**HELLENIC OPEN UNIVERSITY**

**FAITH AND EXPERIENCE**

**OF ORTHODOXY**

**VOLUME 3**

**Long Standing Principles**

**of**

**Eastern Orthodox Christian Theology**

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**Soterios Despotis**

**English Translation**: **Athanasios Antonopoulos**

**2014**

**Chapter 2**

**PHILOSOPHICAL ETHICS AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

**Soterios Despotis**

**Purpose**

Christianity emerged at a time when man, uprooted from his native land and suffering from economic and social impoverishment, felt increasingly small and insignificant as a resident of colossal state compounds[[1]](#footnote-1) and helpless in the face of uncontrollable forces, thus asking himself: “τίνες ἦμεν͵ τί γεγόναμεν· ποῦ ἦμεν͵ [ἢ] ποῦ ἐνεβλήθημεν· ποῦ σπεύδομεν͵ πόθεν λυτρούμεθα· τί γέννησις͵ τί ἀναγέννησις */* who we were, what we have become; where we were, where we have been placed, where we are going; from what we are redeemed, what birth is, and what rebirth.”[[2]](#footnote-2) It was to this existential question and to the moral dilemmas stemming from it, that Greek philosophy sought to respond, chiefly through the Stoics and the Epicureans. At the same time, the Jewish Diaspora was in full bloom in the city centers of the Mediterranean world, propagating through the Alexandrian translation of the Old Testament by the Seventy the God of Exodus and the code of moral holiness ensuing from His Testament. Such was the cultural climate in which Christianity grew up and spread. The present unit aims to identify the moral principles assumed by Christianity from Greek philosophy and the apocalyptic Jewish religion. It also seeks to indicate how the crucified-Resurrected Person of Christ as well as Paul’s kerygma linked ethos to the healing and salvation of the whole human being and to the experiential ethos of a new life.

**Expected Outcomes**

After you have finished studying this unit, you’ll be able to

* Grasp the principles of Greek ethics and, in particular, the ideals of knowing thyself, serenity, and apathy, which had been proposed by the philosophical schools of the Hellenistic times in response to humankind’s existential concerns.
* Discern the relevance of Judaic Torah-Testament for the entire Theology and divine *Economy* of the Old Testament, as well as discern between the casuistic and demonstrative right in it.
* Comprehend the transformation of the Testament to a Law, which occurred in inter-testament times Judaism and strengthened the divide concerning clean and unclean or holy and profane.
* Discern the healing value and significance of the personal relation based on love and freedom preached by Christ, who through His painful and disgraceful Passion and especially His Resurrection, freed humankind from the pain-guilt-death triptych, thereby creating a new, ecumenical Society with an eschatological perspective, i.e. the Church.

**Key Terms**

* The Good
* Virtue
* Well-being
* Conscience
* Purification
* Serenity-apathy
* Casuist demonstrative Law
* Old/new version of the command to love

**Section 2.1**

**DEFINITION OF ETHICS**

 According to P. H. Demetracopoulos,[[3]](#footnote-3) *Ethics* is the discipline which deals with the study of human deeds, and as a result thereof it constitutes the practical side of the philosophical views of human life. Ethics assesses the worthiness or unworthiness of human deeds, and makes pronouncements on what is to be done or avoided in one’s relation with God, with oneself and one’s social circle. At the same time, the discipline focuses on queries into the nature of the essence of *good* and evil, seeking as it does to identify the *essence of**good* deedsthat we ought to do. Moreover, Ethics sets the *moral criterion* by which a deed is dubbed “good.” For example, is the utter worth of this good deed due to the pleasure and benefit that come from it or to a combination of both? Further, Ethics examines the question of *conscience* as well as that of freedom of will, and, lastly, it deals with *ethical law* as the highest moral rule. Are human beings a) good by nature, as Rousseau held, b) evil, as a result of the Original sin, or c) a mere *tabula rasa*? Further to that: Are there eternal moral values or are ethical rules, by contrast, a matter of social convention?[[4]](#footnote-4)

 As could be surmised from the above points, while preaching on Ethics[[5]](#footnote-5) is rather easy, its justification is quite a challenging endeavor.[[6]](#footnote-6) St. Augustine (Civ. Dei XIX), having first stressed the catholicity of the demand for the good and well-being, which is what leads man to philosophy in the first place, identifies as many as 288 different philosophical “heresies” concerning happiness. Over the course of history, numerous ideals have consecutively dominated human civilization”[[7]](#footnote-7): those of the hunter-gatherer, heroism-manhood (Homer), agrarian and labor culture (Hesiod), cognizance-wisdom (Socrates), metaphysics or idealism-justice (Plato), theism or “religion” (Judaism and Christian philosophers), deontology-duty (Kant), courtliness and nobility (Middle Ages), emotivism or the romantic “logic of the heart” (Pascal), naturalism in the form of “living according to nature” (Stoics, Rousseau, ecologists), anthropocentric private interest or individualism (Sophists), scholarly Homo-universalis (Encyclopaedists), social, in the form of classless society (K. Marx) political involvement (Socialism, Liberalism, etc.) monetarism-Homoeconomicus (Capitalism), etc.

In what follows we shall focus on the philosophical ethics of the classical era, which we shall compare to the ethics of the Jewish people, in the way the latter is reflected in the Old Testament. Special emphasis will be given to the ethics of Hellenic-Roman times, as the backdrop for analyzing Christian ethics at the end of the unit, since Christianity emerged at precisely that period, i.e. during the “era of saviors.”

**Section 2.2**

**GREEK ETHICS**

**2.2.1 General characteristics**

As E. P. Papanoutsos[[8]](#footnote-8) appositely remarked, ethics is among the last problems posed by philosophical reflection. Following the collapse of myth, scientific inquiry and discovery take precedence over alternative intellectual endeavors. “Ethical” probes into the maze of selfhood, by contrast (an acutely painful process, in view of the crises and reshuffling of values that it causes), come later. That being the case, the question of Ethics had to wait until the 5th century BC to be posed, during the so-called axonic period of humankind.[[9]](#footnote-9) In Greece, this ethical turn was instituted chiefly by the Sophists and Socrates, who “περί τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἀεὶ διελέγετο, σκοπῶν τί εὐσεβές, τί ἀσεβές, τί καλόν, αἰσχρόν, δίκαιον, ἄδικον */* His own conversation was ever of human things. The problems he discussed were, What is godly, what is ungodly; what is beautiful what is ugly; what is just what is unjust*.*”[[10]](#footnote-10) It was through these thinkers, that ancient Greek philosophy began to raise the problems of goodness and justice, of virtue and eudemonia. For some time afterwards, Ethics dominated philosophical reflection, until it eventually became almost exclusively predominant on the Hellenistic-Roman times thanks to the Stoics and Epicureans.[[11]](#footnote-11)

 With the transition from the Myth to Logos and the consequent taming of the subterranean titans by the Olympian deities of order, measure, and light, the human race realizes that it differs from beasts thanks to its upright standing, its language and mind (which is capable of creating culture), and at the same time is aware of its own mortality. As reasonable and social beings, humans seek not only to ***live*** but to ***live well***; they are after eudemonia, a state of being combining goods and virtue. But while eudemonia was initially attributed to God (eu=good, and demon=god, luck), it was later associated with human character. As Heraclitus the Ephesian (500 BC) characteristically remarked, “for man, demon is but his character.”[[12]](#footnote-12)

 Over time, the ingredients for happiness, as listed by Aristotle (the most systematic of philosophers), are a) external and b) internal, concerning i) the body and ii) the soul: “εἰ δή ἐστιν ἡ εὐδαιμονία τοιοῦτον͵ ἀνάγκη αὐτῆς εἶναι μέρη εὐγένειαν (καταγωγής), πολυφιλίαν͵ χρηστοφιλίαν͵ πλοῦτον͵ εὐτεκνίαν͵ πολυτεκνίαν͵ εὐγηρίαν· ἔτι τὰς τοῦ σώματος ἀρετάς (οἷον ὑγίειαν͵ κάλλος͵ ἰσχύν͵ μέγεθος͵ δύναμιν ἀγωνιστικήν)͵ δόξαν͵ τιμήν͵ εὐτυχίαν͵ ἀρετήν [ἢ καὶ τὰ μέρη αὐτῆς φρόνησιν͵ ἀνδρείαν͵ δικαιοσύνην͵ σωφροσύνην]· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν αὐταρκέστατός τις εἴη͵ εἰ ὑπάρχοι αὐτῷ τά τ΄ ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς ἀγαθά· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἄλλα παρὰ ταῦτα. ἔστι δ΄ ἐν αὐτῷ μὲν τὰ περὶ ψυχὴν καὶ τὰ ἐν σώματι͵ ἔξω δὲ εὐγένεια καὶ φίλοι καὶ χρήματα καὶ τιμή͵ ἔτι δὲ προσήκειν οἰόμεθα δυνάμεις ὑπάρχειν καὶ τύχην· οὕτω γὰρ ἀσφαλέστατος ὁ βίος. / If, then, such is the nature of happiness, its component part must necessarily be: noble birth, numerous friends, good friends, wealth, good children, numerous children, a good old age; further, bodily excellences, such as health beauty, strength, stature, fitness for athletic contests, a good reputation, honour, good luck, virtue. For a man would be entirely independent, provided he possessed all internal and external goods; for there are no others. Internal goods ate those of mind and body; external goods are noble birth, friends, wealth, honour. To these we think should be added certain capacities and good luck; for on these conditions life will be perfectly secure.”[[13]](#footnote-13) Aristotle singles out as the premier *good:* “Ἔστω δὴ ἀγαθὸν ὃ ἂν αὐτὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἕνεκα ᾖ αἱρετόν͵ καὶ οὗ ἕνεκα ἄλλο αἱρούμεθα͵ καὶ οὗ ἐφίεται πάντα͵ ἢ πάντα τὰ αἴσθησιν ἔχοντα ἢ νοῦν ἢ εἰ λάβοι νοῦν͵ καὶ ὅσα ὁ νοῦς ἂν ἑκάστῳ ἀποδοίη͵ καὶ ὅσα ὁ περὶ ἕκαστον νοῦς ἀποδίδωσιν ἑκάστῳἀγαθὸν, καί οὗ παρόντος εὖ διάκειται καὶ αὐτάρκως ἔχει, καὶ τὸ αὔταρκες, καὶ τὸ ποιητικὸν ἤ φυλατικὸν τῶν τοιούτων, καί ᾧ ἀκολουθεῖ τὰ τοιαῦτα, καὶ τὰ κωλυτικὰ τῶν ἐναντίον καὶ τὰ φθαρτικά*/* Let us assume good to be whatever is desirable for its own sake, or for the sake of which we choose something else; that which is the aim of all things, or of all things that possess sensation or reason; or would be, if they could acquire the latter. Whatever reason might assign to each and whatever reason does assign to each in individual cases, that is good for each; and that whose presence makes a man fit and also independent; and independence in general; and that which produces or preserves such things, or on which such things follow, or all that is likely to prevent or destroy their opposites.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

 It is characteristic that *virtue* was initially thought of as a positive attribute, whether practical or moral, intellectual or bodily, which rendered a person great. In Homer, the word virtue (of uncertain etymology) is linked to the adjective ἀρείων, meaning “better, stronger” and denoted *bravery in war and the feeling of individual superiority*: “*αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων͵ μηδὲ γένος πατέρων αἰσχυνέμεν* / ever to be bravest and pre-eminent above all, and not bring shame upon the race of my fathers.”[[15]](#footnote-15) Homeric epics further extolled love for one’s country, glory and fame, friendship, and family prosperity. In time, virtue acquires more “spiritual” characteristics, eventually referring to the blossoming of the soul’s strengths. While the par excellence anthropological model in Homer is the *good* (in body) and *fair* (in mind), in the classical and post-classical era the model of the wise and fair is raised to prominence instead (cf. Socrates).

 The feature that perennially characterizes Greek ethics is the *predominance of logos* (*reason*, or *mind*), which comprises the very essence of the human being, since it shares in truth and essence, according to Plato: “ἀληθείας τε καὶ οὐσίας συμμετέχει / he is evolved to the truth and substance”[[16]](#footnote-16) and is god for everyone.[[17]](#footnote-17) People can become *good and virtuous* by means of *knowledge*. Apart from wisdom-temperance, virtue is an impossibility. Plato systematized the tripartite division of the soul: its immortal and divine aspect, called the *logical* (*τό λογιστικόν*), corresponding to mind, resides in the brain so as not to be contaminated by the mortal counterpart residing in the chest. The latter is subdivided in the following parts: a) the *high-spirited* (*θυμοειδές*), related to emotions, ranging from the pleasant (such as maternal affection, love, friendship, and joy) to the most unpleasant ones (e.g. range, hatred, fear, or envy). It occupies half the chest region and resides in the heart; b) to the *appetitive* (*ἐπιθυμητικόν*), which is related to instincts, urges, and needs, and is located in either in the other half or in the belly and kidneys or in the liver. The relation of the logical part, subsequently called the ‘sovereign’, by the Stoics, has been likened to the relation between a charioteer and his chariot or that of a guitar player and his guitar, of a captain and his ship and of a horse rider and his/her horse.

# The *good man* harmonizes the four kinds of virtues: *phronesis wisdom*, which governs the logical part (the awareness of man’s place as a microcosm within the macrocosm, the sense of awe and piety before God and the avoidance of hubris which incurs nemesis), *temperance*, which determines the high spirit’s part (the confinement of irrational desires within the limits of measure through exercises and abstinence), *bravery* and *leniency*, which dominate the appetitive (which was contrasted to bestiality), and *justice*, the perfect, harmonious and balanced arrangement of the previous three virtues. The latter one, justice, ranks highest among all virtues, given that it constitutes the determining factor for the way the forces inside the microcosm of the soul and the macrocosm’s elements relate. It “ἐπεὶ δ’ οὗν ἐπιτροπεύει τὰ ἄλλα πάντα διαϊόν, τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα ἐκλήθη ὀρθῶς δίκαιον / Since, then, it superintends and passes through (*διαϊόν*) all other things, this is rightly called by the name *δίκαιον*.[[18]](#footnote-18)”

Three are the proverbs on display at the sanctuary of Delphi from the 6th century BCE onward: *Μηδὲν ἄγαν* / Nothing in excess, *Γνῶθι σαυτὸν* / Know thyself and *Ἐγγύα πάρα δ’ ὰτα* / Give surely, and ruin is imminent. From the former it can be established that for Greeks, the *highest of iniquities* was *hubris*. Immoderate wealth, immoderate power, sudden glory, and ceaseless bliss by necessity denote pride and hubris, which causes the envy and, by extension, the nemesis of the gods, inasmuch as “διανοεῖσθαι πρός αὐτόν ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν εἷς ὁ τῆς Δίκης όφθαλμός, ἀλλά πᾶσι τούτοις ἐπισκοπεῖ κύκλῳ ὁ θεός τά πραττόμενα περί γῆν τε και θάλατταν / he bethought himself that the eye of Justice is not a single eye only, but through all these eyes of hers God watches every direction the deeds that are done here and there both on land and on the sea.”[[19]](#footnote-19). That is why shame, reserve, and the respect of moral laws governing human life feature the root every virtue.[[20]](#footnote-20)

# In addition to these virtues, the notion of disgrace had been central to the Greek mind, in the sense of refraining from embarrassing oneself publicly so as not to lose one’s social prominence and posthumous honorable regard, one’s chief way of winning eternity. Well known, in that regard, are Hipparchus’ moral inscription on the Hermes of Attican roads, which on the top of submission to divine will and piety also extoled such virtues as friendship, hospitality, the observance of oath, providence and refraining from arrogance or from setting up too high or impossible goals. Collectively, the foregoing virtues make a human being, *citizen*. From the *polis* is not merely a vital place of protective cohabitation for the Greeks, a mere shelter from the uncontrollable forces of nature; it is a living organism, wherein members exist in a harmonious relation amongst themselves and with nature, just as the soul’s forces are harmoniously interrelated. The polis is precisely comprised when Hermes donates *shame* and *justice*, through which humankind accomplishes wisdom and justice.[[21]](#footnote-21) The unwritten law of the polis, to which Greeks obeyed with religious fervor, is not the fruit of a social contract, but rather a law of nature vested with divine authority. On that score, Demaratus’ response to Xerxis, when the latter wondered if the Greeks dared resist his military onslaught, is quite telling: “Βασιλεῦ͵ ἐπειδὴ ἀληθείῃ διαχρήσασθαι πάντως κελεύεις ταῦτα λέγοντα τὰ μὴ ψευδόμενός τις ὕστερον ὑπὸ σέο ἁλώσεται͵ τῇ Ἑλλάδι πενίη μὲν αἰεί ποτε σύντροφός ἐστι͵ ἀρετὴ δὲ ἔπακτός ἐστι͵ ἀπό τε σοφίης κατεργασμένη καὶ νόμου ἰσχυροῦ· τῇ διαχρεωμένη ἡ Ἑλλὰς τήν τε πενίην ἀπαμύνεται καὶ τὴν δεσποσύνην . . . Ἐλεύθεροι γὰρ ἐόντες οὐ πάντα ἐλεύθεροί εἰσι· ἔπεστι γάρ σφι δεσπότης νόμος͵ τὸν ὑποδειμαίνουσι πολλῷ ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ οἱ σοὶ σέ· ποιεῦσι γῶν τὰ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ἀνώγῃ· ἀνώγει δὲ τὠυτὸ αἰεί͵ οὐκ ἐῶν φεύγειν οὐδὲν πλῆθος ἀνθρώπων ἐκ μάχης͵ ἀλλὰ μένοντας ἐν τῇ τάξι ἐπικρατέειν ἢ ἀπόλλυσθαι. Σοὶ δὲ εἰ φαίνομαι ταῦτα λέγων φλυηρέειν͵ ἀλλὰ σιγᾶν θέλω τὸ λοιπόν· νῦν δὲ ἀναγκασθεὶς ἔλεξα. Γένοιτο μέντοι κατὰ νόον τοι͵ βασιλεῦ / O King, seeing that you did bid me by all means speak the whole truth, and say that which you shall not afterwards prove to be false, - in Hellas poverty is ever native to the soil, but courage comes of their own seeking, the fruit of wisdom and strong law; by use of courage Hellas defends herself from poverty and tyranny . . . Free they are, yet not wholly free; for law is their master, whom they fear much more even than your men fear you. This is my proof-what their law bids them, that they do; and its bidding is ever the same, that they must never flee from the battle before whatsoever odds, but abide at their post and there conquer or die. If this that I say seems to you but foolishness, then let me hereafter hold my peace; it is under constraint that I have now spoken. But may your wish, O king! Be fulfilled.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

# Man’s harmony with himself and his fellow citizens in the organism that was the polis was accomplished through *education*. It was believed that man was endowed with a natural ability to distinguish between right and wrong.[[23]](#footnote-23) Nevertheless, this innate capacity still had to be cultivated and formed by rearing and obedience to state laws. Hence, it literally constitutes a *work of art*. Thus, while other peoples created kings, gods, and spirits, the Greeks created citizens with the help of education-good in body and mind.[[24]](#footnote-24) It should be noted here that in this view, man is the only being that is shaped and nourished for so many years in order to attain was is *ἀναφαίρετον* i.e. inalienable or irremovable from him (Menander, *Gnomai*, 2). But because education is “μὲν καὶ πόνου πολλοῦ καὶ χρόνου μακροῦ καὶ δαπάνης οὐ μικρᾶς καὶ τύχης δεῖσθαι λαμπρᾶς / required great labour, much time, considerable expense, and conspicuous social position.”[[25]](#footnote-25) Knowledge is attainable only by the few wise men, the aristocrats of mind, the free citizens of Athens. Thus, the ideal of goodness was chiefly seen as a property of the aristocracy, from which slaves, women, and “barbarians” were excluded.

# The premier methods of child rearing were physical education for the body and music (the Dorian and Phrygian chant) for the soul, “ἵνα ἡμερώτεροί τε ὦσιν͵ καὶ εὐρυθμότεροι καὶ εὐαρμοστότεροι γιγνόμενοι χρήσιμοι ὦσιν εἰς τὸ λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν· πᾶς γὰρ ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εὐρυθμίας τε καὶ εὐαρμοστίας δεῖται / that they may gain in gentleness, and by advancing in rhythmic and harmonic grace may be efficient in speech and action; for the whole of man's life requires the graces of rhythm and harmony.”[[26]](#footnote-26). Tragedy also served as a chief means of instruction, given that it was seen as the sole way of curing one’s soul from its passions. In his book *Poetics*, Aristotle resorts to the term *catharsis* (κάθαρση), of mystical and medical origin, to convey the repercussions of tragedy: “δι΄ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν / through pity and fear accomplishing the catharsis of such emotions.”[[27]](#footnote-27) The meaning of Aristotelian catharsis has been explained by the following two interpretations:[[28]](#footnote-28) “a) the pedagogical-ethical one: the viewer becomes acquainted with two dangerous passions, fear and compassion, and learns to experience them without falling into exaggeration or going over the edge. In effect, viewers learn to temper and manipulate in real life the intense passions they feel while watching a tragedy. Hence, art educates people; it improves them, and in effect renders them moral subjects. B) the *moral-aesthetic* one: the events on stage that stagger viewers are cleansed passions, falling as they do on the artistic and aesthetic sphere. They assist the viewer in grasping life’s and the human predicament’s deeper meaning. They don’t lower viewers to the level of blind and irrational instincts. On the contrary, through aesthetic emotiveness, viewers are elevated to a higher moral and spiritual sphere, thereby managing an inner reconciliation of the combatting elements of the human soul (reason and passion) and so attaining an inner peace*.*”

 It should be evident from the foregoing remarks that the moral ideal of ancient Greeks is truly immanentist and anthropocentric in character. In this perspective, the world we’ re living in is considered perfect as well as self-sufficient, a harmonious whole in which man can live and prosper, provided that he lives in accordance with reason. However, given how “πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κοὐδὲν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει / many wonders there be, but naught more wondrous than man”[[29]](#footnote-29) it is small wonder than in the selfsame Athens, the “acropolis” of the philosophers, even after the triumphant Greek victories in the Persian wars and alongside the apollonian glorification of human reason and light, a second principle prospered: the Orphic-Dionysian orgiastic element, known for its peculiar mysticism, its attachment to the earth, women, and darkness (Eleusinian Mysteries, Pythagoras, Eleatic philosophy).

 After the Greek triumph in the Persian Wars and the defeat of the “barbarians,” decline follows. Continuous civil strife brought about the collapse of the polis, an entity that held divine status for its citizens. By returning to himself, man discovers the limits of his reason and, after becoming aware of the chaos plaguing the unconscious, suffers “blindness” (e.g. *The Story of Oedipus*). The blissful Olympian gods that ousted the subterranean deities (representing as they did an idealization of the Greek aristocrats’ way of life), were criticized by Xenophanes of Colophon (580-480 BCE) on account of committing “ἀθεμίστια ἔργα ὅσα παρ΄ ἀνθρώποισιν ὀνείδεα καὶ ψόγος ἐστίν͵ κλέπτειν μοιχεύειν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεύειν / all sorts of things which are matters of reproach and censure among men: theft, adultery, and mutual deceit.”[[30]](#footnote-30) Euripides criticized the Greek gods along the same lines (e.g. in his play *Ion*). The enmity of gods, who in contrast to mortals do not succumb to ageing and death, bit still obey *Hemarmene*, is attributed to their dented self-love and envy.[[31]](#footnote-31) A more systematic effort to adjoin *ethics and religion*, whose main characteristic was sacrifice, was made by the Pythagoreans. Deeming themselves as a possession of the gods, particularly Apollo’s, they sought to emulate him by following every divine command. The two mottos dominating the Pythagoreans’ school premises were, “Ἔπου θεῷ και βέλτιστοι γιγνόμεθα πρὸς τους θεοὺς βαδίζοντες */* Follow God, and we become better when we walk toward the gods.”[[32]](#footnote-32)

**2.2.2 The Chief “Moral Teachers”**

The negative attitude of the Sophists, which shakes the polis’ very foundations in the 5th cent, BCE, can be summed up in the view that no single truth exists for everything, since,“πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστιν, τῶν δὲ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν / Man is the measure of all things: of things which are, how they are, and of things which are not, how they are not”*[[33]](#footnote-33)*. Laws are not natural but conventional entities, created and agreed upon, and as such they shake moral values, hitherto believed to have been of cosmic or divine origin. Good and evil are entire subjective and relative, and in the service of the mighty, at that. That is why moral values differ from society to society.

 Socrates, the deformed Son of Sophroniscos, a sculptor, and Phaenarete, a midwife, had been gifted with an uncanny ability to control passions, and instituted an inward turn in philosophy, enacting the Delphic motto “Know thyself,” having become aware of the limits of human knowledge and existence (I know only one thing, that I know nothing). At the same time, Socrates obeyed an inner voice, a source of intuitive ethical “prophetic knowledge” (usually ignored by rationalism), the daemon or the divine, which initiates Socrates himself in the love of the right and good, and elicits the same love in others. Socrates had been taught this kind of love by Diotima, a priestess from Mantinea. The human mind is endowed with the capacity to distinguish between good and evil. If the correct inductive method is followed, Socrates held, it is possible for all people to arrive at an identical knowledge and so come up with an ecumenical kind of moral behavior.[[34]](#footnote-34) Socrates, while articulating views on reason and ‘knowledge,’ “stresses the possibility of a radical transformation of man, capable of not only giving him mental enlightenment but of purifying him in terms of will and emotions … This transformation is reminiscent of an enlightenment that renovates the individual from within. Socratic “knowing” does not correspond to an abstract, dry kind of knowledge, but refers rather to an appropriation of the known object. Hence, Socratic moral knowledge must be understood as an inner appropriation and as the fullest possible internalization of moral values by one’s soul.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Eventually, Socrates is condemned to death in 399 BCE by the 500 member Court of Iliaia, at the age of 70, on the charges of introducing novelties and of corrupting the city’s youth. Despite being given the chance to escape, he elects to obey the city’s laws, remaining faithful to the end to the city that executed its finest son, in what was a prelude to its final decay and collapse.

