the great *polis* or city-state was to achieve excellence through community education, to build gigantic gymnasiums for the purpose of educating the children. The elite were gathered into these community buildings and quickly stripped of whatever realities they possessed at that point. By the way, the word gymnasium is from the Greek word *gymnos* which means "naked". The many were taught by the few and given instructions on every conceivable subject. The point was that knowledge was the key to excellence, and to know was to rule. The poor, however, were not permitted to be educated this way. The parents of the poor were discouraged from teaching their young the sciences or the arts. They were trained in a trade and this was perfectly acceptable. Most poor people were barely able to write their name. Less well to do mothers and fathers were not trained to educate. So the elite were raised by the village and were advanced by the simple fact that they participated in the community education system.

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF EDUCATION

It is perhaps becoming more obvious by now, what the scriptural view of this subject will be. We are talking about the ancient view and not the more modern 'Rabbinical' system. Fathers and mothers were responsible for the education of their children. Knowledge was the focus, but the knowledge was from their Creator and His moral values and judgments. The arts and sciences were taught as well, and all knowledge was founded upon scriptural principles. Some knowledge was not made available, even if it was truth. Sex education was not part of the curriculum. This is one of the most life saving principles of the culture of the Hebrews. We have been trained by our western education system that the more we are educated about the sexual experience, the safer we are. This was the thinking of the 1950's, for example. Certain venereal diseases were on the rise, barely notable by the way, and something must be done. Sex education was introduced in the public system to provide knowledge to children about everything concerning the sexual experience. Unwanted pregnancies were dominating the landscape and education was the answer. Since that time, venereal diseases have multiplied beyond control, and teenage pregnancies are common place. But that is not the point. From the view of our Hellenistic culture, knowledge is power and the answer to our calamities. The conclusion is simple. Education leaders are responsible for the administering of knowledge. They are not, by nature, concerned with the moral values of YOUR child. The whole idea of the nature of your child's education is similar to the Greek view of heaven or salvation. Correct ideas and right thinking is the goal. What you DO with those ideas is irrelevant. Fathers and mothers, on the other hand, very much have a stake in their children's future. The child's future affects the parent as well as the child. What the child DOES with his life is imperative. The child's longevity is part of the motive. His health is also at stake. The parents have the entire life of the child in mind.

# HEBREW MIND vs. GREEK MIND

## THE GREEK VIEW OF THE WORLD TO COME

In Greek thought, 'heaven' is a totally separate place from this present life. It is a world that can be entered by denying the existence of this present world, and accepting the *gnosis* of the initiated. Once this profession has taken place, then one has changed his 'state' in life and is translated into another existence. As I have stated previously, in the spiritual world there are no laws or demands for all is perfect and there is no need for laws. Laws are designed for physical existence from which the initiate has just separated himself. This is seen as the presence and indwelling of the *logos* or divine *gnosis*. Those who attempt to obey laws or rules are demonstrating the lack of this *gnosis*, hence the term 'legalist'. The reason you are here on earth is to find this 'state' of existence. The purpose of sharing this knowledge is to place this *gnosis* in the next person. Once you have found the *logos*, you have entered the world to come, the ultimate goal. Heaven is a place of peace and tranquility that can be experienced only by trance-like activity. It certainly cannot be found by participating in the mundane affairs of life. This existence is particularly enhanced by sharing it with other like-minded people. True reality is the spiritual realm, and all that mankind shares now is not true reality but a passing phase that one must enter in order to have a part in the world to come.

## THE HEBREW VIEW OF THE WORLD TO COME

In Hebrew thought, there is a world to come, and just like Greek thought it is a place that one can enter while still in this tabernacle. However, there are major differences. Just as the spirit, soul, and body are one life, so are these two worlds. In Hebrew thought, man exists in both worlds and is responsible to be righteous citizens of both worlds. The spiritual realm is to guide the physical realm. His ultimate eternal existence is a reward. He is responsible to take part in this existence and sustain the words of YHWH. True knowledge comes from YHWH only, and its purpose is to sustain life in this world; to restore where corruption has taken place; to give life where there is no life; to preserve His creation. Heaven is a present place that guides and directs physical life, a perfect kingdom to rule over an imperfect, corrupt world.