 Socrates’ pupil, the “aristocrat” and former poet Plato (427-347 BCE), living as he did in a historically tumultuous era (during the reign of the Thirty Tyrants regime), taught that virtue is a moral value, the apex of all virtues in life, and is obtained from the aforementioned harmonization of the four virtues corresponding to the forces of the soul. “Plato condemns art, drama, intemperate pleasure, and the Dionysian mindset in general. Moreover, he gave an ontological and axiological priority to the Beyond, over against the present terrestrial world of the senses. He also prioritized ontologically the soul versus the body … What then remains for the bodily entrapped soul? To flee the body and the world that kept it captive as soon as possible, in order to return to God and emulate Him as much as possible.”*[[36]](#footnote-36)* Philosophy in its entirety constitutes a study of death, inasmuch as it is through this procedure that one manages to break free from the deleterious impact of his or her body and ascend to heaven after death. Alethia (truth) is the lifting, the withdrawal of forgetfulness, the recollection of the Ideas or Forms, the true entities, since our souls antedated our physical death and the Ideas are innate. Plato countered Protagoras’ dictum by stating that God is for us the measure of all things (Laws 4. 716).

**Assignment 1 / Chapter 2**

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Compare/contrast platonic love and Christian love by reading Plato’s Symposium and John’s 1st Catholic Letter, bearing in mind the broader philosophical and theological quest of the ancient Greek and Christian mindsets, concerning the God-mankind-world relation.

Based on his systematic observation of human behavior, and having combined the theoretical mindset of southern Greeks with the practical one of their northern countrymen, Aristotle (374-322 BCE) taught that the *good*, the final end of every theoretic and practical pursuit, is not unitary, as his teacher Plato held.[[37]](#footnote-37) Eudemonia (i.e. well-being) is attained through activating the soul’s potential. But what is the work for which humankind was created? Antigone, the main heroine in the namesake Tragedy, responds:: “Οὔτοι συνέχθειν͵ ἀλλὰ συμφιλεῖν ἔφυν / I have no enemies by birth but I have friends by birth,”[[38]](#footnote-38) even as she mourns her imminent death. For Aristotle, the teacher Alexander the Great, humankind’s purpose on earth amounts to energizing the soul according to virtue. *Virtue* then is a settled disposition of the mind [i.e. a strong habit] determining the choice of actions and emotions, consisting essentially in the observance of the mean relative to us, this being determined by principle, that is, as the prudent man would determine it. Aristotle then further specifies the meaning of ‘the mean relative to us’ as a perfect balance between excess and lack or defect: “μεσότης δὲ δύο κακιῶν͵ τῆς μὲν καθ΄ ὑπερβολὴν τῆς δὲ κατ΄ ἔλλειψιν· καὶ ἔτι τῷ τὰς μὲν ἐλλείπειν τὰς δ΄ ὑπερβάλλειν τοῦ δέοντος ἔν τε τοῖς πάθεσι καὶ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι͵ τὴν δ΄ ἀρετὴν τὸ μέσον καὶ εὑρίσκειν καὶ αἱρεῖσθαι /it is a mean state between two vices, one of excess and one of defect. Furthermore, it is a mean state in that whereas the vices either fall short of or exceed what is right in feelings and in actions, virtue ascertains and adopts the mean.”[[39]](#footnote-39) This ‘mean,’ (reminiscent of the “all in good measure” proverb, concerns the moral virtues that cultivate practical activity (the character) of people, as opposed to the mental ones, concerning the activity of the mind (spirituality): “Διττῆς δὴ τῆς ἀρετῆς οὔσης͵ τῆς μὲν διανοητικῆς τῆς δὲ ἠθικῆς͵ ἡ μὲν διανοητικὴ τὸ πλεῖον ἐκ διδασκαλίας ἔχει καὶ τὴν γένεσιν καὶ τὴν αὔξησιν͵ διόπερ ἐμπειρίας δεῖται καὶ χρόνου͵ ἡ δ΄ ἠθικὴ ἐξ ἔθους περιγίνεται͵ ὅθεν καὶ τοὔνομα ἔσχηκε μικρὸν παρεκκλῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθους. ἐξ οὗ καὶ δῆλον ὅτι οὐδεμία τῶν ἠθικῶν ἀρετῶν φύσει ἡμῖν ἐγγίνεται· οὐθὲν γὰρ τῶν φύσει ὄντων ἄλλως ἐθίζεται͵ οἷον ὁ λίθος φύσει κάτω φερόμενος οὐκ ἂν ἐθισθείη ἄνω φέρεσθαι͵ οὐδ΄ ἂν μυριάκις αὐτὸν ἐθίζῃ τις ἄνω ῥιπτῶν͵ οὐδὲ τὸ πῦρ κάτω͵ οὐδ΄ ἄλλο οὐδὲν τῶν ἄλλως πεφυκότων ἄλλως ἂν ἐθισθείη. οὔτ΄ ἄρα φύσει οὔτε παρὰ φύσιν ἐγγίνονται αἱ ἀρεταί͵ ἀλλὰ πεφυκόσι μὲν ἡμῖν δέξασθαι αὐτάς͵ τελειουμένοις δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἔθους /Virtue being, as we have seen, of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue is for the most part both produced and increased by instruction, and therefore requires experience and time; whereas moral or ethical virtue is the product of habit （ethos, and has indeed derived its name, with a slight variation of form, from that word.And therefore it is clear that none of the moral virtues formed is engendered in us by nature, for no natural property can be altered by habit. For instance, it is the nature of a stone to move downwards, and it cannot be trained to move upwards, even though you should try to train it to do so by throwing it up into the air ten thousand times; nor can fire be trained to move downwards, nor can anything else that naturally behaves in one way be trained into a habit of behaving in another way. The virtuestherefore are engendered in us neither by nature nor yet in violation of nature; nature gives us the capacity to receive them, and this capacity is brought to maturity by habit.”[[40]](#footnote-40) The joy or sorrow accompanying our deeds and inciting us to perform good or evil acts marked by hardship and uniqueness, may count as evidence that settled dispositions of the mind (i.e. strong habits) have been formed.[[41]](#footnote-41) It is impressive that Aristotle ranks friendship above justice, because it establishes the polis[[42]](#footnote-42) This is why in the Aristotelian corpus, the *Nichomachean Ethics,* is followed by the *Politics*. The perfect person is not the impassive character but s/he who is passive as need be,[[43]](#footnote-43) given how useful passions are for the attainment of virtue and well-being, provided they are put to the service of morality. Material goods, too, make up the *sponsorship*, the means by which well-being is attained, chiefly as a result of the “θεωρητικό / contemplative” life, through which humankind is raised to the heights of the immortal souls: “οὐ χρὴ δὲ κατὰ τοὺς παραινοῦντας ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα οὐδὲ θνητὰ τὸν θνητόν͵ ἀλλ΄ ἐφ΄ ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατίζειν καὶ πάντα ποιεῖν πρὸς τὸ ζῆν κατὰ τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἐν αὑτῷ / Nor ought we to obey those who enjoin that a man should have man’s thoughts and a mortal the thoughts of mortality, but we ought so far as possible to achieve immortality, and do all that man may to live in accordance with the highest thing in him.”[[44]](#footnote-44)

 Here it is worth mentioning the witness of a so-called “peripatetic” pupil of Aristotle’s with regard to the impossibility of a friendship ever developing between humans and the Aristotelean God fashioned as *actus purus* (pure deed), existing in eternal motionlessness and unresponsiveness: “Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν διοριστέον ἂν εἴη ὑπὲρ φιλίας ποίας σκοποῦμεν. ἔστι γάρ͵ ὡς οἴονται͵ φιλία καὶ πρὸς θεὸν καὶ τὰ ἄψυχα͵ οὐκ ὀρθῶς. τὴν γὰρ φιλίαν ἐνταῦθά φαμεν εἶναι οὗ ἐστὶ τὸ ἀντιφιλεῖσθαι͵ ἡ δὲ πρὸς θεὸν φιλία οὔτε ἀντιφιλεῖσθαι δέχεται͵ οὔθ΄ ὅλως τὸ φιλεῖν· ἄτοπον γὰρ ἂν εἴη εἴ τις φαίη φιλεῖν τὸν Δία· οὐδὲ δὴ παρὰ τῶν ἀψύχων ἐνδέχεται ἀντιφιλεῖσθαι. φιλία μέντοι καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἄψυχα ἐστίν͵ οἷον οἶνον ἢ ἄλλο δὴ τῶν τοιούτων. Διὸ δὴ οὔτε τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν φιλίαν ἐπιζητοῦμεν οὔτε τὴν πρὸς τὰ ἄψυχα͵ ἀλλὰ τὴν πρὸς τὰ ἔμψυχα͵ καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα ἐν οἷς ἐστι τὸ ἀντιφιλεῖν. Εἰ δή τις μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπισκέψαιτο τί ἐστι τὸ φιλητόν͵ ἔστιν οὖν οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ τἀγαθόν. ἕτερον μὲν οὖν ἐστι τὸ φιλητὸν καὶ τὸ φιλητέον͵ ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ βουλητὸν καὶ τὸ βουλητέον. βουλητὸν μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἁπλῶς ἀγαθόν͵ βουλητέον δὲ τὸ ἑκάστῳ ἀγαθόν· οὕτω καὶ φιλητὸν μὲν τὸ ἁπλῶς ἀγαθόν͵ φιλητέον δὲ τὸ αὑτῷ ἀγαθόν͵ ὥστε τὸ μὲν φιλητέον καὶ φιλητόν͵ τὸ δὲ φιλητὸν οὐκ ἔστι φιλητέον / First, then, we must make clear what kind of friendship is the object of our inquiry. Men fancy that friendship for God is possible, and also friendship for lifeless things. But they are mistaken. Friendship as we define it exists only where the friendly affection is returned. But the (so-called) friendship for God admits of no such return, not even of affection on our part; since it were an absurdity for a man to profess a friend’s affection for Zeus. Equally impossible is the return of affection by things that are lifeless; yet even towards them we may have a friendly feeling-as we have for wine and other things of the kind. We are not, then, concerned with the so-called friendship for God or for things without life, but with that whose objects are living beings, and such living beings as we can return the affection. If we next proceed to inquire what things are naturally lovable, the answer is, only such things as are good. Now there is a difference between what is in itself lovable, and that which draws someone to love it; just as there is between what is intrinsically desirable, and what one is drawn to wish. Unqualified of absolute Good is desirable; but each will wish that which is good for himself; and in the same way what is absolutely good is lovable, but one is drawn to love what is good for oneself. It follows that whereas the object of one’s love is always lovable, what is lovable does not (in every case) command one’s love.”[[45]](#footnote-45)

**Addendum: The Symbols of Oedipus**

Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* is a characteristic case study of “ancient Greek ethos.” The majority of scholars have hitherto maintained that the theme of this play is the tragedy inflicted by *Hemarmene*. For, no human wisdom, no human activity could prevent or reverse what has been pre-ordained by the indomitable Fate. A glorious king, husband and father endowed with high spiritual and moral virtues (as evidenced by his successful solution to the Sphinx’s riddle, and his devotion to the welfare of his poor subjects) falls from highest bliss to the utmost misery. End of the day, is he a victim or a victimizer? However, as is perceptively indicated by the Cypriot philologist H. Papachrysostomos,[[46]](#footnote-46) this splendid play may have been an *ode* to the omnipotent Destiny/Hemarmene in its early stage. As presented by Sophocles in the golden age of Athenian Democracy and Philosophy, this play more likely depicts the fight of rationalism against faith. After all, the play’s purpose, i.e. the catharsis of viewers, would’ve remained unfulfilled, had Oedipus remained a mere victim of *Hemarmene*, a motif which would be at odds with the ethical ideas of the 5th century BCE.

Oedipus symbolizes the man who passionately strives to discover the secrets of life. This perennial seeker of the truth commences his life’s voyage, the adventure of leaving behind the blithe world of ignorance, armed with the benefit of faith. He heads toward the Oracle of Delphi, to heed the revealed truth. Continuing his journey and avoiding as he does to return to his supposed homeland, Oedipus unknowingly arrives at his real birthplace, where he first solves the Sphinx’s riddle, i.e. the question of man’s identity, and in so doing he relieves the city and the world of the pestiferous gene that causes extended pain and premature death. Having thus gained full confidence in the supremacy of his mind and logic, but still puzzled over the pestilence that has fallen over his country as a result of his unholy matrimony to his own mother, the rationalist sovereign summons the seer Tiresias to have the truth revealed to him. As soon as he realizes that the Seer’s revealed truth clashes with his own square logic, Oedipus dismisses it fiercely, accusing the man of the cloth of *ignorance* and *obscurantism* (as being “blind in ears, mind, and eyes”), because he didn’t manage to pin down the Sphinx’ secret, i.e. to decipher some relevant truths). Eventually, however, the decoder of life’s enigmas becomes himself blind from the light of absolute truth, which he willingly declined to grope. Hence, the enlightened investigator and intellectual sinks into deep, total darkness. Sightless, Oedipus continues to carry on touting the limits of logic and the immensity of truth, perhaps awaiting with the passing of the centuries his submission to and finally his vision of the premier Logos/Jesus, the absolute truth that became “flesh,” precisely so that the “blind” see and the “lame” walk. The rest of the casting members are also worth our attention. Jocasta, much like the play’s other figures, draw the truth solely from the senses, from whatever they see and hear. They are dependent upon circumstances and people. In all, they represent the fleeting, fluid version of the truth and by so doing they symbolize the kind of men and women who are really afraid of the truth and upon seeing it, take their own lives or are otherwise annihilated. Oedipus, by contrast, is not annihilated because he moves beyond the surface, although he descends to the depths of being exclusively armed with his logic. Which is why, although initially triumphant, he finally gets crashed. The blind, “*σκοταδιστής* / *obscurantist*” (as Oedipus would have him) Tiresias, the man of God, is receptive to the revealed truth and thus triumphs at the end, despite his initial failure. And so is also the *chorus* justified: the so-called “plain men” or common people as the intelligentsia scornfully calls them, who, while having faith in human wisdom, still proclaim “Θεὸν οὐ λήξω ποτὲ προστάταν ἴσχων / God is my help and hope, on him I wait,”[[47]](#footnote-47) knowing as they do full well and *from experience* the “uncertainty” of human discoveries. Hence, the gist and timeliness of the “myth” of Oedipus for our present day, a time of overabundance of conceited specialists full of themselves, lies in the research modes and methods of human attempts at discovery. The purpose of the human being as a higher moral agent is indeed to discover the truth; and this project is capable of contributing some genuine well-being to the life of humankind. Absolute truth exists and the struggle for its attainment is inescapable. Nevertheless, its discovery by logical means alone, through sheer exercise of the brain is impossible, for as Einstein has demonstrated, it is hindered by the relative, for humankind, dimensions of space and time. “No matter how many mountains you may climb, all you will end up gazing at are still higher mountain tops, and a seductress nature; and even if you reach the highest top, you will only see that you are standing below again, under all the stars,” says Greek poet K. Palamas, who without resorting to complicated analyses, gave in his poem “Death of the Lad” valuable insights to European scholarship concerning the Oedipus Complex.

**2.2.3 The Ethics of the Hellenistic Times—the “Era of Saviours”**

The cosmopolitan citizen (*genus humanum*)[[48]](#footnote-48) of the Hellenistic era, known as the period of saviours, uprooted as s/he was from the city-state, and living as s/he did in what was mainly a moral and economic impoverishment,[[49]](#footnote-49) sought his or her deliverance and *salvation* (*salus*) from the tragic depths of pain, guilt, and especially death.[[50]](#footnote-50) Attempts to respond to the people’s existential questions came from the philosophical quarters of the Epicureans and the Stoics, as the (*θυρεπανοίκτες*) Cynics (Antisthenes, Diogenes from Sinope), by contrast, lived in the margins of “civilized” society.

According to the frail Epicurus (341-270 BCE), an Athenian from Samos, happiness is identified with the attainment of a non-transient pleasure, one encompassing the totality of life–but a life reducible to the present state of affairs, without extending to a ‘beyond’:[[51]](#footnote-51) “ὅταν οὖν λέγωμεν ἡδονὴν τέλος ὑπάρχειν͵ οὐ τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας λέγομεν͵ ὥς τινες ἀγνοοῦντες καὶ οὐχ ὁμολογοῦντες ἢ κακῶς ἐκδεχόμενοι νομίζουσιν͵ ἀλλὰ τὸ μήτε ἀλγεῖν κατὰ σῶμα μήτε ταράττεσθαι κατὰ ψυχήν / When we say that pleasure is the end and aim, we are not mean the pleasures of the prodigal, or the pleasures of sensuality, as we are understood to do by some through ignorance, prejudice, or willful misrepresentation. By pleasure we mean the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul.”[[52]](#footnote-52) Hence, the enjoyment of eternity in finite time[[53]](#footnote-53) is effected by the halting of the so-called “energetic” pleasures (such as joy and contentment)[[54]](#footnote-54) and the pursuit of “still” ones, chiefly that of *tranquility*. That is why the School’s motto was “*λάθε βιώσας* / live secretly.” The discernment of virtues[[55]](#footnote-55) occurs through the exercise of prudence. The fourfold medicine (known as “τετραφάρμακο / tetrapharmakos”) for achieving tranquility amounts to the following four principles, according to Epicurus “ἄφοβον ὁ θεὸς, ἀνύποπτον ὁ θάνατος καὶ τἀγαθὸν μὲν εὔκτητον τὸ δὲ δεινὸν εὐκαρτέρητον / Do not fear god. Do not worry about death; What is good is easy to get, and what is terrible is easy to endure.”[[56]](#footnote-56)

 Epicurus particularly valued friendship, which he viewed not as a *political* but as a personal affair, and would even risk death for the sake of his friends[[57]](#footnote-57) Life in his famous *Garden* was communal, with joint ownership, in a setting of friendship and mutual enjoyment, shared in even by slaves and prostitutes: “γελᾶν ἅμα δὴ καὶ φιλοσοφεῑν / One must laugh and seek wisdom.”.[[58]](#footnote-58) The Epicurean influence, particularly on the issue of death, is captured in Hellenistic gravestones, where the *nffnsnc* abbreviation was frequently inscribed:

N(on) f(ui), f(ui), n(on) s(um), n(on) c(uro).

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, *Epicurus*,

The Epicureans’ views on pleasure suffered significant distortion as they gained ground in the masses,[[59]](#footnote-59) where the slogan *let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall be dead* became increasingly dominant.[[60]](#footnote-60)

**Assignment 2/ Chapter 2**

# \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Study Epicurus’ letter to Menoeceus and identify the basic principles of Epicurean ethics. Similarly, on the basis of Cleanthes’ hymn to Zeus, summarize the basic points of Stoic theology and anthropology.

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#  *Eudemonia*, according to the Stoics (who were thusly named because they were located at the Stoa Poikile, at the entrance of the busy Athenian Agora, although they were also rumored to have had oriental roots)[[61]](#footnote-61) and especially according to Epictetus (50-120 CE), son of a slave mother and himself a lame, is achieved after another ideal, also spelled with a privative a, is conquered: *a-pathy*. As Stoicism would have it, people are called to retreat from the world after sorting out which of the surrounding things are dependent on us (*ἐφ’ ἡμῖν*) and which aren’t, and so are not controlled by us, thus being considered *ἀπροαιρετικά, ἀλλότρια, ἀδιάφορα* / *involuntary, foreign, and indifferent* (e.g. life-death, health-illness, poverty-prosperity)[[62]](#footnote-62) and do not contribute to the advancement of *inner freedom*. Here the model is the *wise man*, the figure that embodies *ἀπέχεσθαι καὶ ἀνέχεσθαι* / *abstinence* and *tolerance*. Liberated from external objects (which Aristotle considers goods) as well as from the personal passions and impulses that bond him to the yoke of external things,[[63]](#footnote-63) the sage makes a deep inward turn in order to trace the source of the good and to discover the sole oasis of the state of real inner peace-tranquility, through the enactment not of pleasure but of *virtue*, which is identified with the good and with beauty, and which is eternally present and irremovable. Those who possess a single virtue are in possession of them all, and there is no middle ground between virtue and malice. The bottom line is that happiness is identified with *self-sufficiency*, and with *ζῆν ὁμολογουμένως κατά Φύση / living according to Nature*; i.e. in harmony with the spirit’s inner logos. But the latter is identified with the cosmic *Logos spermatikos*, which runs through the Universe like a flame and wind, leading everyone and everything to a state of *com-passion*.[[64]](#footnote-64) The instrument by which freedom is effected is the logic of human beings. The *βρωτός* (i.e. expendable, literally the edible), human person as *God’s imitation[[65]](#footnote-65)* and “διὰ τι μὴ υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ; διὰ τί φοβηθήσεταί τι τῶν γιγνομένων ἐν ἀνθρώποις; ἀλλὰ πρὸς μὲν τὸν Καίσαρα ἡ συγγένεια ἢ ἄλλον τινὰ τῶν μέγα δυναμένων ἐν Ρώμῃ ἱκανὴ παρέχειν ἐν ἀσφαλείᾳ διάγοντας καὶ ἀκαταφρονήτους καὶ δεδοικότας μηδ΄ ὁτιοῦν͵ τὸ δὲ τὸν θεὸν ποιητὴν ἔχειν καὶ πατέρα καὶ κηδεμόνα οὐκέτι ἡμᾶς ἐξαιρήσεται λυπῶν καὶ φόβων; / Why should he not call himself a son of God? And why shall he fear anything that happens among men? What! Shall kinship with Caesar or any other of them that have great power at Rome be sufficient to enable men to live securely, proof against contempt, and in fear of nothing whatsoever, but to have God as our maker, and father, and guardian, shall this not suffice to deliver us from griefs and fears?”[[66]](#footnote-66) If all people are members of the one and only *divine* race, they all rightfully deserve *com-passion* and affection. On the other hand---and this is one of Stoicism’s paradoxes— ὁ *ἄλλος* / the *other* always constitutes a threat, in the sense of blocking one’s return to one’s inner self and thus toward the boundless impersonal being of Nature, and ultimately toward inner freedom.[[67]](#footnote-67) In a real sense, therefore (judging from the above), it could be said that the Stoics nourished a sense of community restricted to those sharing in the unshakable faith.

#  Neither Epicureanism nor Stoicism managed to offer a therapy and a salvation to plain people from the countless woes caused by our emotional and bodily pain. Furthermore, Stoicism in particular represented but a spiritual aristocracy of sorts. Whereas some Stoics glorified God in some special way,[[68]](#footnote-68) in truth the logos (i.e. the logical principle) of the Universe, the universal law called *πάνδωρ καί πατέρας* *Ζεῦς / pandor and father Zeus* (which the Stoics etymologically justified from the notion of being *the cause of living*, as Diogenes Laertius reports[[69]](#footnote-69) and carries the symbol of *thunder*, is actually nothing more than the *impersonal* Fate, which gives everything form and guides life all the while demanding submission/adjustment to the *Hemarmene* (= the inescapable necessity).[[70]](#footnote-70) This metaphysical arrangement is tellingly depicted in the classic Stoic prayer of the former wrestler Cleanthes (appr. 304-appr. 232 BCE): “ἄγου δέ μ΄͵ ὦ Ζεῦ͵ καὶ σύ γ΄ ἡ Πεπρωμένη͵ ὅποι ποθ΄ ὑμῖν εἰμι διατεταγμένος / Lead me Zeus, and you, wise Fate to the place where I should be by your will.” And as everything is subject to the *Hemarmene* (a natural preordaining force), the so-called *ἀνθρωπάριο* / *the small man*, likened to a mere actor that has to perform his role on the stage of life;[[71]](#footnote-71) hence the adjective *gesturing puppet* in Marcus Aurelius[[72]](#footnote-72) is still called to bear responsibility for his or her actions. Ultimately, in this soteriological context “people are simply invited to close their eyes to the harsh reality of life and seek recourse, by exercising an ostensible freedom, to an internally fragmented world. Thus, the human subject dismisses with remarkable dialectical astuteness every external restriction, commitment or fate; and yet, it can’t liberate itself from the fragmentation and the schism that dominates its thought and will, therefore remaining ever a captive of itself, of its miserable and deceitful ego.”[[73]](#footnote-73)

#  The so-called *ἀ-παθής* / *dispassionate* (rid of anger, stress, greed, terror or jubilation) and self-sufficient *sage*, the model looked up to by the Stoics, was actually an impossibly ideal goal to achieve. Hence, it has been likened to Superman.[[74]](#footnote-74) Human beings, endowed as they are with *social* and *personal* qualities, with souls and *bodies*, crave wholeheartedly (and not merely with their reasoning faculty) for happiness, which is holistically achieved through their atonement with God and the formation of bonds with other persons in the setting of a community. In light of all this, a mere inward turn based on reason alone is not, in and by itself, redeeming. On the contrary, it can lead people to despair, whose “twin sisters and daughters are Epicurean calmness and Stoic apathy (see Lightfoot). In fact, following up consistently on this path, raises *suicide* (the “extraction from life”) as the ultimate means of retreat and liberty from worldly worries.”[[75]](#footnote-75) Moreover, the manner of death of both Zeno of Citieas, founder of the School and author of a utopian Republic, and Seneca from Spain, shows that the Stoics’ ideal wasn’t actually ascetic, but pleasure-seeking, given its firmness on the pointlessness of human life in a state of weakness. It is worth quoting Epictetus himself in that regard, from a treatise of his called *Περί Ἀφοβίας* / *On Fearlessness* addressed to Christians (or Galileans, as he calls them), in which he attributes the martyrdom of Christians to irrationality and habit. In his own words, “Εἶτα ὑπὸ μανίας μὲν δύναταί τις οὕτως διατεθῆναι πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ ὑπὸ ἔθους οἱ Γαλιλαῖοι· ὑπὸ λόγου δὲ καὶ ἀποδείξεως οὐδεὶς δύναται μαθεῖν͵ ὅτι ὁ θεὸς πάντα πεποίηκεν τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν κόσμον ὅλον μὲν ἀκώλυτον καὶ αὐτοτελῆ͵ τὰ ἐν μέρει δ΄ αὐτοῦ πρὸς χρείαν τῶν ὅλων; / Therefore, if madness can produce this attitude of mind toward the things which have just been mentioned, and also habit, as with the Galileans, cannot reason and demonstration teach a man that God has made all things in the universe, and the whole universe itself, to be free from hindrance, and to contain its end in itself, and the parts of it to serve the needs of the whole?”[[76]](#footnote-76)

It is because of this failure of even the most accomplished philosophical exercises of human reason to offer substantial psychological outlets,[[77]](#footnote-77) that most people faced their existential and material needs by recourse to bread and bloody spectacles or circuses (*panem et circenses*). These were abundantly provided by uncle Caesar, either at the “Colosseums” or in the dark sanctuaries worshipping the Great Mother and several *demonic deities* subject to passion and death, and which essentially embodied Nature’s cycle (e.g. Isis-Osiris). Participation in these cults, at a time of mythological revival, involved *body and soul* alike, with no regard to the social or racial discriminations supporting the “patriarchal” Roman authority pyramid. The concluding moment of this apocryphal initiation, which involved wandering through the dark pathways of Hades, concerned a transformation and *theosis*,[[78]](#footnote-78) experienced either by wearing a deity’s cloth or by joining a meal (as well as drinking from the holy cup, the hotpot). At the Liturgy of Mithra, the Hierophant proclaimed the following “Θαρρεῖτε μῦσται τοῦ θεοῦ σεσωσμένου, ἔσται γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐκ πόνων σωτηρία / Be brave, initiated of the saved god, your salvation will lie in the sufferings.”[[79]](#footnote-79) End of the day, as M. Albrecht indicates, “just as in ancient China one was born a Taoist and died a Buddhist, so every Roman was a Stoic in his capacity as homo politicus, an Epicurean in his private life, and a Platonist or a Neo-Pythagorean regarding his philosophical convictions, depending on circumstances.”[[80]](#footnote-80) The sovereign, in particular, should be adorned by the virtues of *clementia*, *iustitia*, and *pietas* (clemency or lenience, justice, and piety).

#  The healing of bodily ailments, on the other hand, was variously sought and discovered at the Asclepia of Pergamon and Epidaurus, or in itinerant Neo-Pythagorean philosophers and healers, such as Apollonius of Tyana, alternatively.

# Section 2.3

# THE ETHICS OF ISRAEL

# 2.3.1 Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures)

#  Whereas the motto “the measure of all things is human reason” –alongside the view that reason can be educated and flourishes in law-abiding polis--enjoyed a wide popularity in Hellenism, in Israel, by contrast, “πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἀρχὴ σοφίας φόβος Κυρίου / God is the measure of all things: the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord” (Proverbs 1:7). This sovereign God is He who truly is, the absolute Master. For it was He who, through His almighty Word created (and not merely decorated) the universe,[[81]](#footnote-81) out of love and from *εκ του μηδενός* / *ex nihilo*; and it is He who sustains it and prevents it from falling into non-being. The Hebrew God is the personal ontological Agent that created every human being “κατ’ εἰκόνα καί καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν / in His own image and likeness” (Genesis 1:26).[[82]](#footnote-82)

#  This creator God is revealed as the leading Lord of History, which, much like the universe, is not governed by abstract, circular laws, but is instead headed dynamically toward its end (*the Eschata*), obeying as it does Yahweh’s good and life-giving will. God acts in History as the liberating *God of Exodus*. Moreover, with a view to saving a renegade humanity from the confusion of Babel, He singles out Noah, Abraham, and Moses, who in turn must each enact their own, painful exodus from *the motherland of idols*. Yahweh proves His sovereignty in such historical events as the liberation of the enslaved nomad Hebrews from the Egyptian yoke, the crossing of the Red Sea (indicative of His creative dominion over Chaos), and the marvelous providence that He showed to the people of Israel during its rough forty-year long trajectory in the Sinai desert. Everything that this people is and possesses is not due to its own, inner worth, nor does it constitute an accomplishment. Rather, it is the fruit of divine grace: “καὶ γνώσῃ σήμερον ὅτι οὐχὶ διὰ τὰς δικαιοσύνας σου κύριος ὁ θεός σου δίδωσίν σοι τὴν γῆν τὴν ἀγαθὴν ταύτην κληρονομῆσαι ὅτι λαὸς σκληροτράχηλος εἶ / Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people” (Deuteronomy 9:6).

#  Having proven His mercy, His liberating power, and His dominion over the irrational elements of nature, God hands His *Testament*, *the Torah* (meaning guidance and mandate as opposed to simply Law) on Mount Sinai: list of “guidelines” that must be followed by the 12 nomadic tribes in their “desert” sojourn, if they wish to preserve their God-given freedom and conquer the Promised Land, bodily as well as existentially. This particular Testament, which follows up on a number of previous testaments,[[83]](#footnote-83) can be summed up in the *Decalogue* (*asaeraet haddebarim* Exodus 20, 2:17); cf. Deuteronomy 5, 6:21), which opens with a foundational proclamation: “Ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὅστις ἐξήγαγόν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας/ οὐκ ἔσονταί σοι θεοὶ ἕτεροι πλὴν ἐμοῦ. οὐ ποιήσεις σεαυτῷ εἴδωλον / I am the Lord your God who took you out of the land of Egypt from a house of slavery/there shall be no gods to you other than me/you shall not make an idol for yourself.” There follows a list of commands concerning, for the most part, the well-being of one’s brethren or neighbors, expressed negatively (e.g. thou shalt not kill). This Testament, sanctioned by meal and sacrifices, was lived in the here and present through worship (particularly at Easter, Pentecost, and the feasts of Atonement and Tabernacles), which for Israel was not delimited to sacrifice alone, but had a protological, historical, and eschatological character.[[84]](#footnote-84)

The *Ten Commandments*, in turn, introduce the *Book of Testament*(Ex. 20:22-23, 19), which according to modern scholarship dates back to early 7th century BCE, and is made up of two parts: the *casuistic***[[85]](#footnote-85)** (rules-*mispatim*) *and the apodictic* (*principles*). As O. Artus[[86]](#footnote-86) observes, the former of these strictly regulates specific legal issues relating to the protection of the weakest members (such as the treatment and freeing of slaves, the bodily injuries of humans and animals, the reimbursement for theft, etc.) No theological motives are offered therein; what is stated, rather, are precise penalties, analogous to the committed offense. At bottom, the Book is comprised of multiple family, social, economic and ceremonial or ritualistic commands, derived from the practical needs of a set social group, in the context of a particular historical and cultural situation. This explains why they are subject to criticism and are evolving. The apodictic Right (Exodus 22:20, 23: 9-12) is delivered in the name of God without mentioning the precise penalties: “καὶ προσήλυτον οὐ κακώσετε οὐδὲ μὴ θλίψητε αὐτόν ἦτε γὰρ προσήλυτοι ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ πᾶσαν χήραν καὶ ὀρφανὸν οὐ κακώσετε ἐὰν δὲ κακίᾳ κακώσητε αὐτοὺς καὶ κεκράξαντες καταβοήσωσι πρός με ἀκοῇ εἰσακούσομαι τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῶ / You must not mistreat or oppress foreigners in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt; You shall not abuse any widow or orphan; If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry;” (Exodus 22:23). These were the provisions upon which the Prophets (Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah), who began their activity after the nomads consolidated into a kingdom, based their criticism. They express the eternal demands of the Testament and it was in view of these that the specific legal mores were revised. Hence, even though the establishment of faith in the one God, Yahweh, appears to be the single foundational principle of the Torah, the Prophets add alongside monotheism the love and care for the poor, widows and orphans as the highest principle of justice (Isaiah 1: 4-20). The love for one’s brethren is designated as a sense of God’s immediate presence among the poor and the economically and socially weak.

But Yahweh’s philanthropy is clearly discernible in the casuistic Right as well, in a way that is deconstructing the stereotypical image of the “vindictive God of the Old Testament” (cf. Psalms 93 [94]: 1). For example, the *Code of Hammurabi* ends with the injunction that a slave’s ear be cut off if he flees his servant. In “Moses’ code,” by contrast, there is a provision for the piercing of an ear, in case a Hebrew slave forfeits his own liberation on the seventh year (Exodus 21:5-6),[[87]](#footnote-87) a liberation enhanced by an economic lump sum payment, at that (Deuteronomy 15: 12-17). Mandatory as well in Moses’ code are the daily payment of workers after a day’s work is finished, and the prohibition of their exploitation (Deuteronomy 24: 14-15), while the misfortune of injuries suffered in the workplace is compensated with their release (Exodus 21, 26ff). Quite indicative of the code’s mentality is also the prohibition of interest and of the acceptance of pawn items, with a view toward protecting small-time producers from the greed of large landowners. Further to all that, the Deuteronomist reformation of King Hosea of 622 BCE institutes the abolition of debts (Deuteronomy 12:26), already in effect from Deuteronomy 14:28, 15:1.

Here we would be remiss if we failed to address the broad misinterpretation of Ex. 21:22-24, which on first reading appears to justify *Lex talionis*, or the law of retributive justice and revenge: “ἐὰν δὲ μάχωνται δύο ἄνδρες καὶ πατάξωσιν γυναῖκα ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσαν καὶ ἐξέλθῃ τὸ παιδίον αὐτῆς μὴ ἐξεικονισμένον ἐπιζήμιον ζημιωθήσεται καθότι ἂν ἐπιβάλῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ τῆς γυναικός δώσει μετὰ ἀξιώματος ἐὰν δὲ ἐξεικονισμένον ἦν δώσει ψυχὴν ἀντὶ ψυχῆς, ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ, ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος, χεῖρα ἀντὶ χειρός, πόδα ἀντὶ ποδός. Η εντολή αυτή δεν απευθύνεται στον παθόντα, για τον οποίο ισχύει το οὐκ ἐκδικᾶταί σου ἡ χείρ […] καὶ ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. Ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος! / If people are fighting and hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurelybut there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. This command is not addressed to the victim, for whom the following mandate is in effect: ‘You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord’ (Leviticus 19:18; cf. Deuteronomy 32:35). Rather, it is addressed to the guilty party, who has to compensate his or her victim *in the place of* (= tachat) the wound that he or she caused, in a manner set by the judge. Just as misunderstood is the verse concerning the so-called divine revenge up until the third or fourth generation, supposedly denoting the collective consequences of every sin:[[88]](#footnote-88) “οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς οὐδὲ μὴ λατρεύσῃς αὐτοῖς ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου θεὸς ζηλωτὴς ἀποδιδοὺς ἁμαρτίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα ἕως τρίτης καὶ τετάρτης γενεᾶς τοῖς μισοῦσίν με / you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me” (Exodus 20:5). “Pakad,” used in the original text, denotes the precise assessment of one’s offspring, which may lead to an either negative or a *positive outcome*, given that “the Lord, the Lord God, [is] merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,“καθώς κύριος ὁ θεὸς οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος καὶ ἀληθινὸς καὶ δικαιοσύνην διατηρῶν καὶ ποιῶν ἔλεος εἰς χιλιάδας ἀφαιρῶν ἀνομίας καὶ ἀδικίας καὶ ἁμαρτίας καὶ οὐ καθαριεῖ τὸν ἔνοχον ἐπάγων ἀνομίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα καὶ ἐπὶ τέκνα τέκνων ἐπὶ τρίτην καὶ τετάρτην γενεάν / keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty,* visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation” (Exodus 34:6-7).

An excellent instance of the “humanism” permeating Mosaic law is the mandate for the weekly rest on the *Sabbath* (Exodus 20:8-23, 12:34-21), provisioning everyone’s rest (slaves and cattle included) on the seventh day, so that all may acknowledge that “διότι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν / so that you may know that I the Lord am your God” (Ezekiel 20:20), and so “ἵνα ἀναπαύσηται ὁ παῖς σου καὶ ἡ παιδίσκη σου ὥσπερ καὶ σύ / that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you” (Deuteronomy 5:14; and 5:12-15 as a basis for labor law). Moreover, Leviticus 25:1-7 further introduces the practice of making land fallow after every six years, for the rest of all farm workers. *Jubilee* also marks the “ecological cessation” of farming every 50th year, along with the alimentation of the poor and the redistribution of land, so that every family enjoys a means of subsistence (Leviticus Priestly Code 25:8; cf. Daniel 9:24); in fact, “the land shall not be sold permanently, for the land *is* Mine; for you *are* strangers and sojourners with Me (Leviticus 25:23). The *supply of manna in the desert* (Exodus 16) is cited as a model of “sufficiency economy” for everyone, when “καὶ μετρήσαντες τῷ γομορ οὐκ ἐπλεόνασεν ὁ τὸ πολύ καὶ ὁ τὸ ἔλαττον οὐκ ἠλαττόνησεν ἕκαστος εἰς τοὺς καθήκοντας παρ᾽ ἑαυτῷ συνέλεξαν / But when they measured it with an omer, those who gathered much had nothing over, and those who gathered little had no shortage; they gathered as much as each of them needed” (Exodus 16:18). Moreover, Exodus 23:4 is replete with exhortations for the assistance of the enemy, the poor, the foreigner, for after all Israel must never forget it was once also a resident alien in Egypt (Exodus 22:20; 23:9; Deuteronomy 10:19). The tithing tax system also aimed at furthering and consolidating social cohesion, with particular care for the weak and the priests (Deuteronomy 26:12, 28-29).[[89]](#footnote-89)

The division of foods into clean (i.e. those deemed appropriate for consumption) and unclean, which was made more prominent especially in the *Law of Holiness* (Leviticus 18-20), was not due to any demonization of certain elements of nature, since everything was created good by God. On the contrary, the purpose of the distinction aims to prevent the people of Israel from sliding into idolatry (it will be remembered that so-called “unclean” space was viewed as deified in multicultural settings of that time), and thus preserve Israel intact, emotionally as well as bodily. Idolatrous Canaan, which offered infants as living sacrifice to Moloch, and threatened to transmit this horrendous practice to neighboring Israel, posed a trap that had to be extinguished (Deuteronomy 7:1), in order to prevent the spread of enticing orgiastic ceremonies, which included the sacrifice of babies, in the very people intended to become the light of the world.[[90]](#footnote-90) In no way can *the Lord’s war*,[[91]](#footnote-91) as chiefly chronicled in the Book of Joshua, justify the distinction or radical gap between the “Old Testament God” (who resorts to flood as a way of cleansing the earth, but still chooses to make a liar of His prophet than destroy the big town of Nineveh, which finally repents [cf. Jonah]), from the “New Testament God,” featuring Jesus Christ, the son of man and son of God. Even in the New Testament, the God-Father, despite being love, kills Ananias and Sapphira, as seen in the of the *Acts of the Apostles* chapter 4, both to set an example for the Church community, and as a way, perhaps, for the couple to be saved in heaven (cf. Paul’s injunction in 1st Corinthians 5:5 and 1 Timothy 1:20).[[92]](#footnote-92)

Obedience to divine laws, which must be “ἀσάλευτος πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν σου / as frontlets between your eyes” (Deuteronomy 6:8; cf. Joshua 1:8), result not in mere survival but in life itself: “ζωὴν καὶ τὸν θάνατον δέδωκα πρὸ προσώπου ὑμῶν τὴν εὐλογίαν καὶ τὴν κατάραν ἔκλεξαι τὴν ζωήν ἵνα ζῇς σὺ καὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου / I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19ff).[[93]](#footnote-93) The rejection of divine commands and rights, in other words sin, does not imply a mere failure or miss, possibly attributed to a deficit in knowledge and education. It rather constitutes a deliberate, conscious apostasy of the mortal self from God: “εἶπεν ἄφρων ἐν καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν θεός. διέφθειραν καὶ ἐβδελύχθησαν ἐν ἐπιτηδεύμασιν οὐκ ἔστιν ποιῶν χρηστότητα οὐκ ἔστιν ἕως ἑνός / the fool has said in his heart, ‘*There is* no God.’ They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good” (Psalm 13:1).[[94]](#footnote-94) Very indicative of the vital significance of the commands are Psalms 1, 19:8-15, and 118 (119).

The historic progression of sin in the sense of a deliberate separation from the divine Source of life is aptly described in Genesis 1-11: The first humans wish to be like gods, γινώσκοντες καλὸν καὶ πονηρόν / knowing good and evil (Genesis 3:5).[[95]](#footnote-95) Following the suggestion of the wisest of beasts, and his distorted image of God from a loving father to a malicious antagonist, the “self-deified mortal animals” assume themselves to be the ultimate measure of reality and the sole Masters of their destiny. Their arbitrary [premature?] partaking of the fruit of total knowledge of good and evil, without regard for the conditions set by the Creator, not only doesn’t lead Adam to the utmost state of eudemonia and theosis (as a Greek might expect), but causes instead a painful rift with God, with fellow human beings (particularly with the opposite sex), and the Universe, as soon as his existential destitute has sunk in. Thus the “death of God” has brought about the existential and, in quick succession, the bodily death of humankind” as well. The earliest human city, called *Enoch* (meaning to de-sacramentalize!) and traced opposite Eden, constitutes the peak of Cain’s efforts to build, however clumsily and based on his own strength, a refuge or better yet, a substitute for his lost homeland, Eden, as he roams about fleeing from the act of murdering his own brother (Genesis 4:16ff.). The apex of such efforts is the construction of *Babel* (Gen. 11), at the heart of which rises not the tree of life but the tower symbolizing man’s effort to make a name for himself by technologically bridging the gap between earth and heaven all alone, apart from God.

As the above points indicate, the source of evil lies not in physical matter (which as God’s creation cannot but be *very good*), but in the bad use of freedom.[[96]](#footnote-96) The desired goal for the Hebrew Scriptures is not a flight from the body/tomb (σώμα/σήμα) and the rise/return of the soul to a “higher sphere,” so that humans can enjoy a view of the true World of the Ideas. The goal is rather a total *obedience* to the will of the personal God of freedom and mercy, who cannot possibly be *seen* by reason or mind: “ὀπίσω κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῶν πορεύεσθε καὶ αὐτὸν φοβηθήσεσθε καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ φυλάξεσθε καὶ τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσεσθε καὶ αὐτῷ προστεθήσεσθε / The Lord your God you shall follow, him alone you shall fear, his commandments you shall keep, his voice you shall obey, him you shall serve, and to him you shall hold fast”(Deuteronomy 13:5). This kind of obedience is inseparable from the worship/glorification of God and it alone leads to His *knowledge*, which for the Semitic mind is not abstract cognizance but an existential relation/experience (Genesis 2:9-11).

God Himself does not envy the happiness of mortals, since He keeps nothing for Himself, contrary to the gods of ancient myths (Wisdom 2:23). At the same time, however, He is a *zealot/jealous* God (*El qanno*; Exodus 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24). He doesn’t see sin as a fault or an error but as unfaithfulness to Him who acts as a Groom and a Father but also as mother: “διότι νήπιος Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐγὼ ἠγάπησα αὐτὸν καὶ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετεκάλεσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ / When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. (Hosea 11:1); καὶ ἐπεποίθεις ἐν τῷ κάλλει σου καὶ ἐπόρνευσας ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί σου καὶ ἐξέχεας τὴν πορνείαν σου ἐπὶ πάντα πάροδον ὃ οὐκ ἔσται / But you trusted in your beauty, and played the whore because of your fame, and lavished your whorings on any passer-by” (Ezekiel 16:15). What is asked of humans is to throw themselves in the paternal and maternal love of God (Isaiah49:15, 66:13; cf. the Hebrew word for *mercy*, *rahamim*, meaning maternal bowels), by realizing that as innately corruptible and mortal beings, humans cannot live apart from God, the source of life. Religious and moral autonomy constitute, throughout the Bible, the very essence of sin, for when humans glorify or deify themselves, not only will they lose God, they are also bound to lose their own humanity.

Thus, the task assigned to the earthly creatures bearing God’s image and intended for *ζῶον θεούμενο* / deification, is not that they become *καλός κάγαθός / good and virtuous*, but nothing less than *ἅγιος* / *holy*: “ἔσεσθε ἅγιοι ὅτι ἅγιός εἰμι ἐγὼ κύριος / you shall be holy, for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:45). Such holiness should not be understood negatively, as a mere worshipful purification from various unclean states, for that is an integral aspect of every religion, including that of ancient Greece. Nor is it a removal from a place of iniquity, with a view to preventing the contamination of the elect portion of humanity: “ὑμεῖς δὲ ἔσεσθέ μοι βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἔθνος ἅγιον */* but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6). Rather, as eminently emphasized by Deuteronomy and later by the Prophets, holiness must be understood as an exercise in mercy and love for one’s brethren, particularly the orphan, the widow, and the convert, after the pattern set by Yahweh. As Micah states with particular emphasis, “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ... He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your” (Micah 6: 6, 8).[[97]](#footnote-97)

Thus, following God by keeping His commands is not effected simply by performing external acts, since it must commence from the core of human existence, which rests not in the brain but in the heart: “καὶ ζητήσετε ἐκεῖ κύριον τὸν θεὸν ὑμῶν καὶ εὑρήσετε ὅταν ἐκζητήσητε αὐτὸν ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου ἐν τῇ θλίψει σου / From there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29); “τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸ ὄρος τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τίς στήσεται ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ; ἀθῷος χερσὶν καὶ καθαρὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ ὃς οὐκ ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ὤμοσεν ἐπὶ δόλῳ τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ. οὗτοςλήμψεται εὐλογίαν παρὰ κυρίου καὶ ἐλεημοσύνην παρὰ θεοῦ σωτῆρος αὐτοῦ / Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully. They will receive blessing from the Lord, and vindication from the God of their salvation” (Psalm 23 [24]:3-5). The term “heart” is not only denotative of emotional life (mainly described by the word “bowels” in Scripture) but also refers to the seat of volition and thought, as well as to the seat of moral judgment. This makes “heart” synonymous with mind, a term referring more to theoretical knowledge.

Based on the above points, one can see why the notions of *education* (*παιδεία*) and *soul-rearing* are absent from Israel, as is the dialogical method for arriving to the truth, inasmuch as the latter is seen as the fruit of God’s revelation. Equally absent are such terms as *struggle* or *competition*, *virtue*, *eros* (the impetus toward Aristotle’s immovable Mover) as well as the Homeric ideal of *ever to excel* and *prevail over others*. In Jewish thought, ethical terminology is not derived from the realm of art (*εὐσχήμων*=handsome, *κόσμιος*=civil, *εὐάρμοστος*=well-adjusted, *ἔμμετρος*=rhyme, εὔρυθμος=orderly). It is rather expressed by such terms as rightness, holiness, directness, perfection, and especially by the notion of *justice*(*tsedakah*), which, however, does not correspond to any harmony of the soul’s faculties as in Plato, nor does is it at all related to the blind *Justitia* of the Romans. In the Jewish sense of the term, justice concerns the complete observance of the divine commands, i.e. a behavior congruent with divine order, traceable to the personal God of the Forefathers and marked by mercy: “καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραάμ τῷ Θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην / And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6); (cf. Proverbs 21:21: “ὁδὸς δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἐλεημοσύνης εὑρήσει ζωὴν καὶ δόξαν / Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life and honor.” “Ἐν φόβῳ Κυρίου ἐλπὶς ἰσχύος τοῖς δὲ τέκνοις αὐτοῦ καταλείπει ἔρεισμα, πρόσταγμα Κυρίου πηγὴ ζωῆς ποιεῖ δὲ ἐκκλίνειν ἐκ παγίδος θανάτου / In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and one's children will have a refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, so that one may avoid the snares of death” (Proverbs 14:26-27).