I thought I might take some time to provide a short explanation of some other aspects of life that are seen differently by these two views. I will not labor through long explanations.

## LOVE AND HATE

In Greek thought, love is a feeling or emotion that is solicited, and demonstrated by feeling or emotion. There are different kinds of these emotions and different Greek words to define these emotions. There is brotherly love, erotic love, and committed love for example. Committed love is the love that man is to have for the gods. This is the famous *agape* kind of love that is taught in the church today. This love, however, is demonstrated by feelings or emotion, as an act of expressing true commitment. Hate is also a feeling or emotion that is generally reactionary. One can 'love' until something negative is

# HEBREW MIND vs. GREEK MIND

expressed and then love can quickly turn to hate. Hate has not a place in Greek thought as an original action. It is a reaction. One could easily hate the gods as an emotional reaction to negative circumstances, and one could just as easily 'love' them when the circumstances change. **When love is based on feeling or emotion then feeling or emotion can change it to hate.**

In Hebrew thought, ***ahav*** or love is based on the idea of preference or choice. It is not an emotional concept. When YHWH said that "He loved Ya'akov (Jacob) and hated Esav (Esau)", He meant that He chose Ya'akov and did not choose Esav. When YHWH, in **B'reshith (Genesis) 22**, said that He loved Isaac, He meant that He preferred Isaac. **Love and hate are not emotional concepts in scriptural thinking.** When Yahshua said, "***If you love me, you will keep my commandments***", He was saying that if you have chosen Me or if you prefer Me, then do what I say. When He said that men loved the darkness rather than the light, He was saying that men preferred or chose the darkness over the light. In a Hebrew betrothal, the father **CHOOSES** his son's bride. When vows are spoken, the son and the bride **CHOOSE** each other. In the Commandments it is written that you are to **LOVE** the Lord your God. You are to prefer the Lord your God. This is directly related to the first two Commandments that state that you are to have no other gods before Him. It is a matter of choice. **In the Greek culture, emotion is solicited first, then commitment. Emotion must be sustained or the commitment fails. Why? Because it began with emotion. In Hebrew thought, emotion is a result of commitment.**

## PEACE

**In Greek thought, peace is a state of mind.** This state of mind can be found in several ways: through lack of confusion or chaos. In other words when there is no war there is peace. Peace is the lack of war. This, I believe, is part of the background of **1 Thessalonians 5**, when the people will cry, ***peace and safety***. From a world wide point of view, peace is taken from the western point of view. A 'peaceful' neighborhood is one that has no crime to speak of. A 'peaceful' home is one where the children are not in trouble. When a mother wants to have some 'peace' she means she wants all kids out of the house and quiet to prevail. Many people go to a quiet resort somewhere to have some 'peace'. When Israel and her neighbors are not fighting there is peace. Monks would find 'peace' by going to the monastery. Yoga is a way to attain 'peace'. Nirvana is 'peace'. Peace and quiet go together very naturally. **When Yahshua said, "...my peace I leave with you."** He meant the state of mind one finds when accepting Him as Savior. This state of mind is given to you upon confession. If you lose your peace, then it can be found by **'stirring' it up.**

In Hebrew thought, ***shalom*** or peace, is wholeness or completeness. When a person is submitted spirit, soul, and body to His Creator, then he is at peace. Peace is being whole. A whole person is actively involved in his world, his community, his family. He is at peace when he sees the results of his harvest, when he acts upon what his Creator directs him to do. He completes the act when he **DOES** what he believes. **Peace is the full realization of YHWH's Word in your life and is not a 'state of mind' or an emotional state.**

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## BLESSINGS AND CURSES

To be blessed in Greek thought is to receive from the gods. Favorable conditions in war, weather, and finances are to be blessed by the gods. When a military leader is promoted, he is blessed. When financial rewards are reaped, this is a blessing. To be cursed, however, is to lose the battle or fall in financial ruin. When something seen as negative occurred, this was a curse. Curses could turn into blessings by a change in attitude toward the gods. The curses of the demiurge could be reversed through proper adoration. Simply put, blessings are when good things happen and curses are when bad things happen. Good and bad are relative, of course. If a violent thunderstorm suddenly occurred that evening, it was the direct result of displeasing the gods that afternoon.

In Hebrew thought, blessings are synonymous with obedience and curses to disobedience, and are not tied to good or bad circumstances. In other words, the blessing comes at the moment of obedience, and so with the curse. Something good or bad happening could be the result of a myriad of circumstances totally unrelated to recent obedience or disobedience. The word of YHWH promises blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. This is what we know. I will illustrate with an old Rabbinical tale. In a village in northern Europe in the 11th century, there was an old Rabbi that everyone sought for wisdom. One day a white horse strays into the village. That evening the butcher's house burns to the ground. The villagers go to the Rabbi and say, "Rabbi, we have been cursed, for this morning a white horse came to town and Schlomo's house burned to the ground. What do we do?" "What!" says the Rabbi, "all you know is that a horse came to town." The next day the horse left the tiny village and that evening the butcher found a large sum of money buried underneath his burned house. The villagers came to the Rabbi and said, "We have been blessed, for the horse left and Schlomo can now build a new house." "What!" said the Rabbi, "all you know is that the horse left and Schlomo found some money." The next day the horse returned and Schlomo's son fell and broke his leg. The villagers came to the Rabbi and said, "We have been cursed, for the horse has returned and Levi's leg is broken." "What curse?" said the Rabbi, "all you know is that the horse came back and Levi broke his leg." The next day the horse left and the village went to war with the neighboring village, and most of the young men were killed. The rest of the village came to the Rabbi and said, "Rabbi, Schlomo has been blessed, for the horse has left and Levi's life was spared because he could not go to war due to his broken leg!" And on and on and on it goes.

This paper was designed to be elementary. I pray that it has been just that. I hope that I have shown in a simple way how the thinking of the early church began. I hope that you have seen some sort of time line in our western thinking process. I believe with all my heart that when Sha'ul said that gentiles are grafted into a natural tree, contrary to their nature, that this western thinking process was precisely what he was referring to. When he said that we need to have 'the mind of Christ', that he was referring to the current state of our thinking process. The facts are that our thinking is not scriptural thinking, and there must be a radical transformation made. Many times in our culture we are divided up into other kinds of thinking. Those who call themselves conservative are many times

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moved to laughter in trying to understand the liberal mind-set. White people are sometimes in another world from black people. From a 'straight' persons point of view a gay man is from another planet or solar system. There are books about the differences between men and women, and type 'A' or type 'B' people. Young people think differently from old people and rich people from poor people. A middle-aged member of the NRA sees his world differently from the Greenpeace activist. I am sure my father still struggles to make me see things his way. I believe that all these barriers would fall if man could see his world from the scriptural view. I am quite aware that this is very idealistic, but YHWH's design was and is ideal.

I would like to conclude with a few thoughts and comments. This paper is not designed to condemn Greek people. The term 'Greek' only summarizes a world thought that opposes, by its prophesied nature, 'Hebrew' or scriptural thinking. YHWH knew ahead of time that most of the world would reject his pattern for behavior. Behavior must begin with a thought process that leads to ungodly behavior. All that is wrong in this world can be traced back to the circumventing of YHWH's Word. As I have stated earlier, the Greek mind and the Hebrew mind both gaze upon the same evidence. Both look at the same scriptures and come to different conclusions. This is because both minds have a preconceived bias. It is just like the evolutionist and the creationist. Both ponder the exact same physical evidence, and come to two different conclusions. One brings with him a bias that says there is no god. The other brings a bias that says there is. When a gentile makes a decision to follow the Messiah, he brings with him all that he has learned about life and the world around him into the equation. He sees every word in the Scriptures from the world he was raised in. The majority of the words he will read in the Brit Chadashah (Renewed/New Testament) he already knows, and he will never research their true meaning. When these words are spoken from the pulpit he will rarely investigate them.