**2.3.2 The Ethics of Judaism**

On the eve of Jesus Christ’s birth, a transformation had already occurred in Israel’s broader theological and cosmological self-consciousness, what with its submission to foreign powers (Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans) for half a millennium and the disappointment of its messianic expectations. Hence the prophet of Passion Jeremiah asks in protest: “δίκαιος εἶ κύριε ὅτι ἀπολογήσομαι πρὸς σέ. πλὴν κρίματα λαλήσω πρὸς σέ. τί ὅτι ὁδὸς ἀσεβῶν εὐοδοῦται; εὐθήνησαν πάντες οἱ ἀθετοῦντες ἀθετήματα**;** / You will be in the right, O Lord, when I lay charges against you; but let me put my case to you. Why does the way of the guilty prosper? Why do all who are treacherous thrive?” (Jeremiah 12:1). On that note, C. Voulgaris makes the following remark: “whereas in the past religion expressed the will of God as the purpose of Israel’s life, now religion is used as a means of promoting national and political agendas, particularly after the Maccabean revolt.”[[98]](#footnote-98) As R. Bultmann further adds, “neither is God’s name uttered anymore nor is His presence felt in the present history, since He is seen as governing the universe from the Seventh Heaven through angels and demons. The God of the Fathers ceases to send prophets and judges to the present time. His creative Spirit no longer blows as a catalyst in history. What now binds Israel together is not an experience of the Lord’s apocalyptic manifestation in the Present time, but a continuous remembrance of Yesterday, effected by the study of the Torah and Worship. The Testament is turned into *Law*, and Judaism becomes the religion of a Book. Not infrequently, the Law carries no answer to contemporary needs, while the fundamental distinction of God’s commands between provisions pertaining to worship and ethics, respectively, is eliminated. What is proposed as the ideal for everyday life is worshipful holiness, no longer meant actively as a ministry and service to the world, but in a passive sense, as a personal cleansing and a total removal from any setting that is deemed unclean. Instead of the *ἰδεῶδες ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων*the dominant ideal is: **“**μὴ ἅψῃ, μηδὲ γεύσῃ, μηδὲ θίγῃς / Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (Colossians 2:21). From a total of 613 commands, 365 were prohibitions. A legalist fixation with sin dominates the broader religious scene, where sin is understood as a “higher” force that has dominated the entire world and has permanently infested the human heart. People’s leaders, moreover, do not come from among political and social activists, but from the pool of theologians and legal Scribes.”[[99]](#footnote-99)

The above ideas of Bultmann were significantly disputed by the so call *The New Perspective of Pauline Theology* in the past thirty yearsmainly by K. Stendahl and Ε.-P. Sanders.[[100]](#footnote-100) Belying the anti-Jewish interpretation of Paul and the legalistic-scholastic view of justification is a ‘reading’ of Paul by Augustine and especially Luther. The latter in particular, understood justice in a legalistic sense and as a result projected his experiences as a young man to the Apostle prior to his conversion, just as he projected to Judaism the distortions of medieval Catholicism. In this view, the understanding of Judaism as a religion exclusively preoccupied with works is based on a misunderstanding inasmuch as the Jewish people had been aware pf the grace of God*.*[[101]](#footnote-101)For the election of Israel by Yahweh and the astonishing event of the Exodus predate the sealing of the testament. This covenant was arranged through the Torah which is not a way of entering the testament (*berith*) or of accumulating good works but a way of living ontologically in the context of *berith* (*covental nomism*).

The *new perspective* indeed constitutes a remarkable effort on the part of researchers to emphasize the unity of revelations and of the testaments. The Church Fathers, in their effort to counter the Gnostic opposition against the Old Testament, underscored that the latter, too constitutes a product of God’s grace. After all, the New Testament itself forms an icon of the future, when the knowledge/experience of God shall be face to face. (1 Cor. 13:12). Unfortunately, however, the aforementioned school of biblical exegesis assumes Judaism to be a unified entity, which was certainly not the case. Apparently, throughout Galilee of the nations and in the diaspora (a phenomenon which is recycled in our days as well among minorities) the Pharisees’ circles were dominated by a legalist emphasis on good works

(which including observance of the Sabbath and the clean-unclean distinctions), which also functioned as a distinguishing mark of identity against the broader social and religious setting, apart from being a means of salvation. The point wasn’t so much the entrance or stay in the testament, but the ultimate ruling in the eschatological court, predominated by the rule of reward.

**Appendix ΙΙ**[[102]](#footnote-102):

The main reason for the emerging of the New Perspective has been the attempt to challenge the caricature of Judaism and the Jewish religion as a legalistic System in the traditional Lutheran understanding of Paul. The reconstruction of the historic context of Paul on behalf of new insights into Second Temple Judaism as well as the preliminary works of William Wrede and Albert Schweitzer have offered crucial support in that direction. Similarly, the need of the modern pluralistic Society for tolerance and acceptance of the special characteristics of other individuals or groups has motivated the pioneers of the New Perspective to reinterpret the teaching of Paul from a perspective of tolerance. This is required for the actualization of Paul in the modern context of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Therefore, the representatives of the New Perspective have tried to investigate the Jewish background as well as the sociological dimension of Pauline teaching concerning justification according to faith. This sociological perspective led to an emphasis on the Pauline ecclesiology and the continuity between Pauline Gospel and Mosaic Law. Therefore, the texts of Paul have been understood as texts of a far sighted rabbi who had the mission to make the gentiles participants of God's blessings to Abraham and his family. From this point of view, the representatives of the New Perspective try to reconstruct the pragmatics of the Pauline teaching of justification by faith, the function of the mosaic Law, his argument concerning the unbelieving Jews as well as the works of the law. […] Nevertheless, my study of the patristic material has shown that the key issues of the New Perspective are in part already present in the Greek Fathers. The continuity among the Jewish and Christian religion, the ethnocentric or "nationalistic" aspect of the critique of Paul's adversaries against his law-free Gospel and the ecclesiological meaning of the Pauline teaching concerning justification by faith are concepts of which the Greek Fathers were also aware. […] According to patristic point of view the difference between Paul and Judaism can be understood neither on the basis of legalism nor on the basis of covenantal nomism (E.P. Sanders) or nationalism, i.e. ethnocentricity (Dünn, Wright) but rather on an ontological basis, namely*the incomparable superiority of the new reality in Christ*. The reason for Paul's turning from his zeal for the Jewish nation to the faith in Christ is due *to the fact that a new reality emerges in Christ, i.e. one where death is abolished and one can attain holiness and eternal life through faith in Christ.* Surely, this approach excludes any other way of salvation except through faith in Christ. By this typological Interpretation, which was common in early interpretations of the Bible (cf. the Epistle of Barnabas), Chrysostom tries both to give reasons for a positive evaluation of the Old Testament and to highlight the radical new reality in Christ.

Besides, as is obvious in the Gospels, οn the eve of Jesus’ birth, for all the “globalization” of both the Roman empire under the leadership of Octavius Augustus and that of Judaea under the scepter of Herod the Great, Judaism was *externally and internally fragmented*. Externally, it was split in several heresies, which may have been greater in number than the “philosophical schools” cited by Josephus, meaning the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, and the Zealots, since the New Testament further mentions the Herodians, the Sikarians, and the disciples of John the Baptist. Each of these heresies held on to its own exegesis of the Law and sported its own eschatological vision. Still, the common thread uniting all these splinter groups had been the catholic endorsement of the *Law*/*Torah* and the *Temple*, as the two basic, central pillars of Judaism. Just as catholically espoused was the expectation of the Kingdom, following *the judgment of the nations and the elimination of every irreverent man and woman, even if they belong to the “chosen” people.*

What caused an *internal split* among the common folk, in particular, was that all these factions claimed for themselves the laurels of the divinely elect, and that they monopolized the salvation that was to follow the eschatological judgment. Each declared that salvation from the imminent doom would be afforded strictly to those who had joined their rank. Those who didn’t belong to the faction in question and found it hard or impossible to observe the Torah (cf. John 7:49), whether for social or economic reasons, were deemed irreverent and unclean, and as such condemned to perish in the Gehenna fire. Such unmitigated legalism fostered an enormous amount of guilt and fear. For example, the plain people who visited the Temple in Jerusalem at least once a year to offer sacrifices, and who listened to the Law and Prophets every Saturday at the Synagogue, and were daily burdened with earning a living, had no way of knowing if the commodities sold in the market had been decimated according to Law or were unclean; as a result, people were conscientiously tortured from the guilt of possibly consuming morally infected food, and so of failing to abide by the priestly ordinances concerning worship purity. This overflowing of guilt demanding propitiation, may explain or justify the multitude of bodily and emotionally ailing folk encountered in the Gospel narratives, anxiously seeking salvation and redemption in the company of Jesus. Clearly, then, the demand for an outlet from political, social, and psychological pressure was intense and pressing. This outlet/salvation, though seen by some as deliverance from sin, was perceived by everyone as a national rebirth. The Prophets, after all, had long declared that human nature (inhabited as it was, according to rabbis, by a demonic element, a sly tendency, 4 Esdras 3. 22. 4:30-31) needed a rebirth by the life-giving Spirit of God as well as a new heart, for it to be afforded salvation (from the Greek σάω-σώζομαι=to become whole) and peace (shalom=εὐλογία) through a new testament/covenant (Ezekiel 36:25).

**Assignment 3/Chapter 2**

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Study the “confession” of the Apostle Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans,* chap. 7-8, wherein he describes the existential conflicts he suffered from as a faithful observer of Jewish Law.[[103]](#footnote-103)

**Section 2.4**

**CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

**2.4.1 Jesus Christ**

 It was at this critical juncture for both Greeks and Jews, a time when the world was increasingly unified just as the individual was internally split up, that Jesus of Nazareth was born.[[104]](#footnote-104) His baptism manifests a number of things: his solidarity for sinners, God the Father’s consent to His Son as well as Christ’s fullness of the Holy Spirit, who appears in the form of a dove as a reminder of the creation of the universe but also in order to denote the world’s new beginning after the Flood. As soon as the new Adam got out of the water –the archetypal symbol of chaos—in which he descended along with the sinners and the downtrodden of Judaea, and after his rough sojourn through the desert where Christ experiences the human drama and subjects Himself to the temptations facing humankind, the Gospel or Good News of God is heard for the first time—not in Scion, in the “Holy Mount,” but in Galilee (Mark 1:15).

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| **Κατά Μάρκον 1:15**Πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ. Μετανοεῖτε καὶ πιστεύετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ | **Mark 1:15**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news. |

 Whereas the rabbis claimed that if, for two consecutive Saturdays, the Law were completely obeyed, the Kingdom would arrive, in the preaching of Christ it is the indicative mood, and the present perfect, at that, which takes precedence while the imperative follows. The treasure is already at hand, and it is appropriated by the mere absolution/forgiveness of sins, apart from the observance of ritualistic rules. The Kingdom of God (not in a spatial meaning of the term but in the sense of divine dominance-presence; better yet, in the sense of uncreated *grace*) is not simply a heart’s desire but an actual *historical experience*. It intersects with ongoing history in this present world, in the tragic here and now: “Ἐπερωτηθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν Φαρισαίων πότε ἔρχεται ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν͵ Οὐκ ἔρχεται ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ παρατηρήσεως͵ οὐδὲ ἐροῦσιν͵ Ἰδοὺ ὧδε· ἤ͵ Ἐκεῖ· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστιν / Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed” (Luke 17:20-21).[[105]](#footnote-105) This *Kingdom* is not accounted for by Jesus in exclusively grim apocalyptic undertones (cf. John’s preaching: “ἤδη δὲ ἡ ἀξίνη πρὸς τὴν ῥίζαν τῶν δένδρων κεῖται πᾶν οὖν δένδρον μὴ ποιοῦν καρπὸν καλὸν ἐκκόπτεται καὶ εἰς πῦρ βάλλεται/ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire,” Matthew 3:10) but is described as a banquet, a wedding, and a residence. The Kingdom’s presence is variously attested to: it is made immanent by the unique weight of Jesus’ statements, the exorcisms and the healings that He performs, thereby restoring the complete healing, body and soul, of sufferers. It is further lived in Jesus’ common meals (shared not with like-minded fellows, such as Epicureans, Pharisees, etc. but) with sinners, and in the fullness of the bread (“spiritual” as well as material) that He distributes after delivering His authoritative addresses. Time is thus transformed to Kairos, i.e. to an opportunity for life or death.

 The fruit of experiencing the dawn of God’s kingdom is the imperative for *total and unmitigated repentance*—for a re-Turn (in Hebrew, *Schuwu*). Whereas the Prophets admonished the people to return to the Lord by justifying the orphan and the widow, the Essenes preached a return to the Torah and the pedantic observance of the totality of its mandates (even those relating to worship), for the cleansing and hallowing to be effected (1QS V, 8; CD XV, 12). The Stoics likewise preached a credo of abstinence and flee from the world and a concomitant return to the self. Jesus, by contrast, preached a second-person imperative for *faith in His Gospel*. This Gospel is identified with an empirical knowledge of God as the merciful, compassionate Abba-Father of all people, in the place of a domineering King, and of the free redemption from the devil, from sin, illness and typolatry (Mark 2-3) that He gives to everyone.[[106]](#footnote-106) The realization that humankind has a Father that loves every human being unconditionally; and that no one needs to dread death anymore (a dread that caused Cain to recoil into a mindset of self-centeredness focusing on survival alone),[[107]](#footnote-107) can prompt humans to move on to a radically different life perspective: one that presupposes a rebirth by water and Spirit, governed by love (John 3:5). Thus, the human being is literally transformed from a mortal *individual* to a *person*, and is placed through adoption (adrogatio) in the family of God, to a participant of divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). It is this re-turn from the herd to the Father’s House that the “Greek” physician Luke so vividly narrates in the parable of the merciful Father and the two brothers (Luke 15:11ff).

 Faith in the Gospel does not amount to the adoption of a new ideology or philosophy; it signifies, rather, a decisive turn away from idols, which may entertain but eventually enslave the mind, toward the authentic Image, to the Archetype of Man sought by Diogenes the Cynic (cf. Seneca Let. 115), Jesus as *the Son of God and Son of man*: “οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ᾽ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον */* For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16). As early as the beginning of Mark, the oldest Gospel, mention is made of *the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*, who becomes incarnate, is crucified and finally rises from the death, in order to salvage human nature from pain, guilt, and death.

 Immediately after Jesus’ homily in Galilee, land of the “foreign” nations, which was addressed to the poor folk, the imperatives to Repent and Believe are followed by a third one, now targeting a specific group: “δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου / Follow me (Mark 1:17);” cf. Mark 2:14: “ἀκολούθει μοι / Follow me.” Faith, following, and absolute obedience/devotion to the God-Man’s Person (which supplants the Torah, the Sabbath, and the Temple) as well as one’s personal share in His crucifixion and resurrection, are higher acts than even the funeral of deceased parents (cf. the relation between Elijah and Elisseus in 3 Kings 19: 19-21). As is thus shown from the above, in the new “movement” of Christianity, *it is the God-Man who is the measure of all things*.

 By issuing His call, Jesus (who never actually established a commune but wandered instead throughout Galilee) elects twelve disciples, with most coming from the lower social strata;[[108]](#footnote-108) in doing so, He reconstructed the twelve tribes and created a new family, destined to become the nucleus of the catholic, ecumenical Church. In this family, the dominant values of the world are reversed: the new community is no longer based on lust, fame, or domination: “οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν. οὐχ οὕτως δέ ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀλλ᾽ ὃς ἂν θέλῃ μέγας γενέσθαι ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, καὶ ὃς ἂν θέλῃ ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι πρῶτος ἔσται πάντων δοῦλος· καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν / You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many» (Mark 10: 42-45). The model in this new reality of the Kingdom, according to Mark 9:10, wherein are chosen “τὰ μωρὰ καὶ τὰ ἀσθενῆ καὶ τὰ ἀγενῆ καὶ τὰ ἐξουθενημένα καὶ τὰ μὴ ὄντα */* what is foolish in the world. . . what is low and despised in the world, things that are not” (1st Corinthians 1:27-28), is not the *wise man* but the *immature child*:[[109]](#footnote-109) this with a view not only to declare the aforementioned *radical reversal of the pyramid of conventional power relations*, but as a way of reviving the *primordial, paradisiac state of absolute trust between Creator and creature*.[[110]](#footnote-110)

The anti-values of the new social ontology ushered in by the Eschata and Jesus are succinctly encapsulated in the *beatific* sayings designating the blissful ones of this new era, *Beatitudes*:[[111]](#footnote-111)

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| --- | --- |
| **Κατά Ματθαῖον 5:3-12**Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται. μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν. μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται. μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται. μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται. μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται. μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. μακάριοί ἐστε ὅταν ὀνειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς καὶ διώξωσιν καὶ εἴπωσιν πᾶν πονηρὸν καθ᾽ ὑμῶν [ψευδόμενοι] ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ.χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ὅτι ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς· οὕτως γὰρ ἐδίωξαν τοὺς προφήτας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν. | **Matthew 5:3-12**Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. |

This feeling of *poverty of the spirit*, i.e. of one’s inability to achieve happiness and salvation autonomously, based on one’s mental faculties or good works alone, leads to a state of *joyful mourning* (in Greek, *χαρμολύπη*). Contrary to emotionalism, the tears caused by repentance converge with those of joy, in a manner prolonging the cleansing effected by the baptismal water and its rebirth.[[112]](#footnote-112) Through a) meekness, the unknown in the Greco-Roman world *humility* (Psalm 36 [37]: 11; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 11:29-30), i.e. the sense of one’s smallness and mortality, on opposite ends from the Greek moral ideal, and b) as a result of the craving for holy justice, which the then reigning Pax Augusta was incapable of providing, the authentically good ceases to be a mere Idea and becomes a Person. Furthermore, c) as a result of practicing mercifulness for one another other, the human being is gradually having his or her divine image restored and is led to the vision of the human race’s archetype, the incarnate God, now face to face, as not even Moses was capable of beholding Him (Exodus 33:20).

 It is on the basis of the Beatitudes that the neptic process of *cleansing*-*enlightenment*-*theosis* would be structured: a three-step spiritual formula accomplished by guarding the senses from their dispersion among “things” (physical objects as well as worldly concerns, with a tendency to harden themselves into idols, in the form of lust, greed, and love of fame). The main goal of this formula is the mind’s return from the brain to the heart through use of the Jesus prayer, “Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ ἐλέησόν με / Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me,”[[113]](#footnote-113) and eventually the view of the uncreated light. That kind of transfigured human person, while often mercilessly persecuted or harassed because of being intractable (Wisdom of Solomon 2:12), does not lead a self-centered life. Rather, s/he is totally given to the care of others, being as s/he is the sacrifial salt and the light of the world. S/he doesn’t uphold the letter but the spirit of the Law (e.g. concerning adultery, murder, and oath). S/he practices from the heart the virtues of *Charity*, *Prayer*, and *Fasting*, doing as s/he does violence to his or her self (and not to others), all the while displaying a total faith and trust in God the Father. The Gospel’s exhortation to this new life attitude is not justified on the basis of the eschatological Criterion alone, but also on the basis of the “divine” function of nature’s “elements” (such as the *sun* in Matthew 5:43 ff.; *birds* in Luke 12:6ff). Crucially, these anti- or counter-values are embodied first and foremost by Jesus Himself and after Him by the disciples, who after the resurrection carried about: “πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ / always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies” (2nd Corinthians 4:10).

 It is hardly an accident that Friedrich Nietzsche, creator of the *Overman*, viewed the “ethics” of the Sermon on the Mount as a “religion of resignation,” expressive of the envy of the timid and the weak-minded, of those that never matured in life and now wished to wreak vengeance on the Powerful, the Successful, and the Happy by glorifying their weakness and failure. For the Nietzschean Overman, who craves to honor his lust for power and domination, the risen God-Man who incarnates the power of love is a *scandal* and *foolishness*.

 It should be noted, too, that the famed word love (ἀγάπη, an abridged version of the classical Greek ἀγάπησις) as a noun is wholly absent in its Christian sense from classical Greek literature. The mandate to love first appears in the Hebrew Scriptures, which is dominated by the following two commands: a) “ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου / You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5), and b) “ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν / you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18). In his First Epistle, John stresses the following paradox concerning the premier “ethical” value of Christianity: “οὐκ ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφω ὑμῖν ἀλλ᾽ *ἐντολὴν παλαιὰν* ἣν εἴχετε ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς· ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ παλαιά ἐστιν ὁ λόγος ὃν ἠκούσατε. *Πάλιν ἐντολὴν καινὴν*γράφω ὑμῖν / no new commandment, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard” (1st John 2:7-8). Here the question naturally arises: what does the newness of the Christian love consist in and how is it different from ancient Greek eros and friendship?

 *First*, it should be noted that the total love offered to the Lord as inextricably intertwined with a concrete love for the *fellow human*,in contrast to an abstract love for humanity in general (Philo, *Legum Alegiriae* 2.63. Testament of Daniel 5.3 Testament of Isaac 5.1), is upheld as encapsulating in itself the criterion of the Law and the Prophets, and is placed higher than the observance of the Sabbath and other related ritualistic commands (sacrifices, etc.) (Mark 12:28-34 ff.).[[114]](#footnote-114)

 *Second*, this scriptural kind of love is not a mere Idea but is materialized by Jesus Himself into action, one which goes all the way to the end through the Cross, fulfilling the plan of divine economy as well as Scriptures: “ἀγαπήσας τοὺς ἰδίους τοὺς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰς τέλος ἠγάπησεν αὐτούς / Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end(John 13:1);”τετέλεσται / It is finished” (John19:30); (cf. 1st John 2:7; 2nd John 5). Jesus tastes the bitterest, most painful and most shameful death, the one on the Cross, for the sake of the whole world. “ὁρᾶτε δεσμώτην με δύσποτμον θεόν, τόν Διός ἐχθρόν, τοῖς πᾶσι θεοῖς δι’ ἀπεχθείας ἐλθόνθ’ ὁπόσοι τήν Διός αὐλήν εἰσοιχνεῦσιν, διά τήν λίαν φιλότητα βροτῶν/ Behold me, an ill-fated god, immanacled the foe of Zeus, me who have incurred the enmity of all who resort unto the court of Zeus, by reason of my too great love for mankind”[[115]](#footnote-115) and so is the prophecy to *Prometheus Bound* fulfilled: “τοιοῦδε μόχθου τέρμα μή τι προσδόκα͵ πρὶν ἂν θεῶν τις διάδοχος τῶν σῶν πόνων φανῇ͵ θελήσῃ τ΄ εἰς ἀναύγητον μολεῖν Ἅιδην κνεφαῖά τ΄ ἀμφὶ Ταρτάρου βάθη / Look for no term of this thine agony until some god appear to take upon himself thy woes and of his own free will descent into the sunless realm of Death and the dark deeps of Tartarus.”[[116]](#footnote-116) In so doing, Jesus shows the way by which humans can defeat pain, guilt, and death, as well as the necessities of nature (space, time, and death, the “sole immortal on earth”), namely, by personally undergoing what later turned out to be a scandal for Greek thought,[[117]](#footnote-117) i.e. the resurrection: “ἰδού γάρ ἦλθε διά τοῦ Σταυροῦ χαρά ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ / Behold, it came through the Cross joy in the whole world.”[[118]](#footnote-118) From that point on, human love is called to follow the lead of the love of Christ, who sacrifices Himself for the world, thereby revealing the Father’s love. As a result of this, love (along with other notions, such as truth and life) is enhypostatized in a concrete, particular Person.

*Third.* Christian love is based on the fatherhood and the Trinitarian nature of God, who is addressed as *Abba* and who’s seen in terms of a self-offered love, not as the highest Good which humans are called to approach with self-interest in mind. As is emphatically pointed out in Jesus’ Testament, the Hieratic Prayer: “Οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐρωτῶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου αὐτῶν εἰς Ἐμέ, ἵνα πάντες ἓν ὦσιν, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ ἐν ἐμοὶ, κἀγὼ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ὦσιν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας / I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:20-21). The belief that *God is Trinitarian*, namely Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, i.e. a personal God, means that the cause and the foundation of all reality is not an insentient or impersonal entity but one encompassing freedom, reason, and love—these are the core qualities of the Person. Consequently, the world itself in its totality, besides humankind, is not ill-logical, but endowed with personal depth: it is comprised of *freedom*and*logicality*, being as it is an expression of God’s free creative love; which, in turn, suggests that a reflective probe into the depths of material creation points us “beyond” the world, to a conscious Being that is its cause […] God is a dialogical reality, a communion of Persons, which is why He converses with Himself in an “I-Thou” manner. “Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τῷ Κυρίῳ μου / The Lord says to my Lord” is stated in Scripture (Psalm 109:1). The insight that God, though one, is simultaneously three persons in dialogue, introduced *relatedness* as a primary ontological reality, thus causing a notable revolution shaking the foundations of ancient Greek and Aristotelian worldviews, in particular, in the context of which relatedness was demoted to the realm of “contingency,” i.e. of secondary being, excluded from essence.