I would like to provide a basic bibliography. These are some of the sources used for this paper. These are the sources that contain the most comprehensive information for your money, if you should decide to purchase them for your library. There are really too many Hebrew sources to name, so I will give the ones I enjoy the most and are the easiest to read. I will place an \* next to the volumes that I consider to be a must in your library. It would be helpful to have a means by which to read all the writings of the early church fathers, but I know this is cost prohibitive for some.

- \* "The Gnostic Religion" by Hans Jonas. Beacon Press. 1958.
- "The Eastern Orthodox Church" by Adrian Fortescue, Ph.D, D.D. The Catholic Truth Society. 1920.
- "Eusebius Ecclesiastical History" Hendrickson Pub. 1998.
- \* "The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church" by Edwin Hatch. Hendrickson Pub. 1895.
- "The Genius of Alexander the Great" by N.G.L. Hammond. University of North Carolina Press. 1997.
- "Ancient Greece" by Thomas R. Martin. Yale University Press. 1996.

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- "The Bible and the Ancient Near East" by Cyrus H. Gordon. W.W. Norton & Company. 1965.
- The Works of Philo.
- The Works of Josephus.

I have not listed the Hebrew sources for they are too numerous. If you are like I am, you will be pouring through them the rest of your life. Be careful about what you read there as well. I would be flattered to be asked what I would recommend you stay away from. I hope and pray that you go on to more deeper and life changing teaching. If what you learn does not change your life in some small way, then it is just so much intellectual fluff.

Be blessed.

## **GLOSSARY**

<b>OLD TESTAMENT - TANACH</b>	<b>RENEWED/NEW TESTAMENT - BRIT CHADASHAH</b>
GENESIS - B'RESHITH	MATTHEW - MATTITYAHU
EXODUS - SH'MOT	MARK
LEVITICUS - VAYIKRA	LUKE
NUMBERS - B'MIDBAR	JOHN - YOCHANAN
DEUTERONOMY - D'VARIM	ACTS
JOSHUA - Y'HOSHUA	ROMANS
JUDGES - SHOF'TIM	1 CORINTHIANS
RUTH - RUT	2 CORINTHIANS
1 SAMUEL - SH'MU'EL ALEF	GALATIANS
2 SAMUEL - SH'MU'EL BET	EPHESIANS
1 KINGS - M'LAKHIM ALEF	PHILIPPIANS
2 KINGS - M'LAKHIM BET	COLOSSIANS
1 CHRONICLES - DIVRE-HAYAMIM ALEF	1 THESSALONIANS
2 CHRONICLES - DIVRE-HAYAMIM BET	2 THESSALONIANS
EZRA - 'EZRA	1 TIMOTHY
NEHEMIAH - NECHEMYAH	2 TIMOTHY
ESTHER - ESTER	TITUS
JOB - IYOV	PHILEMON
THE PSALMS - TEHILLIM - Mizmor for individual chapters - eg. Mizmor 119 = Psalm 119	HEBREW - MESSIANIC JEWS, IVRIM
PROBERBS - MISHLEI	JAMES - YA'AKOV
ECCLESIASTES - KOHELET	1 PETER - 1 KEFA
SONG OF SONGS - SHIR-HASHIRIM	2 PETER - 2 KEFA
ISAIAH - YESHA'YAHU	1 JOHN - 1 YOCHANAN
JERERMIAH - YIRMEYAHU	2 JOHN - 2 YOCHANAN
LAMENTATIONS - EIKHAH	3 JOHN - 3 YOCHANAN
EZEKIEL - YECHEZK'EL	JUDE - Y'HUDAH
DANIEL - DANIEL	REVELATION - HITGALUT
HOSEA - HOSHEA	
JOEL - YO'EL	
AMOS - 'AMOS	
OBADIAH - 'OVADYAH	
JONAH - YONAH	
MICAH - MIKHAH	
NAHUM - NACHUM	
HABAKKUK - HAVAKUK	
ZEPHANIAH - TZ'FANYAH	
HAGGAI - HAGAI	
ZECHARIAH - Z'KHARYAH	
MALACHI - MAL'AKHI	