 Thanks to Christianity, the concept of the human being suffered a colossal change. For, whereas in ancient Hellenism the ideal was the “ἄτομον” (individual), a self-centered being, in Christianity the ideal was now the “πρόσωπον” (person), a Greek term denoting a release from the boundaries of the self and a movement toward the other as a fundamental aspect of being human (so is suggested by the proposition “πρός/ pros,” indicating an intentional motion). Boiled down to its essence, the shift means that human beings, as personal entities, are not mere “matter,” in the sense of something static and closed, but a form of active “energy,” in the language of physics. But this dynamic character of the person should not be confused with the mindset of individualism permeating modern capitalist societies. It represents quite the opposite: a forsaking of the ego and self-interest, a release from the fetters of the self, for the sake of others […].[[119]](#footnote-119)

 In Christianity, love is not an ethical concept, as is frequently misapprehended; it has ontological depth, which means that only with love, as a force of self-sacrifice for the sake of the other, is the completion of human personhood possible. In that context, the opposite of love, i.e. selfishness as the pursuit of individual self-interest, is not a natural or innocent attitude, but reveals a perversion of personality […] and this is the deeper reason for the vacuity felt by people in our era, despite being in possession of several material comforts: namely, that people lead a selfish life, which is the opposite of what humanity is in essence, i.e. sacrificial love for the sake of fellow humans.”[[120]](#footnote-120)

 *Fourth*. Based on the above, the term *fellow human(s)* no longer corresponds to those of the same race or to converts as in the Old Testament, but to the *other*, who ‘normally” constitutes my hell (as Sartre famously wrote), namely (1) the *unclean* sinner (Luke. 7:36-50) and the enemy (Matthew 5:43-48). Crucially, Jesus does not uphold the negative ethics that rests content with merely urging the avoidance of injustice to others (as in Plato’s, *Republic*, 1.335); not does He only discourage revenge, which in antiquity was regarded as a highest virtue (Luke 6:27-36; cf. Matthew 5:43 ff.).[[121]](#footnote-121) By urging His audience to “γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς͵ ὅτι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους / so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous” (Matthew 5:45), Jesus does not delimit his teaching on non-retribution, as Gandhi did, but presses beyond it to *active love* and sym-pathy for the enemy. Instead of “Ἅγιοι γίνεσθε / You shall be holy” (1st Peter 1:16), what is heard is “Γίνεσθε οὖν οἰκτίρμονες, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Πατὴρ ὑμῶν οἰκτίρμων ἐστίν / Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful (Luke 6:36; cf. Μatthew 5: 48: “Ἔσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι / Be perfect, therefore), by further stipulating “Ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ· ἀλλ΄ ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα [σου]͵ στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην· καὶ τῷ θέλοντί σοι κριθῆναι καὶ τὸν χιτῶνά σου λαβεῖν͵ ἄφες αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ ἱμάτιον· καὶ ὅστις σε ἀγγαρεύσει μίλιον ἕν͵ ὕπαγε μετ΄ αὐτοῦ δύο. τῷ αἰτοῦντί σε δός͵ καὶ τὸν θέλοντα ἀπὸ σοῦ δανείσασθαι μὴ ἀποστραφῇς */* But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well, and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you” (Matthew 5:39-42) in the place of revolution, which only recycles bloodshed and leads to worse forms of domination, Jesus suggests the spirit of ministry even toward the conquerors, in a manner capable of “enslaving” them by an excess of love. This love is further confirmed by the “golden rule” that concludes the Sermon on the Mount. It quite indicative that this rule, which in relevant ancient texts entails a negation (Rabbi Hillel [20 BCE]: “Do not do to others what you do not want done to you” bSchab 31a; Tobit 4:15), in the case of Jesus it becomes an incitement to action: “Πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν θέλητε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς· οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται / In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

 In this manner, love for fellow humans assumes a catholic range, exceeding as it does particular selves and nations: essentially, love becomes *super-natural*, given the reigning laws of natural selection and the survival of the fittest in post-lapsarian nature (despite the fact that even in nature, only what relates to its environment is alive). Moreover, thanks to the archetype of the Holy Trinity, a cross for human logic but also referred to as the social program of Orthodoxy, in the words of Fiodorov, the exclusivity plaguing the dual number (as in the mother-son relation) is transcended, so that love can extend to everyone, without restrictions. As Clement of Alexandria remarks, “Ἀλλά γὰρ φύσει πλούσιος ὤν ὁ Θεὸς ἐν ἐλέῳ διὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ ἀγαθότητα κήδεται ἡμῶν, μήτε μορίων ὄντων αὐτοῦ, μήτε φύσει τέκνων. Καὶ δὴ ἡ μεγίστη τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγαθότητος ἔνδειξις αὕτη τυγχάνει͵ ὅτι οὕτως ἐχόντων ἡμῶν πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ φύσει ἀπηλλοτριωμένων παντελῶς ὅμως κήδεται. Φυσικὴ μὲν γὰρ ἡ πρὸς τὰ τέκνα φιλοστοργία τοῖς ζῴοις ἥ τε ἐκ συνηθείας τοῖς ὁμογνώμοσι φιλία͵ Θεοῦ δὲ ὁ ἔλεος εἰς ἡμᾶς πλούσιος τοὺς κατὰ μηδὲν αὐτῷ προσήκοντας͵ τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἡμῶν λέγω ἢ φύσει ἢ δυνάμει τῇ οἰκείᾳ τῆς οὐσίας ἡμῶν͵ μόνῳ δὲ τῷ ἔργον εἶναι τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ / But God, rich as he is by nature in mercy, he cares for us because of his goodness, even though we are neither parts of his own being nor his children by nature. And the ultimate indication of His goodness is this, namely, that while we have this relationship with him and we are totally alienated from him, he takes care of us. Certainly among animals the affection to their children is natural as well as the friendship to like-minded human beings because of the habit; but the mercy of God is abundantly poured upon us, even if we do not have anything to do with him neither in essence nor in nature or in force, that is related to our essence, but only in the sense that this is the work of His will.”[[122]](#footnote-122)

The personal share in the loving communion of the Father and the Son, which passes through both crucifixion and resurrection, is also empirically experienced in the *Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist*, “τό φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζῆν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός/ the medicine of [immortality](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07687a.htm), and the antidote to prevent us from dying, but [which causes] that we should live for ever in [Jesus Christ](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08374c.htm)” (Ignatius, *Epistle to the Ephesians*, 20: 2). The “Last Supper,” where shortly before the Crucifixion Jesus hands over the *New Testament*, ceases to be identified with the battering of the “Egyptians” and the bloodshed of foreigners (in stark contrast to the Hebrew Easter) and is rather concerned with the sacrifice of the God-Man Himself, who offers Himself as bread, “μελιζόμενος καί μή διαιρούμενος / broken but not divided.” By offering His Body and Blood in the congregation of His disciples as food and drink, Jesus heals the intrinsic to human nature post-lapsarian aggression, which is now transformed into *Holy Communion and Eucharist* (thanksgiving).[[123]](#footnote-123) The absolution of sins, and the deliverance from pain and death, the triptych plaguing humans from the moment of conception and throughout life, and the emancipation from the demonic cycle of senseless pain and pleasure, are no longer dependent on Temple sacrifices and Law commandments. It is lived out in a simple meal, δείπνο (the so-called “breaking og the bread”), which, contrary to the dinners-symposia of the Hellenistic times, is inclusive and all share in it equally, regardless of race, gender or social status—and in which participants become what they eat: they become Gods by grace.

 Some schools of psychoanalysis[[124]](#footnote-124) believe that man’s basic feeling of guilt is not traceable to the Oedipus complex, as was regarded for years. In this narrative, our earliest guilt is actually formed unconsciously at the moment that we are trying to remain alive by sucking milk from our mother’s breast, realizing in the process that with our newly acquired teeth, and our greed for food, we injure our mother’s nipple, the very source of our life. Thus the child somehow sees that in order to survive, s/he needs to suck and injure the holiest, most sacred object available. This feeling is actually similar to what is described in Gen. 3:1-7. The mother’s nipple is for the child the tree of Paradise, and in that analogue, the exile is experienced as a disconnection from the maternal womb and embrace. This subliminal guilt culminates as the mother ceases to breastfeed her child, an interruption perceived by the child as a punishment for the inflicted wound on her breast.

 The selfsame feeling dominated the primitive peoples,[[125]](#footnote-125) who knew that they had to slaughter the so-called “godly” animals for clothing and food, with which death was pushed back momentarily. That is why the slaughter of the “gods” for the sake of humans was a ritual and thanksgiving affair, supplemented by prayers to the killed animals themselves. These animals were thought to be rising to heaven after being killed, forming constellations like the one of the Ursa Major or Great Bear. These people also shared the belief that by consuming the bodies of these godly animals, they shared, too, in their Passion and Resurrection. The same ritual was used by farmers, who felt guilty for tearing apart nature’s flesh by grinding wheat and pressing grapes to make wine: in their case, guilt was supplemented with a liberating joy due to participating in nature’s mysterious seasonal resurrection.

 Through the Christian sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, which differs from the holy meals of the primitive peoples in that it is based on the historical events of Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection, the Church gives children, immediately after the onset of guilt during the so-called “oral” stage in their development, the possibility to express it consciously and fully, instead of repressing it to the unconscious. This is effected by having children commune of the incarnate Word of God (at a time when they get to know the world by taste) and so to be healed and relieved of guilt. In this way, mother Church indicates to children what their physical mothers cannot tell them: that their said feelings of guilt are unjustified, and that they must cease to feel and live like “sadists,” just because they must eat in order to survive. God, who sacrifices Himself voluntarily and is not murdered, lives eternally and so can men and women who sacramentally partake of His flesh and blood. Hence, the child can become what s/he eats, i.e. a God by grace, thereby defeating the fear of death that is experienced from the moment of one’s birth, and finally share in divine *immortality*. Moreover, by joining others in receiving communion, the child breaks through the fences that s/he mentally raised over against “strangers,” i.e. those that s/he perceived as threats to his or her own existence and as rivals to the exclusive motherly care and attention. Only in this manner can the aggression intrinsic to human nature already since infanthood be overcome, along with the terrible, for children and adults alike, fear of loneliness and death.

 Wherever the transition from individualism to Personhood has taken place, the scriptural saying “δικαίῳ νόμος οὐ κεῖται / the law is laid down not for the innocent” applies (1st Timothy 1:9; cf. St. Augustine’s phrase: “Ἀγάπησον τόν Θεό καί ὅ,τι θέλεις ποίησον / Love God and do as you please”). This is why Jesus did not put forward a specific code of moral precepts, as is the case with the Torah and the sophiological literature. Nevertheless, he sternly condemned the egocentric abuse of wealth. For example, the four Beatifications listed in Luke, are followed by four rebukes against the rich: “οὐαὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς πλουσίοις, ὅτι ἀπέχετε τὴν παράκλησιν ὑμῶν. οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, οἱ ἐμπεπλησμένοι νῦν, ὅτι πεινάσετε. οὐαί, οἱ γελῶντες νῦν, ὅτι πενθήσετε καὶ κλαύσετε. οὐαὶ ὅταν ὑμᾶς καλῶς εἴπωσιν πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι· κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ γὰρ ἐποίουν τοῖς ψευδοπροφήταις οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν / woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. "Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.” (Luke 6:24-26).[[126]](#footnote-126) The same Gospel writer gives special emphasis to the nursing of patients (see Luke 10:25-37) and the compassion to the poor (see Luke12:13-21, 16). Hence, in the celebrated parable of the Good Samaritan the question “τίς ἐστίν μου πλησίον; / And who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) is reversed as to *for whom can I be neighbor*? Further to that, one’s stance toward the socially marginalized is displayed as the sole criterion for one’s justification or condemnation in the grand narrative of the Judgment of the Nations in Matthew 25 (cf. the *Epistle of James*, and the *Didache*). The whole point here is that orthodoxy must be complemented by orthopraxis, or else it is but the *theology of demons*. The Lord’s aphorism is quite indicative to that effect: “οὐ δύνασθε θεῷ δουλεύειν καὶ μαμωνᾷ / You cannot serve God and wealth” (Matthew 6:24; cf. Luke 16:11. 13). As a term nowhere in greco-roman literature does *mamonas* appear as idol, god, demon, except only in the gospels.

 By firmly declaring that “οὐδέν ἐστιν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς αὐτὸν ὃ δύναται κοινῶσαι αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενά ἐστιν τὰ κοινοῦντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον / there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile” (Mark 7:15), Jesus abolishes the provisions that divided the world in holy and unclean or between sacred and profane. These concerned mainly food, sexuality, and the observance of the Sabbath, and in effect barred “unclean” women, publicans, prostitutes, and especially the “impure” nations from communion and fellowship. The provisions had been established by the priestly aristocracy based on the Temple, and were shoved by the Pharisees into the simple folk of Galilee, in an effort to “purge” the people from the surrounding nations and make them wholly dependent on the redemptive system of Scion. On opposite ends from this mentality, holiness according to Jesus did not consist in abstaining from a filthy world, but in the active ministry to it thanks to love. Thus the par excellence Son of Man annuls with authority the ritualistic commandments (which are stripped of their meaning in His presence, anyway), while deepening on the ethical precepts of the Torah, extending as He does their claims to inner intentions and desires. In view of this, there is no contradiction in Jesus’ statement that “Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφήτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. Ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν· ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἰῶτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται / Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished” (Matthew 5:17-18).

 Jesus is equally as adamant in His condemnation of automatic divorce (invoking Genesis), [[127]](#footnote-127) which was allowed by the Law in view of the cruelty of the Jews, i.e. so that women should not be forever captive to men’s arbitrariness and whims (see Deuteronomy 24:1; cf. Josephus, *Jewish Archaeology*, 4, 253).[[128]](#footnote-128) By taking this stand, Jesus exalts the intrinsic worth of women, whom He accepted both as followers and as witnesses to His Resurrection. He likewise clashes with the traditions of the Pharisees, at the points where their teachings don’t promote the ideal of love for the others (consider, for example, the effect of the *korvan* institution that run counter to the fourth commandment of love for one’s parents, in Mark 7: 9-13). The upshot of all this is Jesus’ superb declaration: “καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· τὸ Σάββατον διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐγένετο καὶ οὐχ ὁ ἄνθρωπος διὰ τὸ Σάββατον / Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). After all, His very Personhood transcends in itself the Law, the Temple, and the Sabbath. Last but not least, in the place of Romans, hated and embattled (in different ways) by every Jewish group, Jesus targets the Devil as the true enemy.[[129]](#footnote-129)

 The one truly deadly sin is arrogance, and this is why nothing is as fiercely condemned in the famed list of “woes,” not even fornication, as pharisaism, the putting of divine commandments to the service of self-justification and self-promotion. Counter to pharisaic piety, the first person declared to enter Paradise is a thief,[[130]](#footnote-130) a man bereft of good deeds to cash, and with him all who with candid repentance (and especially through their mercy to others) restored their relationship with God.[[131]](#footnote-131)

 Therefore, and according to S. Agouridis, “The NT is not a manual of ethics, even though it is rich in ethical teaching. The NT is a Gospel, the Gospel of God in the world. It is the joyful message about the redemption granted by God’s inscrutable love to His people. In the life and death of Jesus Christ, the Logos of God unites Himself with frail human existence, and in the process restores and transfigures it. The death of Jesus Christ assumes a major significance among other events in His life, because right up on the Cross, the Logos confronts squarely the worst enemy of humankind, i.e. death and annihilation. The Gospel can be summed up as the defeat of physical corruption and death in Christ. *Of what import are moral teachings when humans still stand on the brink of nothingness?* […] The Gospel, the real Good News, is the defeat of sin and evil in one’s relation with others, and the creation of *a new people*of God. Through Christ and His Gospel, God invites us to share in the love that he shares with His own Son. Accordingly, prompted by faith and aided by the Paraclete, humans hear the divine call and shift themselves to their Redeemer God, thereby turning from their fragmentary, poor, and faltering works to the salvific work of God in Christ.”[[132]](#footnote-132)

**2.4.2 Apostle Paul**

The figure that most realized the non-legalist ethos of Christianity was the Pharisee Saul, who had been raised with strict Jewish principles in the Mediterranean city of Tarsus (homeland to the Stoic Athenodorus, teacher of Octavian), and had studied the Mosaic law in Jerusalem. Following his extraordinary vision before the gates of Damascus, his three-day blindness, subsequent Baptism and participation in the Eucharist (Acts 9), Paul realized that the gist of Christianity wasn’t a new teaching, a new worship or a new ethics but *the new life, the new Creation* (“ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά / So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new” 2nd Corinthians 5:17), which can only be materialized with one’s full incorporation to the new Adam, Jesus Christ. This fact is expressed by the repeated reference to the ambiguity of Christ in Paul’s Epistles; an ambiguity which forms the crux of Christian ethics and that runs counter to the Stoic ideal of *living according to Logos*. Jesus is not a moral exemplar to be followed, standing over against us (as was the case with the Stoic *sage*, marked by apathy and occasional arrogance). Far from it, He is a source of strength and life, heading our way (“ἐν ἐμοί / in me” Galatians 2:20), not symbolically but in a real sense, restoring us through His ultimate sacrifice and transmission to us of His Body and Blood.[[133]](#footnote-133) This occurs because the *archetypal image* of humans is true God and at the same time a historic person that underwent unspeakable pain, temptations, and finally death itself in the most agonizing and humiliating manner possible for human existence. Consequently, “ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθείς, δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι / Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested” (Hebrews 2:18).

 Paul himself declared that “Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι·ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός· ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ / For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2, 19-20). The passions that he suffers and the stigmata he carries on his body (Galatians 6:17), in contrast to any sense of Stoic im-passibility, are not related to pathological states of masochism, as had been the case with the mystics of Cybele in his time or with imitators of the Crucified nowadays; they indicated rather Paul’s massive struggle to preach the Gospel of resurrection and hope to the world, so that Christ would be engrafted in the hearts of his fellow men and women. At the same time, thanks to the temptations that he is facing, Paul is humbled even as God’s grandeur sinks into him. Experiencing as he does the “το ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου, ἡ γὰρ δύναμις ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελεῖται / My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (2nd Corinthians 12:9), Paul can state “πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με / I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

 The engraftment to the God-Man’s Person, who by His resurrection and victory over death shattered the necessities of nature before which even the proud Greek spirit had bowed, is effected through the agency of another Person. As was already indicated, Socrates and the Stoics held that proper moral behavior is derived from full self-knowledge, and more precisely from logic and reasoning. Paul, on the other hand, as is shown by Romans 7-8, tracks the tragedy of post-lapsarian, “carnal” human existence not in ignorance, but in the implacable fact that (while acknowledging the voice of consciousness, Romans 2:14-15),[[134]](#footnote-134) he is incapable of doing good. Hence, the Self is split up: “οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλει ποιεῖ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ ὃ οὐ θέλει κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσει */* For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do” (Romans 7:19). The way out of this tragedy lies in the Holy Spirit. Through His energies, Christians are released from the Devil, from the Law, as well as from sin and death, and become, thanks to the sacraments of Baptism (Galatians 3:28) and the Eucharist (1st Corinthians 10:6; 12-12ff.) members of the Body of Christ,[[135]](#footnote-135) wherein “οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ / There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). This same Spirit grants gifts that contribute to the construction of the Church Body (1st Corinthians 12) and by bringing the eschaton to history in the present, even as a foretaste of the Kingdom to come, He pledges the future glory of the human race and the universe (Rom. 8). Even though at present “ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός / For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh” (Galatians 5:17), it is still possible for men and women to make use of their freedom (2nd Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:4) to join the path of the new life, destined to be lived to the full after the final defeat of Satan (Romans 16:20; 1st Corinthians 15:24), the resurrection of everyone and the Judgment, to which History is headed.

 Paul’s experience, which is Christocentric *as well as ecclesiocentric* (inasmuch as it is addressed to the faithful as *members of One, Headed Body* and not to individuals), is handed down in His Epistles. In his introductions to these letters, Paul interestingly changes the Greek words for “χαίρειν / greetings” (James 1:1) and “ὑγιαίνειν / be in good health” (3rd John 1:2) to *grace*, which he combines with *peace*. Thus, by the introduction of this blessing, *grace and peace*,[[136]](#footnote-136) the great Semitic wish accompanies the typical Greek ideal. Both terms, related to one another in terms of cause and effect (since peace is the fruit of grace), encapsulate the spiritual gifts of the new, Christian era, offered by God (usually referred to as Father in Pauline literature) to humankind through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Whereas the work of men and women conclude in death, God grants them *grace*, justifying them through His Cross and redeeming them: “οὐχ ὡς τὸ παράπτωμα͵ οὕτως καὶ τὸ χάρισμα· εἰ γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἑνὸς παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον͵ πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπερίσσευσεν / But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many” (Romans 5:15). Thus, counter to expectations, God elects an enemy and grants mercy to a convict. Redemption and salvation are no longer dependent upon racial origin, inheritance and blood relation, nor do they come from the fulfillment of specific legal requirements, as in Judaism. But neither are they an accomplishment of innate bodily and mental abilities, as in Hellenism.

 The nominative case of divine grace is then complemented by the imperative, as is also seen in the preaching of Christ. That is why the main body of Pauline Epistles is divided between the *doctrinal* part (which describes the justice-justification ensuing from the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ) and the *ethical* part. As P. Andreopoulos remarked, “the presence of Jesus Christ in the new, restored humankind is real enough, but it is not static; it is always a dynamic reality. It is freely granted to humans by God, but it must also be won by them, daily.”[[137]](#footnote-137) Several Christians apparently thought that freedom from the Law and “divine” adoption through one’s participation in the sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist entitles them to lead a “liberated” lifestyle, outside the established conventions. Nonetheless, the Church’s sacraments (especially as is stressed in 1st Corinthians 10) do not save in a magical way, like those of Greek religion, nor do they ensure by themselves one’s final salvation and redemption, unless they are transformed to a continuous renovation of the mind and to acts of love toward everyone. In Galatians, where “Τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν· στήκετε οὖν καὶ μὴ πάλιν ζυγῷ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε */* For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery” is declared (Galatians 5:1), the following stipulation is also added to denote the absolution of Christians from the ritualistic requirements of the Mosaic Law (e.g. circumcision) and the world’s elements: “ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐπ᾽ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἐκλήθητε, ἀδελφοί· μόνον μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκί, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις. ὁ γὰρ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἑνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται, ἐν τῷ· ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν */* For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5: 13-14). Thereafter Paul strongly juxtaposes *the evil works of the flesh with the natural fruits of the Spirit*. The latter are not encountered in an otherworldly space but are available in this present, material plane of existence, as *love, joy, peace, forbearance, goodness, virtuousness, faith, calmness, temperance*; concerning these “ἀγάπη, χαρὰ, εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία, χρηστότης, ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις, πραΰτης, ἐγκράτεια· κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις. Εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν. μὴ γινώμεθα κενόδοξοι, ἀλλήλους προκαλούμενοι, ἀλλήλοις φθονοῦντες */* love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another” (Galatians 5:22-26). Having fiercely admonished those who divide the Church in his *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (what with arrogance and self-sufficiency being the premiere deadly sins in the Church), Paul moves on to rebuke fornication for tarnishing the holy Temple of the Holy Spirit, the human *body*, degrading it as it does to *flesh* (1 Corinthians 5:6). Against the “Πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν” of his adversaries, Paul juxtaposes the “ἀλλ᾽ οὐ πάντα συμφέρει· πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπό τινος / but not all things are beneficial. All things are lawful for me,"but I will not be dominated by anything.” (1st Corinthians 6:12).[[138]](#footnote-138)

Four points in Paul’s ethics are noteworthy:

*First*: The *body* is not a transient, ephemeral “garment” or “prison” of the soul, since physical matter is, after all, a creation of God’s which contributes to the restoration of the universe through the sacraments and itself awaits the liberation of creation from its bondage to physical corruption (Romans 8:21). Salvation and especially the resurrection concern the *rotted and worm-eaten bodies*, as Middle-Platonist Celsus derisively remarked: “εἰ γὰρ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, ματαία ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν /For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised” (1st Corinthians 15:16-17).[[139]](#footnote-139) That is why Paul following as he does the Jewish ethics is radically opposed to fornication (1st Thessalonians Α’ 4:1-8. 1st Corinthians 6:12-20) and homosexuality. (1st Corinthians 6:9. Romans 1:26-27). By contrast, even though he praises virginity, he honors marriage (without linking it necessarily to child-bearing as Musonis Rufus does). The equal participation of Christian women in worship and ministry of the Church constitutes a remarkable reality in early Christianity. This reality corresponds to the lifting of various prejudices concerning the trustworthiness of women and their right to leave the private sphere. Phebe, Chloe, and Priscilla are representative examples of the new reality in Church.[[140]](#footnote-140).

 *Second*: The imprinting of the crucified and risen Christ in one’s heart does not lead to a state of apathy or nirvana, i.e. to a *mortification of passion* (as was upheld by most Stoics), but to its *transformation*, so that it can function as intended by God and serve the love for God and the neighbor, a love which frees humankind ontologically. It is quite instructive that, while the Stoics exalted calmness, Paul, who doesn’t hesitate to express the intensity of his mood swings, makes the following statement: “ὀργίζεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε· ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω ἐπὶ [τῷ] παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν, μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ / Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil” (Ephesians 4:26-27).[[141]](#footnote-141) This is a form of rage that no longer turns against other sinners, but against sin itself and the Devil: “Τοῦ λοιποῦ ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ κράτει τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ. ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς τὸ δύνασθαι ὑμᾶς στῆναι πρὸς τὰς μεθοδείας τοῦ διαβόλου· ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη πρὸς αἷμα καὶ σάρκα͵ ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς͵ πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας͵ πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τούτου͵ πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις / Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:10-12). Without suffering the “passionless passion,” no one can love God and be saved.

*Third*: Nowhere does Paul mention or enumerate specific *duties* that someone owes to observe in order to achieve liberation, as the Stoics held;[[142]](#footnote-142) nor does he state particular *virtues* that humans must display.[[143]](#footnote-143) Rather, he writes about the fruits of the Spirit, which he juxtaposes with the sly works of sin (given how the latter cause pain and finally lead to darkness, in spite of an initial pleasure that they bring) (Galatians 5:19-33). Good works are not imposed from the outside, as it were, but instead are the natural outcome of an existence graced by the Holy Spirit and redeemed from the fear of death—they are the fruit of a being that has discovered his or her authentic image. The new life, therefore, is not the “copy” of a model nor does it imply the “cloning of people; it is the discovery of the real image lying within oneself (cf. the saying “be what you are”). Thus we come to realize that in Christianity there is no wedge between doctrine and ethos, theory and action or between spiritual and social ministry. Social ministry is the fruit and final outcome of spiritual renovation and transfiguration, which occurs during catechism and participation in the Holy Eucharist. The latter, as opposed to individual prayers, is the culminating social event in Orthodoxy.

*Fourth*. The beginning and final end of Christian life, the “σύνδεσμος τελειότητας / which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Colossians 3:14) of everything is *love*. The desired goal, therefore, is not an individual mystical escape of man from the body and the world, but the escape from selfishness and the egocentrism of the present world, along with the material manifestation of Christ’s love, not in the abstract but at any given moment and according to the neighbor’s needs. In 1 Cor. Paul, responding as he does to those who boast of their spiritual gifts of speaking in tongues and prophecy, emphasizes the three utmost Christian virtues, already mentioned in the introduction to the earliest New Testament book: “Νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη / And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13, cf. 1 Thessalonians 1:3). The Pauline *hymn of love* remains powerful and classic to this day (1 Corinthians 13): this love concerns first the members of the Church itself, particularly the weakest ones [“δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις / become slaves to one another” (Galatians 5:13)], and second the peacefulness with all people: “μὴ νικῶ ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ ἀλλὰ νίκα ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακόν / Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21); “Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν· ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν. τὸ γὰρ «οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις, οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις», καὶ εἴ τις ἑτέρα ἐντολή, ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται [ἐν τῷ]· ‘ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. Ἡ ἀγάπη τῷ πλησίον κακὸν οὐκ ἐργάζεται· πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη/ Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet,’ and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:8-10). In this exhortation, the neighbor is not only the brethren in Christ but the foreigners and those of a different faith.[[144]](#footnote-144) Anything that is alien to faith in the God of love and freedom is sinful: “πᾶν δὲ ὃ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἁμαρτία ἐστίν / for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin” (Romans 14:23).

It should be borne in mind that in the Greco-Roman world the adjective *αλλήλ*\*/ *each other* referred to the relation between brothers or the mutuality between friends. In any case it always concern relationships among equals. Thus the use of this adjective in the moral exhortations of the New Testament denotes a very specific ecclesiological position: i.e. the fact that faith in Jesus and baptism in his name renders the most disparate people brothers/sisters and friends. Concerning now the distinction between Jews and non-Jews this was based on the Pauline teaching on justification. **[…]** The social environment where the first Christians could materialize the notion in Christ: “οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ / There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female” (Galatians 3:28; see also 1st Corinthians 12:13) in 1st Corinthians 10:17: “ἓν Σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν / we who are many are one body”) was basically the celebration of sacrament of the Eucharist. In Early Christianity the term ‘ἐκκλησία’ denoted a specific religious.[[145]](#footnote-145)

 The means used by Paul to induce spiritual vigilance and acts of love was to point to the past, present, and future, indiscriminately. This was possible for him, since time in the Church doesn’t flow cyclically, as in Hellenism, nor does it move in a linear fashion, as in Judaism, but in contrast to both it is experienced like the shape of the cross: eternity intersects with the present, which is oriented to the final Eschata: “ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας / see, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation” (2nd Corinthians 6:2). It is thus often the case that references to the *present* are complemented with a recollection of the “exit” through Baptism (*redditus ad baptismum*), as well as to the calling and election of even those saints who had not yet been born but had become Christians and had personally experienced the ontological change granted by Christ and the Holy Spirit. Very frequent as well in Paul’s Letters is for an exhortation to be accompanied by the acknowledgment of the *eschatological time and hour* denoting *the coming of the Lord’s day*.[[146]](#footnote-146) According to Paul, Christians are precisely those who, in contrast to *anyone else*, harbor hope (1st Thessalonians 4:13):[[147]](#footnote-147) “The union with God does not immerse or condemn the faithful to a state of passive inactivity, but mobilizes them to action and life, no less than to vigilance and readiness, for all is “near.” The hope of Christ’s return imbues with meaning the lives of Christians, who await Him eagerly. Knowing as they do that the true Republic lies in Heaven (“Ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει, ἐξ οὗ καὶ σωτῆρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα, κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν */* But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” Philippians 3:20), Christians are able to relativize and deconstruct earthly saviors and immanent ideologies, along with social conventions and political expediencies, being even willing to suffer martyrdom for the sake of the truth.”[[148]](#footnote-148)

 In the later Pauline Epistles one encounters *lists of behavior* addressed to men as husbands and master of slaves, as well as to women, children, and slaves, i.e. to the weakest members of a household, which served as the location for Christian gatherings.[[149]](#footnote-149) It was such factors as the entry to God’s Kingdom (malkut Yahweh), the redemption in Christ (in Greek, από-λύτρωσις, a term used for the liberation of slaves), the fact that through Baptism believers assumed a royal and priestly status (1st Peter 2:9; Ap. 1:6, 5:10; cf. Exodus 19:6), and last but not least, the equality of everyone in the Body of Christ, wherein differences of social status, race and gender (what determined the authority or lack thereof of people in the “pyramid” of Pax Romana), that caused the marginalized members of the Church and the Synagogue (cf. Celsus 3.44: poor, people of folk origin, idiots, slaves, women, and children)[[150]](#footnote-150) to misunderstand especially the radical baptismal paean of “οὐκ ἔνι /neither is there” in Galatians 3:28 as a declaration of independence from husband or master, and an occasion for overturning the social status quo. It is precisely this misunderstanding that Paul seeks to remedy with the qualifications that he introduces in 1st Corinthians 7:11 as well as in Romans 13:1 ff., where he points to God as the source of political authority, and by further citing the catalogues enumerated in Ephesians 5:22-6, 9; 1st Timothy 2:8-15, 6:1-2; Titus 2:1-10 (cf. 1st Peter 2: 13-3, 7). “For the Apostles, issues such as social justice or the abolition of slavery and inequality in general *weren’t the purpose* but the *consequence* of their preaching. What the latter aimed at was humankind’s salvation in Christ, which renders human nature God-like and makes human relations brotherly by sanctifying them. Despite the accomplishment of political or institutional freedom, humans may still be enslaved to passions and have “ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα τῆς κακίας τήν ἐλευθερίαν / yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil” (1st Peter 2:6); this, according to the New Testament, is the worst kind of slavery.”[[151]](#footnote-151)

 Eventually, the preaching of Paul, who followed the reverse trajectory from Alexander the Great (i.e. this time from Asia to Macedonia) and without the latter’s might or glory, managed to conquer the world by the blood of its martyrs—not a minor accomplishment, considering that the Pauline message concerned a barbarian doctrine and a Messiah “ἀνασκολοπισθέντα ἐν Παλαιστίνηι” (Lucianus, *De morte Peregrini,* 11.11), executed in the most disgraceful manner, without incurring the punishment of His crucifiers, as Celsus observes (2:1-50). Thus, on opposite ends from the Athenian Parthenon, a temple overlooked by the towering statue of the goddess Athena, the embodiment of Greek wisdom possessing a *military insignia*, Christians raised the Temple of God’s Wisdom, the Son of the Virgin, whose symbol is the Cross. This, according to R. Stark,[[152]](#footnote-152) was made possible because the “atheist” (as contemporaries called them) Christians showed remarkable resilience, philanthropy, and sacrifice when plagues and deadly epidemics struck their cities and provinces, and did not tend to withdraw or disappear like famous pagan philosophers and physicians, Galen included, did (one should also add here the flagrant failure of idol prophesies and prayers to incur healing and a positive outcome amidst the epidemics). Overall, early Christians did a remarkable job witnessing to Christian love in deed,[[153]](#footnote-153) a feat that earned them their permanent name of Christians (*Chrestianus*), from the Greek χρηστός, meaning calm and good, on top of the mocking nick name *Galileans* (cf. Justin, *First* *Apolology* 46,-3-4; Tertulian, *Apology* 3:5). The disciples of Christ drew their strength from the Eucharistic Meal, which alongside the Cross constituted the greatest scandal and stumbling block for the Greco-Roman setting, which countered vehemently both sides of the Christian faith (“οἰδιπόδειες μίξεις, θυέστεια δεῖπνα”).[[154]](#footnote-154) In the course of this meal, following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon 120 men and women, communion from the common Eucharistic Cup was supplemented by the common meals called αγάπες, and in this manner, equality and joint ownership was lived out without the imposition of a social program: “πάντες δὲ οἱ πιστεύσαντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινά͵ καὶ τὰ κτήματα καὶ τὰς ὑπάρξεις ἐπίπρασκον καὶ διεμέριζον αὐτὰ πᾶσιν καθότι ἄν τις χρείαν εἶχεν / All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all as any had need” (Acts 2:44-45). Worthy of note here is the fact that the term *communa* occurs for the first time in Acts.[[155]](#footnote-155)

 The Church canons and the stipulations of the Ecumenical Councils, in general, set the limits between life and death; they are the very means by which humans can be healed and saved from the Devil and sin, “μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοὸς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον / Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-- what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2), the resources for changing human nature from its initial state of mortal egocentrism and individualism to that of a free person, capable of loving and as a result thereof of defeating death, the sole immortal reality on earth.

**Assignment 4/ Chapter 2**

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Study Basil the Great’s Homily *Εις το πρόσεχε σεαυτώ*, isolate the characteristic principles of Christian self-knowledge, and compare/contrast these with the respective teaching of the Stoics. In addition, write a comment on the following text of St. Symeon the Theologian: “It so happened again, in our times, that St. Symeon, the devout Studite, never beheld any parts of the human body with shame nor was he embarrassed to see people naked, for people bear the whole of Christ in themselves and their bodies, and he thus saw every part of the body as belonging to Christ and indeed saw everyone who have been baptized as Christ Himself. Should you wish, you can become a part of His own body and in this manner everyone’s bodily parts shall become the bodily parts of Christ: all our so-called indecent shall be made decent by Him, decked with godly glory and beauty, just as we shall all become God, resembling Him with our whole bodies and each and every part of our bodies shall be pure Christ.” (See Symeon, *Θείων Ὕμνων Ἔρωτες*, Hymn 15, 205-208)

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**Summary**

 The psychoanalyst V. Frankl,[[156]](#footnote-156) who suffered incarceration at a Nazi concentration camp, came to the realization that those awaiting death obtain the psychological prospect of life and freedom not by a thirst for power or by a passion for lust, but by the feeling of being loved and of having a purpose in life. Based on his discovery, he practiced the so-called Logo-therapy. In Hellenistic times, the Stoic notion of apathy (presupposing the descent to one’s fragmented ego and the union with the impersonal cosmic logos) had proven to be just as useless to most people as power and pleasure were to inmates; the same holds for the Epicurean pursuit for pleasure, which was savored by the masses as a temporary gratification of the instincts. Jesus Christ, on the other hand, the Logos of God, through His Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection offered to the body and soul of the cosmopolitan denizen of the Greco-Roman world a redemption from the pain-guilt-death triptych, no less than the feeling that s/he is not the offspring of a lesser God but instead is, like everybody else, a child of God, the creator of all: “Οὐχ οὕτως ἐραστὴς μανικώτατος τῇ ἑαυτῶι ἐρωμένης ἐπιθυμεῖ ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἐφίεται ψυχῆς τῆς βουλομένης μετανοεῖν” (Νilus the Ascetic, *Letters* PG 79, 464). It was this God who through Jesus Christ took the salto mortale into our miserable reality, sacrificing Himself for the sake of humans, who can henceforth cry *Abba! Father*. It was especially the Resurrection of Christ which spread the certainty that “the human soul can eventually defeat natural necessities, social conditions, and history’s fetters.”[[157]](#footnote-157)

 Thanks to the engraftment into the Church through Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, regardless of race, gender, and social status, humans tasted the feeling of being adjoined to a divine-human Body, in which existence is justified not by an isolation into a watertight ghetto, religious or other, but when it relates lovingly to all people, as living icons of the God of love and freedom. Partaking of the Eucharist, in particular, whose rite is structurally reminiscent of ancient drama, one tastes not a mere catharsis, but deification itself. Thanks to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the observance of commands, one also is afforded the experience of the Trinitarian God, as well as a sense of his/her own uniqueness and that of everyone else: ”ὁ ἔχων τὰς ἐντολάς μου καὶ τηρῶν αὐτὰς ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν ὁ ἀγαπῶν με· ὁ δὲ ἀγαπῶν με ἀγαπηθήσεται ὑπὸ τοῦ Πατρός μου, κἀγὼ ἀγαπήσω αὐτὸν καὶ ἐμφανίσω αὐτῷ ἐμαυτόν / They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them” (John 14:21). Liberated from the perpetual cycle of pleasure and pain, Christians can open themselves to genuine joy, inasmuch as the passions suffered by men and women for the sake of the world can be seen as the labor pains leading to a new life. [[158]](#footnote-158)

 In the spiritual setting established by this personal relation both with God and brethren, the reborn human being is no longer performing duties and morally good deeds intended for self-assurance;[[159]](#footnote-159) instead, believers perform deeds of love, in the process transforming nature to a world and themselves from mortal individuals to persons worthy of eternity.

 When seen from the above perspective, Christianity is not a religion, but an experience of a renewed life. As theologian S. Sakkos[[160]](#footnote-160) indicates, “Neither the apostolic nor the early century Fathers ever called Christianity a ‘religion;’ instead, they referred to it as ‘faith’ or ‘teaching’ or as ‘Church,’ as it is called in the New Testament. And conversely, no other religion besides Christianity has ever been called ‘faith or ‘teaching’ or ‘Kingdom’ or ‘Church’ […] The reason why all ancient religions are only called religions, while the Christian faith alone is called ‘faith or ‘teaching’ or ‘Kingdom’ or ‘Church’ and not a religion, should now be evident enough. The quintessence of every religion other than Christianity is worship. Apart, perhaps, from the religion of ancient Israel, the rest contain nothing much other than rituals for worship. It was thus possible for their followers to be morally incontinent, immoral, and even downright criminals, provided they worshipped the gods of their religion, which itself could be replete with immorality. In Jewish worship, on the other hand, God as the true director of history, imposed monotheism and abstention from injustice and fornication. Nevertheless, the Christian faith is much more than worship and cannot be reduced to it. In fact, worship rid of timeworn types is a vital aspect of Christ’s Kingdom […] From this perspective, to have faith in God means to arrange all aspects of one’s life in accord with God’s revealed will, setting aside all private interests and counteracting one’s own natural forces. Further than that, it even amounts to overcoming the very drive to live for the sake of one’s God […] People, however, usually prefer religion over faith, because one finds it easier to climb up the “saved” sycamore of Zacchaeus, than to give half of one’s belongings to the poor.”[[161]](#footnote-161)

 As a last word, it is worth citing a relevant passage by theologian M. Farantos,[[162]](#footnote-162)who fittingly summarizes the “social” ethics of Christianity as follows: “Christian ethics flows from the basic principles of the evangelical faith, as these were preserved in their authentic spirit by the Orthodox Church, i.e. it is derived from the social character of the Trinitarian God, as a perichoretic communion of Persons bonded by love, and from the Church as a the Body of Christ, in a perichoretic relation of brethren amongst themselves in the same ‘body’.”

# APPENDIX

# Suggested Answers to the Assignments

Assignment 1/ Chapter 2

*Eros* is the spirit’s sensual love to discover the truth, to behold the pure idea of eternal beauty, which however does not respond to and does not love humankind. According to Plato this love is progressing from the biological (eros for the bodies) to the spiritual level (eros for the souls and values). Love in the New Testament is identified with God who sent His Son to humankind. According to the Johannine literature, Jesus Christ as God’s Son and Logos, takes true flesh, suffers for the world and crashes the eternal enemy of humankind, namely death. This experience of God's love is expressed by his faithful disciples in compliance with his commandments which are summarized in the offering of love to everyone: “Ὁ λέγων ἐν τῷ φωτὶ εἶναι καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῶν ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ ἐστὶν ἕως ἄρτι. ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ φωτὶ μένει καὶ σκάνδαλον ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν·ὁ δὲ μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ ἐστὶν καὶ ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ περιπατεῖ καὶ οὐκ οἶδεν ποῦ ὑπάγει, ὅτι ἡ σκοτία ἐτύφλωσεν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ/ Whoever says, I am in the light, while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness. Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness” (1st John 2:9-11).

Assignment 2/ Chapter 2

In his letter to Menoikeas, Epicurus accepts that God is a living being, immortal and happy, which is not concerned with the world. Therefore the opinion that the greatest calamities and benefits are derived from God is incorrect. Death is nothing because when we exist death is not with us and when death comes near us we do not exist. The release of the fear of death makes humankind’s life happy. The desires of man are divided into physical and meaningless. Our choice must be oriented toward health of body and peace of soul. Pleasure is needed when its deprivation causes pain. In Cleanthis’ hymn God is glorified as almighty and ruler of the world. The is no question of the creation of the world by Zeus but only that everything was decorated and put in order by him. A main attribute of God is the lightning, associated with the creative power of pure fire. Thus is common reason guided which runs everything. People, alone among the living beings come from the generation of Jupiter and constitute an effigy of the universe with a mission to celebrate the universal. A characteristic of fools is that they cannot capture the eternal meaning of everything and instead chase glory and pleasures.

Assignment 3/ Chapter 2

In modern biblical research there is a dispute on whether the former Pharisee and then Apostle in this text speaks for himself, for Adam (as representative of humankind), for Israel, or for Christians. Probably the first two theses are valid. Saul and then Paul, who was raised in the cosmopolitan center of the Mediterranean, namely the Tarsus, was not familiar with Jewish law as a child. When Paul entered his adolescence and officially became *the son of the Law* at the age of 12, his spiritual rebellion against the “paternal” provisions and the spiritual sin were awakened inside him. He knew the rules of the Torah but he absolutely could not implement them. Paul refers in particular to the tenth commandment *οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις*. According to Philippians 3, Galatians 1-2, 2nd Corinthians, Paul while typically irreproachable from a legal point of view, at the same time experienced a spiritual tragedy, as he was part of fallen humankind whose disrupted ego could not achieve perfection. According to Paul, the solution to this problem is the Holy Spirit, which illuminates humankind through the Sacraments and gives us the strength to feel united with Christ on the Cross and his Resurrection (see Romans 8). This is the feeling of combined joy and sadness that every Christian experiences, when despite bearing the stigmata of Christ s/he sacrifies him/her self for his/her neighbor and feels the victory over pain and death.

Assignment 4/ Chapter 2

This sermon by one of the Cappadocian Fathers has as a starting point the Deuteronomy’s passage: “πρόσεχε σεαυτῷ μὴ γένηται ῥῆμα κρυπτὸν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ἀνόμημα / Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking” (Deuteronomy 15, 9). According to P. Chrestou, he elaborated on the Delphic saying *Know thyself* and was influenced by the *Phaedo* and *Philebus* of Plato and Porphyry’s “*γνῶθι σαυτόν* / On Knowing thyself.” He develops in a practical way the Orthodox doctrine of self-awareness which leads to the knowledge of God. Moreover he refers to a spiritual battle against evil thoughts and to the accomplishment of the purity of mind, and to the avoidance of the confusion with perishable things and the orientation towards eternal salvation. Thus we can protect ourselves from arrogance as well as from frustration, and are led rather to the avoidance of condemnation and to a disposition of leniency toward others and of true repentance of ourselves. Thus is humankind led to the true knowledge and experience of God.

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1. K. D. Georgoulis, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας* (Athens: Papadimas Publications, 1994) 346-347. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Clement of Alexandia, *Ἐπιτομαί Θεοδότου* 78:2, P.G. 6:696A. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See P. H. Demetracopoulos, *Ethics* *Ε* 6, 8-14. According to G. Babiniotis’ *Λεξικό τῆς Νέας Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσας* (Athens: Lexicology Centre, 20052) 723-724: “from the beginning there has been a fundamental distinction between the meanings of ethos 'character' and ethos 'habit, custom'. Originally, ethos meant the house of people and animals, and later the inner spirit and character, ie. the permanent and stable way of acting logically for free human beings. Today a distinction is made between morals, ethics and morality: Ethos is the deepest formation and cultivation of human nature enabling one to behave reasonably in moderation and dignity, respecting oneself and others. Manners are the behaviors that grow in groups of people (communities, peoples and nations) through the way of life, beliefs, values, history and cultivation over longer periods of time. Morality is often accompanied by customs, habits and traditions of a people who are compatible with the formation of morals. The term morality originating in philosophy indicates "study of morals (value, attitudes, behavior, etc.) of a society and thus the system of rules of thought and behavior that regulates the actions and attitudes of a society at a certain place and time.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For other questions pertaining to Ethics, see C. Terezis, *Θέματα Εἰσαγωγῆς στήν Φιλοσοφία* (Patras: University of Patras, 2005) 142ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Aristotle makes a statement on *ethical theory* (see Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, 89). According to the philosopher from Stageira in Northern Greece, the highest ethical value is *εὐδαιμονία* **/** *happiness* (see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* 1097a). The term *moral* (mos, mores) has been first used by Cicero (see Cicero, *De Fato* 1; *Philosophia Moralis*). Tertullian (+220) is the first Christian author who writes essays on ethics: *De spectaculis*, *De corona*, *De patientia*, *De poenitentia*, *De virginibus velandis*, *De exhortatione castitatis*, *De pudicitia*. Ιn 361, Basil of Caesarea published the *Ἀρχή τῶν Ἠθικῶν* (see Basil of Caesarea, *Ἀρχή τῶν Ἠθικῶν*/*Initium Moralium*, PG 31, 699-888), that comprises eighty rules for the Christian life. Ambrose of Milan has written the first systematic monograph on Christian Ethics in 391 (see Ambrose of Milan, *De officiis Ministrorum,* PL 16, 25-188) following Cicero’s *De officiis*. Cf. also, Augustine’s, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Mainichaeorum*, 32, 1309-1. See Martin Honecker, *Einführung in die Theologische Ethik* (Berlin-New York: De gruyter, 1990) 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Arthur Scopenhauer, *Preisschrift über die Grundlagen der Moral*, ed. P. Deussen, Bd. 3 (1912) 573. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. This catalogue of moral values derives from the study of S. Tsitsigkos, *Τό Χρυσοστομικό Ἦθος. Οἱ Αρετές Κατά τόν Ἰωάννη Χρυσόστομο* (Thessalonica: Pournaras Publications, 2001) 16-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. E. Papanoutsos, *Ἠθική* (Athens: Ikaros Publications, 1970) 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Between the 6th and 4th centuries there emerged the so-called axial period of world history, as a result of crises that occurred simultaneously in China, India, Israel and Greece, which prompted the response of such distinguished personalities as Lao Tse Confucius, Buddha-Mahavira, Prophets Jeremiah-Ezekiel, Pre-Socratic philosophers, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle. These persons criticize the established religion and especially the priesthood. It is striking that Socrates and Gkaontama Gautama (Buddha Enlightened-Nephon) and Confucius (551-479 BC) are turning their interest to human beings. The latter, faced with the prospect of old age, disease and death following years of spiritual exercise declares that a) One conquers the truth by avoiding extremes, and b) that life is only pain - pain (*ntoukka*) caused by desire for pleasure and vain things, i.e. by a thirst for pleasures. The *epithymia / desire* is born of ignorance (*avitza*), which believes in the reality and the importance of apparent ephemeral beings and things. Confucius emphasizes the meaning of virtue, love and compassion (*yen*) which realizes the unity of man with heaven and earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See Xenophon, *Ἀπομνημονεύματα*, 1:16 and in Xenophon, *Memorabilia. Oeconomicus. Symposium. Apology*, engl. trans. by E. C. Marchant and O. J. Todd, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 168 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1997) 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “While in the first year of its life the child develops relationships with the surrounding environment, in the second year it acquires the first sense of the correct and error. At the fourth year of its life the child may explain why something is right or wrong. However the child’s judgment is self-centered. The first stage of morality is formed when the children can come to the place of their parents and teachers, who at this (stage) are pundits for them. For the children, evil is automatically punished and good is automatically rewarded (as it happens in the fairy tales). Thus the child feels that it must obey to avoid punishment. In the second stage (7-8 years) a sense of justice is developed: ‘what you do to me, I will do to you.’ "If someone gets knocked, s/he must repay the batter. However, in the third stage, if the person that beats is a friend, the retaliation does not come automatically but is preceded by a momentary reflection.” Cf. G. Kroustalakis, *Διαπαιδαγώγηση. Πορεία Ζωῆς* (Athens: Danias Publications, 2005) 337ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. D. Lypourlis and D. Moraitis, *Φιλοσοφικός Λόγος* (Athens: OEBD) 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See Aristotle, *Τέχνης Ρητορικῆς*, I, 1360b and in Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, engl. trans. by J. H. Freese, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 193 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1926) 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Aristotle, *Τέχνης Ρητορικῆς*, I, 1362a and in Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, engl. trans. by J. H. Freese, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 193 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1926) 59, 61. Cf. Plato, *Philebus*, 20d. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See Homer, *Ἰλιάδος*, 6. 208-209 and in Homer, *The Iliad*, engl. trans. by A. T. Murray, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 170 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1924) 277. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See Plato, *Πολιτεία, 9:585d* and in Plato, *The Republic ΙΙ,* engl. trans. by P. Shorey, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 276 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1935) 389. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Cf. Euripides, *Fragment*, 1007. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See Plato, *Κρατύλος*, 412d and in Plato, *Cratylus. Parmenides. Greater Hippias. Lesser Hippias*, engl. trans. H. N. Fowler, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 167 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1926) 101*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. ##  See Plutarch, *Τῶν Ἑπτά Σοφῶν Συμπόσιον*, 161 and in Plutarch, *Moralia II.* *How to Profit by One's Enemies. On Having Many Friends. Chance. Virtue and Vice. Letter of Condolence to Apollonius. Advice About Keeping Well. Advice to Bride and Groom. The Dinner of the Seven Wise Men. Superstitio*, engl. trans. F. C. Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 222 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1928) 435.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Cf. Hesiod’s, *Works and Days.* [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See Plato, *Protagoras*, 322-323. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See Herodotus, *Historiae*, Book 7 *Polymnia*, 102, 104, and in Herodotus, *The Persian Wars III*, Books V-VII, engl. trans. by A. Godley, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 119 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1922) 405, 409. Cf. R. Bultmann, *Das Urchristentum* (München and Zürich, 1985) 169-181. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Plato, *Republic*, 310a. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See W. Jäger*, Παιδεία*, greek trans. G. Verroios (Athens: Paideia Publications, 1968) 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. See Lucian, *Περί τοῦ ἐνυπνίου, ἤτοι Βίος Λουκιανοῦ,* 1:5 and in Lucian, *Vol. III* *The Dream, or Lucian’s Career*, engl. trans. by A. Harmon, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 130 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1921) 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. See Plato, *Πρωταγόρας*, *Protagoras*, 326b and in Plato, *IV Laches. Protagoras. Meno. Euthydemus*, engl. trans. by W. R. M. Lamb, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 165 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1924) 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. See Aristotle, *Περί Ποιητικῆς*, 1449b:27-28 and in Aristotle, *Poetics. Longinus On the Sublime. Demetrius On Style*, engl. trans. by S. Halliwell, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 199 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1995) 47, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Cf. J. Parisis and N. Parisis, *Λεξικό Λογοτεχνικῶν Ὅρων* (Athens: ΟΕΔΒ) 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. #  See Sophocles, *Ἀντιγόνη,* 332 and in Sophocles, *Oedipus the King. Oedipus At Colonus. Antigone*, engl. trans. by F. Storr, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 20 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912) 341.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See Xenophanes, *Fragment* 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Cf. Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. See Didymus, *Epitome*, 59:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. See Protagoras 480-411 BCE. This famous statement derives from the lost book entitled *Ἀλήθεια ἤ καταβάλλοντες λόγοι.* [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Th. Pelegrines, *Οἱ Πέντε Ἐποχές τῆς Φιλοσοφίας* (Athens: Hellinika Grammata Publications, 19983) 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Κ. Georgoulis*, Ἱστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας*, 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. See F. Skoinas, “Ἑλληνισμός καί Χριστιανισμός: ρήξη ἤ ζεύξη;” *Synaxis* 69 (1999) 33. He also points out: “Nietzsche is fairer when he attributes to Plato the ‘rationalization’ and ‘moralization’ of ancient Greek spirit. Indeed, he calls Plato a ‘curse of Europe’ and a Christian before Christ, accusing him (Plato) for the degeneration of the ancient spirit and the alienation of the European human being that originates with him.” [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See Aristotle, [Nicomachean Ethics](http://www.google.gr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FNicomachean_Ethics&ei=DNgAVOHHMcagyAPuvYHABQ&usg=AFQjCNGidZNcaHBhaHxxHvuvIEmrLWNweg&bvm=bv.74115972,d.bGE) 1098.1.21. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. #  See Sophocles, *Ἀντιγόνη*, 523 and in Sophocles, *Antigone. The Women of Trachis. Philoctetes. Oedipus at Colonus,* engl. trans. by H. Lloyd-Jones, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 21 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994) 51.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. See Aristotle, *Ἠθικῶν Νικομαχειῶν*, 1107 and in Aristotle, *The* [Nicomachean Ethics](http://www.google.gr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FNicomachean_Ethics&ei=DNgAVOHHMcagyAPuvYHABQ&usg=AFQjCNGidZNcaHBhaHxxHvuvIEmrLWNweg&bvm=bv.74115972,d.bGE), II 15-16, engl. trans. by H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 73 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1926) 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See Aristotle, *Ἠθικῶν Νικομαχειῶν*, 1103 and in Aristotle, *The* [Nicomachean Ethics](http://www.google.gr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FNicomachean_Ethics&ei=DNgAVOHHMcagyAPuvYHABQ&usg=AFQjCNGidZNcaHBhaHxxHvuvIEmrLWNweg&bvm=bv.74115972,d.bGE), II 15-16, engl. trans. by H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 73 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1926) 71. Thus the following triads are formed: timidity-prowess-impudently / anesthesia-wisdom-debauchery / unfreedom-eleftheriotis-profligacy / analgesia-gentleness-orgilotis / loss-righteous-profit / dislike, friendship, flattery / evitheia-wisdom-cunning. From the axiological point of view, virtue is extremity, something that could not be further developed. See Aristotle, [Nicomachean Ethics](http://www.google.gr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FNicomachean_Ethics&ei=DNgAVOHHMcagyAPuvYHABQ&usg=AFQjCNGidZNcaHBhaHxxHvuvIEmrLWNweg&bvm=bv.74115972,d.bGE), 1107, 1.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. See Aristotle, op. cit. 1153, 1.13. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. See Aristotle, op. cit. 1155, 1.22. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. See Aristotle, *Art of* *Rhetoric,* 1395a. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. See Aristotle, *Ἠθικῶν Νικομαχειῶν*, 1177.31 and in Aristotle, *The* [Nicomachean Ethics](http://www.google.gr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FNicomachean_Ethics&ei=DNgAVOHHMcagyAPuvYHABQ&usg=AFQjCNGidZNcaHBhaHxxHvuvIEmrLWNweg&bvm=bv.74115972,d.bGE), X.vii.8, engl. trans. by H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 73 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1926) 617. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. See *Aristotle, Ἠθικῶν Μεγάλων,* 2:11.6-9 and in Aristotle, *Metaphysics II. Books 10-14. Oeconomica Magna Moralia,* engl. trans. by H. Tredennick, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 287 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1935) 649, 651. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. See H. Papachrysostomos, *Ἄπαντα*, Vol. 1 (Nicosia, 1999) 46ff. He also stresses that any myth is occasioned by observing the natural phenomena, which are personified and animated in it. This happens in the tragedy of Oedipus. Laius was the deity of darkness. Jocasti was the *mauve aurora*. From the marriage of darkness and the dawn a solar hero Oedipus is born. His name symbolizes the wide disk of the sun behind the black clouds, which it eliminates. However, while being married to Dawn, the sun as is born in the morning kills his Father (*darkness)* and at the end of the day becomes blind. The second stage of the mythological creation is the outbreak of the moral phenomena. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. See Sophocles, *Οἰδίπους Τύραννος,* 881 and in Sophocles, *Oedipus the King. Oedipus At Colonus. Antigone*, engl. trans. by F. Storr, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 20 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912) 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Cf. Cicero, *De finibus* III,67. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. V. Stogiannos, *Ἀποκάλυψη καί Πολιτική, Ἑρμηνευτικά Μελετήματα* (Thessalonica: Pournaras Publications, 1988) 561-591, 570. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Th. Pelegrinis, *Οἱ Πέντε Ἐποχές τῆς Φιλοσοφίας,* 104-105: “During the Hellenistic period, philosophy ceased to be the guiding light to the few intrepid seekers of the truth. It has become rather a portable hospital that tends to those who are struggling in life, offering as it does psychological assistance to the weak and wounded. In the philosophical trends of this period and in the centuries that followed, unlike the systems of classical philosophy that have a theoretical texture, emphasis is given on the comforting and practical assistance to man, as opposed to aiming only at the definition of truth and virtue. By extension, philosophy now intends to provide behavioral patterns through which people's lives could be relieved of anxiety, insecurity, and unhappiness.” S. Agouridis in his *Ἱστορία τῶν χρόνων τῆς Καινῆς Διαθήκης. Ἑλλάδα Ρώμη Ἰουδαία: Ἱστορικό καί πνευματικό ὑπόβαθρο γιά τή μελέτη τῆς Καινῆς Διαθήκης* (Thessalonica: Pournaras Publications, 19854) 142, points out that: “the need for treatment, felt by people in the Hellenistic period, is beautifully captured by Seneca. He talks about his contemporary world as a vast hospital. In Lucilius, who wants to visit him in his insulation, in order to make a progress, Seneca writes: ‘You would not find here any doctor, but a sick man’ (Ep. 68:9). In another letter he also writes: ‘I discuss with you our common suffering and I share medicine with you as we both are inmates of the same hospital’ (Ep. 27, 1). General and deep is the awareness of sin: ‘*Peccavimus Omnes*, for some, regarding serious things while for others about plain matters, for some intentionally, for others on the spur of the moment or because they were pushed aside by the wickedness of other human beings. With our innocence against our will and despite sticking to it. Not only did we do bad things so far, but we will continue to do worst things until the end of our life’ (*De Clementia* VI). Seneca considers the body as a source of suffering and death as a birthday of eternity. In order to be redeemed in this life, Seneca uses the ‘art of non-sorrow’.” [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Cf. Diogenes Laertius: “καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τέλος λέγομεν εἶναι τοῦ μακαρίως ζῆν· ταύτην γὰρ ἀγαθὸν πρῶτον καὶ συγγενικὸν ἔγνωμεν͵ καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτης καταρχόμεθα πάσης αἱρέσεως καὶ φυγῆς καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτην καταντῶμεν ὡς κανόνι τῷ πάθει πᾶν ἀγαθὸν κρίνοντες / Wherefore we call pleasure the alpha and omega of a blessed life. Pleasure is our first and kindred good. It is the starting point of every choice and of every aversion, and to it we come back, inasmuch as we make feeling the rule by which to judge of every good thing.” See Diogenes Laertius, *Βίων καί Γνωμῶν τῶν ἐν Φιλοσοφίαι εὐκοκιμησάντων τῶν εἰς δέκα*, Βιβλίο 10: *Ἐπίκουρος*, 10.128-129 and in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Book X: *Epicurus*, engl. trans. by R. Hicks, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 185 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1925) 655. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. See Diogenes Laertius, *Βίων καί Γνωμῶν τῶν ἐν Φιλοσοφίαι εὐκοκιμησάντων τῶν εἰς δέκα*, Βιβλίο 10: *Ἐπίκουρος*, 10:131 and in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Book X: *Epicurus*, op. cit. 657. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Cf. J. Sirinelli, *Τά Παιδιά τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου. Ἑλληνική Γραμματολογία τῶν Ἑλληνιστικών, τῶν ρωμαϊκῶν χρόνων καί τῆς Ὕστερης Ἀρχαιότητας 334 π.Χ.-519 μ.Χ.* (Athens: Zacharopoulos Publications, 2001) 73-76: “For the Epicureans, there is no Provision or Ideas that act as standards. There is no Creator of the universe, nor determinism [...] There are gods, but they do not care about the world and the human beings. Remote as they are from human beings they confidently sit in empty spaces inserted between the infinite worlds; they are enjoying their bliss and their immortality, and they are ignoring us. The Soul indeed exists. It consists of small pieces of material and fire, wind and breath all together. It is a very fine material and agile that is scattered throughout the human body. The highest good for Epicurus is the wisdom that marvelously combines pleasure and virtues in the wise man. Here the impact of the atomic theory of Democritus is evident.” [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Cf. Aristippus of Cyrene (end of 5th cent.). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Cf. Diogenes Laertius: “Ἀναλογιστέον δὲ ὡς τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν αἱ μέν εἰσι φυσικαί͵ αἱ δὲ κεναί. καὶ τῶν φυσικῶν αἱ μὲν ἀναγκαῖαι͵ αἱ δὲ φυσικαὶ μόνον· τῶν δὲ ἀναγκαίων αἱ μὲν πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν εἰσὶν ἀναγκαῖαι͵ αἱ δὲ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος ἀοχλησίαν͵ αἱ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ ζῆν. τούτων γὰρ ἀπλανὴς θεωρία πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν καὶ φυγὴν ἐπανάγειν οἶδεν ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος ὑγίειαν καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀταραξίαν͵ ἐπεὶ τοῦτο τοῦ μακαρίως ζῆν ἐστι τέλος / We must also reflect that of desires some are natural, others are groundless; and that of the natural some are necessary as well as natural, and some natural only. And of the necessary desires some are necessary if we are to be happy some if the body is to be rid of uneasiness, some if we are even to live. He who has a clear and certain understanding of these things will direct every preference and aversion toward securing health of body and tranquility of mind, seeing that this is the sum and end of a blessed life.” See Diogenes Laertius, *Βίων καί Γνωμῶν τῶν ἐν Φιλοσοφίαι εὐκοκιμησάντων τῶν εἰς δέκα*, Βιβλίο 10: *Ἐπίκουρος*, 10:127-128 and in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Book X: *Epicurus*, op. cit. 653. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. See Philodemus, *Herculaneum Papyrus 1005*, 4:9-14, and in B. Inwood and L. Gerson, *The Epicurus Reader. Selected writings and Testimonia* (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994) vi. The human happiness is achieved when man is not upset by pain, political adventures, or metaphysical concerns. Cf. Th. Pelegrinis, *Οἱ Πέντε Ἐποχές τῆς Φιλοσοφίας,* 108: “Concerning death, Epicurus has noted: When we live there is no death, and when it appear, we do not exist. Why, therefore, fear death? (Epicurus, *Epistle to Menoikeas* 125-126). The last words of his life were: ‘τὴν μακαρίαν ἄγοντες καὶ ἅμα τελευτῶντες ἡμέραν τοῦ βίου ἐγράφομεν ὑμῖν ταυτί· στραγγουρικά τε παρηκολούθει καὶ δυσεντερικὰ πάθη ὑπερβολὴν οὐκ ἀπολείποντα τοῦ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς μεγέθους· ἀντιπαρετάττετο δὲ πᾶσι τούτοις τὸ κατὰ ψυχὴν χαῖρον ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν γεγονότων ἡμῖν διαλογισμῶν μνήμῃ· σὺ δὲ ἀξίως τῆς ἐκ μειρακίου παραστάσεως πρὸς ἐμὲ καὶ φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιμελοῦ τῶν παίδων / I write to you on this blessed day, which at the same time is the last day of my life. My pains accompanying dysentery and urinary blockages cannot be surpassed in their severity; yet countering all that is the joy in my soul at the memory of our past conversations. As is worthy of one who since childhood has been devoted to me and to philosophy, please take care of the children’ [Epicurus, *Epistle to Idomeneus,* 138 and in Epicurus, *Selected Fragments*, engl. trans. by P. Saint-Adre ([Monadnock Valley Press](http://www.monadnock.net/), 2011) at <http://www.monadnock.net/epicurus/fragments.html>]. On the 20th of each month a memorial symposium was held celebrating his friend Metrodorus. Therefore according to some historians the Epicureans are called *Eikadeis*/ *Eikadistai*. After his death Epicurus was honored as a Saviour.” [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Book X: *Epicurus*, 10:121. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. See Epicurus, *Προσφώνησις* 41*:* “γελᾶν ἅμα δεῖ καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ οἰκονομεῖν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς οἰκειώμασι χρῆσθαι καὶ μηδαμῇ λήγειν τὰς ἐκ τῆς ὀρθῆς φιλοσοφίας φωνὰς ἀφιέντας. Γελᾶν ἅμα δεῖ καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ οἰκονομεῖν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς οἰκειώμασι χρῆσθαι / One must laugh and seek wisdom and tend to one’s home life and use one’s other goods, and always recount the pronouncements of true philosophy” in P. Von der Mühll*, Epicuri Epistulae Tres et Ratae Sententiae a Laertio Diogene Servatae: Accedit Gnomologium Epicureum Vaticanum* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1922) 64 and in *Vatican Sayings*, engl. trans. by P. Saint-Adre ([Monadnock Valley Press](http://www.monadnock.net/), 2010) at http:// [www.monadnock.net/](http://www.monadnock.net/)epicurus/vatican-sayings.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Lucretius (98-51 BCE.) and Horatius (65-8 BCE) place themselves in the group of Epicureans. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:32: “φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αὔριον γὰρ ἀποθνῄσκομεν / Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. According to K. Georgoulis, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας*, 355: “Edward Norden was the first who argued that under the name of his father Zeno *Μνασέα* the Hebrew name *Manasis* was hiding. This is conjecture, since the homeland of Zeno was Citium in Cyprus, which had been occupied by Phoenician settlers. According to the Emile Bregie, the god of the Stoics is neither an Olympian nor Dionysus. He is god who lives in communion with people and reasonable beings, over whom it has proactive governance. He is a worker and creator of the world in mind and his plan is captured in advance. Virtue is neither the theory recommended by Plato nor the Aristotelian ‘wisdom’ but the acceptance of the divine work and the cooperation in this by understanding. However, it is evident that the Stoics derive their theology from the pre-Socratic philosophers.” [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. In the Middle Stoa they are divided in: *προηγούμενα* and *ἀπροηγούμενα*, *ἄξια* and *ἀπάξια.* [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. According to Diogenes Laertius: “Φασὶ δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν εἶναι ὀκταμερῆ· μέρη γὰρ αὐτῆς τά τε πέντε αἰσθητήρια καὶ τὸ φωνητικὸν μόριον καὶ τὸ διανοητικόν͵ ὅπερ ἐστὶν αὐτὴ ἡ διάνοια͵ καὶ τὸ γεννητικόν. ἐκ δὲ τῶν ψευδῶν ἐπιγίνεσθαι τὴν διαστροφὴν ἐπὶ τὴν διάνοιαν͵ ἀφ΄ ἧς πολλὰ πάθη βλαστάνειν καὶ ἀκαταστασίας αἴτια. ἔστι δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ πάθος κατὰ Ζήνωνα ἡ ἄλογος καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ψυχῆς κίνησις ἢ ὁρμὴ πλεονάζουσα / According to the Stoics there is an eight-fold division of the soul: the five senses, the faculty of speech, the intellectual faculty, which is the mind itself, and the generative faculty, being all parts of the soul***.*** Now from the falsehood there results perversion, which extends to the mind; and from this perversion arise many passions of emotions, which are causes of instability. Passion, or emotion, is defined by Zeno as an irrational and unnatural movement in the soul, or again as impulse in excess***.***” See Diogenes Laertius, *Βίων καί Γνωμῶν τῶν ἐν Φιλοσοφίαι εὐκοκιμησάντων τῶν εἰς δέκα*, *Ἱστοριῶν Ζ’,* Κεφ. Α’: *Ζήνων*, 110-111 and in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Book VII: *Zeno*, op. cit. 215, 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. *Logos* is considered by Stoics as *τονική δύναμις*, *λόγος σπερματικός τοῦ φυσικο****ύ******ἔ****μψυχου Ζώου*, of the world. According to J. Sirinelli’s *Τά Παιδιά τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου,* 80, Stoicism: “is a religious vision of the universe. The god of the Stoics is present in the tiniest part of the world, unlike the gods of the Epicureans that were completely cut off from it. God is a breath or fire and is uniform throughout the Universe. It is the connective tissue of diverse nature, the power of that, the tone through which the cosmic system maintains coherence. That is why the universe looks like a huge living organism governed by the principle of compassion.” [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. See Cleanthes, *Hymn to Zeus*, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. See Epictetus, *Ἀρριανοῦ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διατριβῶν*, Βιβλίον Α’, Κεφ. 9:6-8 and in Epistetus, *The Discources as Reported by Arrian, the Manual, and Fragments*, Vol. 1, Book 1, Chapt. IX, engl. trans. by W. A. Oldfather, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 131 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1925) 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. In Epictetus, *Discourses*, the terms *ἐλευθερία* / *freedom* and *ἐλεύθερος* / *free man* occur one hundred thirty times. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Cf. Epictetus, *Discourses*, 4.10.14-16: “Ἂν μετὰ τούτων με ὁ θάνατος καταλάβῃ͵ ἀρκεῖ μοι ἂν δύνωμαι πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀνατεῖναι τὰς χεῖρας͵ εἰπεῖν ὅτι ‘ἃς ἔλαβον ἀφορμὰς παρὰ σοῦ πρὸς τὸ αἰσθέσθαι σου τῆς διοικήσεως καὶ ἀκολουθῆσαι αὐτῇ͵ τούτων οὐκ ἠμέλησα· οὐ κατῄσχυνά σε τὸ ἐμὸν μέρος. ἰδοῦ͵ πῶς κέχρημαι ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν͵ ἰδοῦ͵ πῶς ταῖς προλήψεσιν. μή ποτέ σε ἐμεμψάμην͵ μή τι τῶν γινομένων τινὶ δυ σηρέστησα ἢ ἄλλως γενέσθαι ἠθέλησα͵ μή τι τὰς σχέσεις παρέβην; χάριν ἔχω ὅ με σὺ ἐγέννησας͵ χάριν ἔχω͵ ὧν ἔδωκας· ἐφ΄ ὅσον ἐχρησάμην τοῖς σοῖς͵ ἀρκεῖ μοι. πάλιν αὐτὰ ἀπόλαβε καὶ κατάταξον εἰς ἣν θέλεις χώραν. σὰ γὰρ ἦν πάντα͵ σύ μοι αὐτὰ δέδωκας.’ οὐκ ἀρκεῖ οὕτως ἔχοντα ἐξελθεῖν; καὶ τίς βίων κρείττων ἢ εὐσχημονέστερος τοῦ οὕτως ἔχοντος͵ ποία δὲ καταστροφὴ εὐδαιμονεστέρα; / If death finds me occupied with these matters, it is enough for me if I can lift up my hands unto God, and say, ‘The faculties which I received from Thee to enable me to understand Thy governance and to follow it, these I have not neglected; I have dishonored Thee as far as in me lay. Behold how I have dealt with my senses, behold how I have dealt with my preconceptions. Have I ever blamed Thee? Have I been discontented with any of these things which happen, or wished it to have been otherwise? Have I at all violated my relationships with others? For that Thou didst beget me I am grateful; for what Thou hast given I am grateful also. The Length of time for which I have had the use of Thy gifts is enough for me. Take them back again and assign them to what place Thou wilt, for they were all Thine, and Thou gravest them me.’ It is not enough for a man to take his departure from the world in this state of mind? And what among all the kinds of life is superior to this, or more seemly than his who is so minded, and what kind of end is more fortunate?”See Epictetus, *Ἀρριανοῦ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διατριβῶν*, Βιβλίον Δ’, Κεφ. 10:14-16 and in Epistetus, *The Discources as Reported by Arrian, the Manual, and Fragments*, Vol. 2, Book IV, Chapt. Χ, engl. trans. by W. A. Oldfather, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 218 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1928) 401, 403. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Cf. Diogenes Laertius: “Δία μὲν γὰρ φησὶ δι’ ὅν τὰ πάντα / They give the name *Dia* (*Δία*) because all things are due to (*διά*) him.” See Diogenes Laertius, *Βίων καί Γνωμῶν τῶν ἐν Φιλοσοφίαι εὐκοκιμησάντων τῶν εἰς δέκα*, *Ἱστοριῶν Ζ’,* Κεφ. Α’: *Ζήνων*, 147 and in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Book VII: *Zeno*, op. cit. engl. trans. by R. Hicks, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 185 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1925) 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. As P. Demetropoulos in “Ἠθική-Ἦθος,” *Θρησκευτική καί Ἠθική Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία,* Vol. 6 (1965) 10*,* underlines: “it is impossible for any impersonal kindness to impose absolute liability on man from above. For, man as a person is incomparably greater than any impersonal existence. Only goodness as a property of the personal God can do this. In that sense, we have to accept that without God all moral values as well as moral law itself would be deprived of their metaphysical foundation. Thus, by necessity moral values, moral law, moral order, moral obligation and the voice of our conscience all require God as a person, pointing as they do to His existence.” [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. See Epictetus, *Manual*, 7:17, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. See Marcus Aurelius, *To Myself*, 7:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. J.Holzner, *Παῦλος* (Athens: Damaskos Publications, 2010) 306. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. See C. Oikonomou, “Αὐτάρκης καί Αὐτάρκεια στούς Στωϊκούς καί στόν Ἀπ. Παῦλο,” in his *Βιβλικές Μελέτες γιά τόν Ἀρχέγονο Χριστιανισμό* (Thessalonica: Pournaras Publications, 1998) 231:

“This model is approached by Socrates and Diogenes. The pridefulness is appropriate for the wise man: ‘Ὥσπερ τῷ Διὶ προσήκει σεμνύνεσθαι ἐπ΄ αὐτῷ τε καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ μέγα φρονεῖν͵ καί͵ εἰ δεῖ οὕτως εἰπεῖν͵ ὑψαυχεῖν καὶ κομᾶν καὶ μεγαληγορεῖν ἀξίως βιοῦντι μεγαληγορίας· οὕτω τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς πᾶσι ταῦτα προσήκει͵ κατ΄ οὐθὲν προεχομένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Διός’ / As it befits Zeus to glory in himself and in his way of life and to be haughty and, if it must be said, to carry his head high and plume himself and boast, since he lives in a way worth boasting about, so does this befit all good men, since they are in no wise surpassed by Zeus’ [seePlutarch, *Περί Στωϊκῶν ἐναντιωμάτων*, 13, and in Plutarch, *Moralia* XIII. Part 2. *Stoic Essays*, engl. trans. by H. Cherniss, Loeb Classical Library 470 (Cambridge: Harvard Univeristy Press, 1976) 455, 457]. It should be noted that according to the Stoics wickedness serves to emphasize as a contrast the brightness of virtue, and imperfection the beauty of perfection (Plutarch, *Ethics*, 1065).” This model was incarnated by Socrates and Diogenes. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. C. Oikonomou, op. cit. 496. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. See Κ. Siamakis, *Ἐξωχριστιανικές Μαρτυρίες γιά τό Χριστό καί τούς Χριστιανούς* (Thessalonica, 1995) 27-28. 43-44: “One anonymous commentator believes that Epictetus has read the Gospels and even passages ‘ἐάν τις σέ ραπίση / if someone slaps you’ and ‘ἀγαπᾶτε τούς ἐχθρούς ἡμῶν / love our enemies.” In Nicopolis there was actually a Christian community (Titus 3:12). Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD) in his work *Εἰς Ἑαυτόν* believes that Christians open themselves to martyrdom due to a sterile objection rather than in a cautious and humble way that could persuade the other without a dramatic performance. This emperor, although a Stoic, did not hesitate to become one of the cruelest persecutors and slaughters of the Christians. He even established a legislation allowing the squealers against Christians to share the property of their victims together with the emperor’s personal fund (cf. Επιστολή των εν Βιέννη και Λουγδούνω δούλων Χριστούπρος τους εν Ασία και Φρυγία αδελφούς).” [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. See Epictetus, *Ἀρριανοῦ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διατριβῶν*, Βιβλίον Δ’, Κεφ. 7:6-7 and in Epistetus, *The Discources as Reported by Arrian, the Manual, and Fragments*, Vol. 2, Book IV, Chapt. VII, engl. trans. by W. A. Oldfather, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 218 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1928) 363. Also according to K. Georgoulis, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας*, 494: “in the history of Greek philosophy, it is noted that in a Swiss sanatorium for neuropathic patients, the *Handbook of Epictetus* had a beneficial effect on restoring the health of patients suffering from neurotic psychoses. Epictetus himself addressed all people irrespective of race and country as brothers in suffering, burning as he was for the desire to heal. He compared the Philosopher’s School as a souls’ infirmary. As patients exit the infirmary cured but somewhat in pain because of the therapy, so must outgoing and cured pupils leave the school of the philosopher aching, because together with the vices of which they were healed, they were forced to deprive themselves of the pleasures with which the vices lured them: ‘ἰατρεῖόν ἐστιν͵ ἄνδρες͵ τὸ τοῦ φιλοσόφου σχολεῖον · οὐ δεῖ ἡσθέντας ἐξελθεῖν͵ ἀλλ΄ ἀλγήσαντας. ἔρχεσθε γὰρ οὐχ ὑγιεῖς / men, the lecture-room of the philosopher is a hospital; you ought not to walk out it in pleasure, but in pain. For you are not well when you come(Epictetus, *Discourses*, 3:23.30). In contrast, in December 1970 the United States Department of Health banned the book entitled *Suicide: Stoic therapy* by J. Xenakis, Professor at the University of Louisiana, because some students having access to this book committed suicide. Xenakis himself committed suicide at the age of 53.” [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Cf. G. Patronos, *Ἡ Θέωση τοῦ Ἀνθρώπου ὑπό τό φῶς τῶν ἐσχατολογικῶν ἀντιλήψεων τῆς Ὀρθόδοξης Θεολογίας* (Athens: Domos Publications, 1995) 18-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. See S. Torallas-Tovar, “Egyptian Burial Practices in Late Antiquity: The Case of Christian Mummy Labels,” in *Cultures in Contact. Transfer of Knowledge in the Mediterranean Context. Selected Papers*, eds. S. Torallas-Tovar and J. P. Monferrer-Sala (Córdoba, Spain: CNERU and Oriens Academic; Beyrouth, Liban: CEDRAC, 2013) 13, note 43. The ceremony of initiation into the Mithras’ mysteries was known as "tafrovolio." The candidate was placed into a pit, and above him the sacred animal bull of Mithras was slaughtered. With the blood of the bull the candidate was baptized, and was regarded as reborn in eternity (*renovatus aeternitatis*). [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. See M. Albrecht *Ἱστορία τῆς Ρωμαϊκῆς Λογοτεχνίας* (Herakleion, GR.: University of Crete Publications 2002) 1041. He also points out: “In his theoretical thought the educated Roman follows the *theologia rationalis* or *naturalis* with its naturalistic worldview that mostly tends to an abstract monotheism. In his practical behavior he is attuned to the state religion -*theologia civilis*- which is considered rather unreflectively a cornerstone of state organization. On one hand, the state religion manifests a strict and archaic ritual and on the other hand it praises the respective monarch. Finally, in the world of poetic imagination the educated Roman continues to prefer the *theologia fabulosa*: i.e. myth and anthropomorphic polytheism, even though he is aware enough that the old tripartite view of the world may certainly be acceptable in terms of psychology, but from a scientific it is already outdated.” See M. Albrecht, op. cit. 745. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. In the Old Testament, the absence the terms: *κόσμος, φύσις, νόμος φύσεως* is quite telling*.* By contrast the term (*olam*)refers to space and time. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. According to Ulrich Duchrow’s paper presented at a conference in Thessalonica in April 23, 2007 under the title *Οἰκουμενικές ἐναλλακτικές προοπτικές στήν ἄμεση, θεσμική καί πολιτιστική βία τῆς νέο-φιλελεύθερης ἰμπεριαλιστικῆς νεωτερικότητας*: “in the Babylonian myth human beings were created from the blood of a murdered God for the purpose of serving gods and especially to work for them, because the gods were tired of working. In the biblical text, people are blessed and honored as a man and woman to become partners of God. Apart from this in the eastern societies only the king is created in the image of God. In this case, for someone to speak of God's image denotes an ideological legitimation of his right not to work, but to puts others to work for him. In contrast to this ideology, the book of Genesis 1:26-31 considers that all men are created in God's image. Thus they are free and responsible to work with God. This text, written in exile during the Babylonian captivity is a highly subversive text and it is directed against the imperialist forces that through slavery constrain humans to work.” [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Cf. God’s testaments to Noah Abraham and Moses, whose signs are the rainbow and circumcision. It is quite telling that no Old Testament book contains a legislation strictly speaking. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. J. Ratzinger*-*Pope Benedict 16th’, *Ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπό τή Ναζαρέτ* (Athens: Psichogios Publications, 2007, 293: “The memories of the historical actions of God, that come from the precedents of naturalistic religions, are transformed into celebrations of hope, which welcome the Lord; with this event the history of Divine Economy is concluded and creation is pacified.” [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. According to G. Babiniotis’ *Λεξικό τῆς Νέας Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσας* (Athens: Lexicology Centre, 20052) 799: “*kazouism* is a sub branch of ethics that focuses on the practical handling of specific ethical problems/dilemmas through the formulation of specific guidelines for behavior in the case of handling such cases.” [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. J. Ratzinger*-*Pope Benedict 16th’, op. cit. 130-133. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. See Exodus 21:5-6: “Ἐὰν δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἴπῃ ὁ παῖς ἠγάπηκα τὸν κύριόν μου καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ παιδία οὐκ ἀποτρέχω ἐλεύθερος προσάξει αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ κριτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τότε προσάξει αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν ἐπὶ τὸν σταθμόν καὶ τρυπήσει αὐτοῦ ὁ κύριος τὸ οὖς τῷ ὀπητίῳ καὶ δουλεύσει αὐτῷ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα / But if the slave declares, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out a free person, then his master shall bring him before God. He shall be brought to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him for life.” [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Cf. Jeremiah, 31:29. See also Ezekiel, 18:2 “οἱ πατέρες ἔφαγον ὄμφακα καὶ οἱ ὀδόντες τῶν τέκνων ἐγομφίασαν / the parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.” [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Cf. L. Patras, “Ἀρχέτυπα τῆς Κοινωνικῆς Πολιτικῆς στή Βίβλο (Παλαιά Διαθήκη),” *Χρονικά Κεντρικοῦ Ἰσραηλιτικοῦ Συμβουλίου τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 3502 (2007) 3-11. In this article the author correlates these measures reflecting the 5th century BCE with Solon’s *σεισάχθεια* (removal of debt). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. See C. S. Cowles, E. Merill and D. L. Gard, *Show Them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Cf. Psalms, 58:9, 11;.137:9;. 110:1, 6;.144:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Cf. J. Chrysostom, *Εἰς τόν Λάζαρον*, 3, PG 48.1002, God: “κολάζει μέν γἀρ τινας, τήν κακίαν αὐτῶν ἐκκόπτων, καί κουφοτέραν τήν ἐκεῖ ποιῶν τιμωρίαν͵ ἢ καὶ τέλεον αὐτὸν ἀπαλλάττων· αὐτούς, καί τούς ἐν πονηρίᾳ ζῶντας σωφρονεστέρους ποιῶν τῇ τούτων τιμωρία.” [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. See Deuteronomy 30:16-18: “Ἐὰν εἰσακούσῃς τὰς ἐντολὰς κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἃς ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαί σοι σήμερον ἀγαπᾶν κύριον τὸν θεόν σου πορεύεσθαι ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ φυλάσσεσθαι τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς κρίσεις αὐτοῦ καὶ ζήσεσθε καὶ πολλοὶ ἔσεσθε καὶ εὐλογήσει σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ εἰς ἣν εἰσπορεύῃ ἐκεῖ κληρονομῆσαι αὐτήν καὶ ἐὰν μεταστῇ ἡ καρδία σου καὶ μὴ εἰσακούσῃς καὶ πλανηθεὶς προσκυνήσῃς θεοῖς ἑτέροις καὶ λατρεύσῃς αὐτοῖς ἀναγγέλλω σοι σήμερον ὅτι ἀπωλείᾳ ἀπολεῖσθε / If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them. I declare to you today that you shall perish.” [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. The terms that are used in the Old Testament for the *ἁμαρτία/sin* are: Hatta/αποτυχία, awon/παραμόρφωση, pesa=revolution, maal/απιστία. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. As P. Paschos indicates: **“**Eudokimov, on the basis of this passage, has drawn a number of distinctions concerning some characteristic manifestations of evil. These are the following: a) *parasitism* (evil feeds off the beings created by God), b) *deceit* (evil deceives us as in the false promise that we would ‘be like God’), c) *parody* (evil forges and mocks the Creator so us to erect its own kingdom devoid of God, in what constitutes a reverse imitation)**.** However,can humankind exist where there is no God?We could certainly have a multiplication of ‘possessed people who believe in their self-image, but the world would then be dehumanized, because the loss of the image of God results in the disappearance of the image of man as well. Here we see the insatiable nature of evil as the cause and seed of death, to the extent that it does not satisfy any hunger or thirst, resulting as it does in a hopeless boredom […] The world will perish not from wars and their causes but by its unbearable and gigantic boredom, when out of theyawn, big as the world, the devil will jump out.**”** See P. Paschos, *Ὁ Διάλογος μέ τή Δύση γιά τό Θεό καί τόν Ἄνθρωπο* (Athens: Armos Publications, 1995) 38-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. ###  R.Bultmann, *Das Urchristentum* (München und Zürich: Artemis-Verlag, 1985) 38-39.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. See Micah 6:6, 8: “ἐν τίνι καταλάβω τὸν Κύριον ἀντιλήμψομαι Θεοῦ μου ὑψίστου εἰ καταλήμψομαι αὐτὸν ἐν ὁλοκαυτώμασιν ἐν μόσχοις ἐνιαυσίοις… εἰ ἀνηγγέλη σοι ἄνθρωπε τί καλόν ἢ τί Κύριος ἐκζητεῖ παρὰ σοῦ ἀλλ᾽ ἢ τοῦ ποιεῖν κρίμα καὶ ἀγαπᾶν ἔλεον καὶ ἕτοιμον εἶναι τοῦ πορεύεσθαι μετὰ Κυρίου Θεοῦ σου / With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? . . . He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. See Ch. Voulgaris, “Ἐσκυλμένοι καί Ἐρριμμένοι, Παρακμή καί Κατάπτωσις τοῦ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ κατά τούς Χρόνους τῆς Καινῆς Διαθήκης,” in his, *Ἁγιογραφικαί μελέται* (Athens, 1983) 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Cf. R.Bultmann, *Das Urchristentum*, 69-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. For more details see www.thepaulpage.com. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Two further issues that were the subject of a critique are: 1) The individualistic version of the teaching of justification: The question of Apostle Paul was not how do I become approved by a merciful God, but the problem of how Gentile Christians can participate in the grace and salvation without becoming Jews. 2) The traditional Lutheran interpretation of the contrast between faith and works was arrived at mainly on the basis of Romans 3:28: “λογιζόμεθα γὰρ δικαιοῦσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου / For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.” On the contrary, as Romans 3:29 indicates: “ἢ Ἰουδαίων ὁ Θεὸς μόνον; οὐχὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν; ναὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν / Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,” Paul’s critique towards Torah is not concerned with justice through works. On the basis of Paul’s own universal and ecumenical understanding, the Mosaic law cannot serve as a criterion for the participation of people to salvation. This criterion for everyone is now faith. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. See Α. Despotis, *Die New Perspective on Paul und die friechisch-orthodoxe Paulusinterpretation* (Habilitation) (Bonn 2012) 316. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. See P. Andriopoulos, *Ἡπερί Ἁμαρτίας καί Χάριτος Διδασκαλία τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Παύλου* (Athens, 1989) 38. Similar texts are found in Plato (*Politeia*, 9: 577), in Plutarch (*Περί ηθικής αρετής* 445 ε) and in Epictetus (*Discourses*, 2:26). [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. C. S. Despotis, “Ὁ Καινός Αἰώνας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καί ἡ Νέα Τάξη Πραγμάτων,” in his *Ἡ Ἁγία Γραφή στόν 21ο Αἰῶνα* (Athens: Athos Publications, 2006) 15-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. The *ἐντὸς* cannot be reduced to a mere internal presence of the kingdom in one’s heart. Not only the Pharisees to which Jesus responds, but even his disciples themselves, at the time that Jesus uttered these words, were innocent of faith in His person as they also were of other requirements set by the Lord for entering the kingdom. Cf. S. Despotis, *Ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὡς Χριστός καί ἡ Πολιτική Ἐξουσία στούς Συνοπτικούς Εὐαγγελιστές* (Athens: Athos Publications, 2006) 200-201. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. As the Neptic Fathers have pointed out: “When someone feels over abundantly the love of God, s/he starts to feel spiritual love for his/her neighbor [...] No one can love God with their whole heart, unless they have earlier feared Him. Thus the soul reaches this love as purified and softened by the energy of fear, achieved in very quiet setting rid of worries [...] Perfect love belongs to those who have been cleaned, and who did not have fear.” See Diadochos of Photike in*, Φιλοκαλία τῶν Ἱερῶν Νηπτικῶν* (Thessalonica: Perivoli tes Panagias Publications, 19893) 289. “Love, a) is created by apathy, apathy is created by the hope in God, and hope by patience and longsuffering. These are created by the catholic continence and sobriety i.e. created by the fear of God. The fear of God is created by faith. He who believes in God fears hell and he who fears hell controls his passions and he who controls his passions endures grief and in turn will have hope in God.” See Μaximos, *Πρώτη Ἐκατοντάδα*, in *Φιλοκαλία τῶν Ἱερῶν Νηπτικῶν* Vol. 2, 50). [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. According to the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, 2:14-15: “Ἐπεὶ οὖν τὰ παιδία κεκοινώνηκεν αἵματος καὶ σαρκός, καὶ αὐτὸς παραπλησίως μετέσχεν τῶν αὐτῶν, ἵνα διὰ τοῦ θανάτου καταργήσῃ τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου, τοῦτ᾽ ἔστιν τὸν διάβολον, καὶ ἀπαλλάξῃ τούτους, ὅσοι φόβῳ θανάτου διὰ παντὸς τοῦ ζῆν ἔνοχοι ἦσαν δουλείας / Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.” [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. As Celsus points out: “δέκα ἢ ἕνδεκά τινας ἐξαρτησάμενον τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἑαυτῷ ἐπιρρήτους ἀνθρώπους͵ τελώνας καὶ ναύτας τοὺς πονηροτάτους͵ μετὰ τούτων τῇδε κἀκεῖσε αὐτὸν ἀποδεδρακέναι͵ αἰσχρῶς καὶ γλίσχρως τροφὰς συνάγοντα / Jesus collected round him ten or eleven infamous men, the most wicked [persons](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11726a.htm) tax-collectors and sailors, and with these fled hither and thither, collecting a means of livelihood in a disgraceful and importunate manner.” See Origen, *Κατά Κέλσου,* 1:62, and in H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum. Translated With An Introduction and Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 56. See. K. Siamakis*,* op. cit. 68-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Cf. Matthew 11:25: “πάτερ, Κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἔκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις / Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants.” [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. The moment in which Jesus enters the *field of his Passion*, in the borders of Judea ‘beyond the river Jordan’ touches the top three issues of human existence: Wedding / Celibacy (Mark 10:2-12), Wealth / Poverty (Mark 10:17 -27) and Power / Humiliation (Mark 10:35-45). As R.Peschconvincingly argues in his study *Das Markusevangelium. Kommentar zu Kap 8,27-16,20* (Freiburg: Herder, 1984) 128-130: “Mark in chapter 10 of his Gospel resorts to a pre-existing Catechism, which, as evidenced by the use of the translation of the Septuagint, is circulating in Hellenistic Judeo-Christian communities. To this Catechism, the Gospel writer has inserted for the second time the commandment for the abandonment of one’s family for the sake of the Gospel (Mark 10:28-31), alongside third prophecy of the coming Passion (f. 32-34) and the issue of children as a model (Mark 10:13-16). ” [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. According to M. Homecker, *Einführung in die Theologische Ethik*: Grundlagen und Grundbegriffe (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1990) 279: “in the Middle Ages a distinction was drawn between *Praecepta* and *consilia evangelica*. Thus, the ten commandments refer to everybody, while poverty, virginity and obedience only to monks. The fulfillment of the latter three conditions constitutes a merit (cf. Didache 6:2). According to Luther, the radical demands of Jesus are not applicable to public and political life: as a public servant, a Christian should use force and resist for the good of others. However, as far as his private affairs are concerned, he must renounce the resistance. There is also the opinion that good is only that which is committed in good conscience. Thus God's commandments do not apply to the letter but to the spirit. The opinion is also expressed that the Sermon on the Mount as Law is inapplicable. Jesus Christ is not only the subject but also the object of the Sermon on the Mount. Others perceive it as eschatological in regards to the new man (Jer. 31 33 32 40 Ezekiel. 36, 26). Finally, others likened it with a contingent law that is in force during war.” [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. P. Paschos, *Διάλογος μέ τή Δύση γιά τό Θεό καί τόν ἄνθρωπο.* *Ἡ ποιητική ἀνθολογία τοῦ Pavel Nicolaievitch Evdokimov* (Athens: Armos Publications, 1995) 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. First uttered by the marginalized blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46: “Υἱὲ Δαυὶδ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με / Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Only in Matthew 22:39 is it emphasized that the second command is similar to the first one. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. See Aeschylus, *Προμηθεύς Δεσμώτης,* 119-123 and in Aeschylus, *Suppliant Maidens. Persians. Prometheus. Seven Against Thebes*, engl. trans. by H. W. Smyth, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 145 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1922 ) 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. See Aeschylus, *Προμηθεύς Δεσμώτης,* 119-123 and in Aeschylus, *Suppliant Maidens. Persians. Prometheus. Seven Against Thebes*, op. cit. 309. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. #  Cf. Aeschylus, *Εὐμενίδες*, 644-651 and in Aeschylus, Oresteia: *Agamemnon. Libation-Bearers. Eumenides*, engl. trans. by A. Sommerstein, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 146 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009) 437: “ὦ παντομισῆ κνώδαλα͵ στύγη θεῶν͵ πέδας μὲν ἂν λύσειεν͵ ἔστι τοῦδ΄ ἄκος͵ καὶ κάρτα πολλὴ μηχανὴ λυτήριος· ἀνδρὸς δ΄ ἐπειδὰν αἷμ΄ ἀνασπάσῃ κόνις ἅπαξ θανόντος͵ οὔτις ἔστ΄ ἀνάστασις. τούτων ἐπῳδὰς οὐκ ἐποίησεν πατὴρ οὑμός͵ τὰ δ΄ ἄλλα πάντ΄ ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω στρέφων τίθησιν οὐδὲν ἀσθμαίνων μένει / You utterly loathed some beasts hated by the gods! Fetters he can undo: there is acute for that affliction, and many a device for getting him released. But when once a man has died, and the dust has sucked up his blood, there is no rising again. For that my Father has not created any healing charm, whereas he disposes all other things, turning them this way and that, without any laborious effort, by the sheer power of his will.”

 [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. See P. Paschos, op. cit. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Aristotle, in the introduction to his *Politics*, stresses that both the citizen and the city are natural affairs. In that sense, they constitute an ontological given. The *what for* refers to each particular case. (Note: This observation belongs to Professor Christos Terezis, an esteemed colleague and reviewer of this chapter). [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. M. Farantos, *Δογματικά και Ηθικά Ι* (Athens, 1983) 25-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Cf. Μ. Reiser, “Love of Enemies *in the Context of Antiquity*,” *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001) 411-427. As an exception to this rule are the passages in the Old Testament books of Exodus 23:4ff. and Leviticus 19:16-1. The first person that has been approached the ideal of Christianity was Socrates, who proclaims in Plato’s dialogue *Crito*: “Οὐδενὶ τρόπῳ φαμὲν ἑκόντας ἀδικητέον εἶναι͵ ἢ τινὶ μὲν ἀδικητέον τρόπῳ τινὶ δὲ οὔ; ἢ οὐδαμῶς τό γε ἀδικεῖν οὔτε ἀγαθὸν οὔτε καλόν͵ ὡς πολλάκις ἡμῖν καὶ ἐν τῷ ἔμπροσθεν χρόνῳ ὡμολογήθη; / Are we to say that we are never intentionally to do wrong, or that in one way we ought and in another way we ought not to do wrong, or is doing wrong always evil and dishonorable, as I was just now saying, and as has been already acknowledge by us?”(Plato, *Crito* 49a). In this text the *ἀνταδικεῖν* or the *ἀντικακουργεῖν* are regarded as inept. The active love towards enemies does not supported (see pp. 417-418). Plutarch in his work *Ὣς ἂν τις ὑπ’ ἐχθρῶν ὠφελοῖτο,* while cites Caesar as an example, who had Pompey’s statues re-erected after they had been knocked down, he emphasizes that one can manifest a number of virtues better in relationships with enemies than with friends, namely: gentleness (πραότης), forbearance (ἀνεξικακία), straightforwardness (ἁπλὀτης), magnanimity (μεγαλοφροσύνη), and goodness (χρηστότης). He also maintains that it is good to let a chance for revenge on one’s enemies pass (see p. 416). An admirable apathy towards their persecutors is also sported by the stoics, who are considering sin as a result of ignorance of good and inappropriate anger as a wise passion. But again behind this kind of tolerance it is hiding the feeling of selfishness. It should be noted however that, while the first text (see Exodus 23:4ff.) it is solely refers to save the υποζυγίου of burden or buff the enemy, the second text refers to the behavior only towards compatriots and co-religionists, and there is not an explicit mention for the love towards enemies. In Proverbs 25:21-22 the individual interest is projected as reasoning of beneficence to the enemy: “ἐὰν πεινᾷ ὁ ἐχθρός σου͵ τρέφε αὐτόν͵ ἐὰν διψᾷ͵ πότιζε αὐτόν· τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν ἄνθρακας πυρὸς σωρεύσεις ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ͵ ὁ δὲ κύριος ἀνταποδώσει σοι ἀγαθά / If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat; and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink; for you will heap coals of fire on their heads, and the Lord will reward you.” [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. See Clement of Alexandria, *Στρωματέων Λόγος Δεύτερος*, Book 2, Ch. 16.75, P.G. 8:1013. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Cf. Theodoret of Cyrus, *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τό Ἄσμα Ἀσμάτων*, PG. 81.128: “Οἱ τοίνυν ἐσθίοντες τοῦ νυμφίου τὰ μέλη͵ καὶ πίνοντες αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα͵ τῆς γαμικῆς αὐτοῦ τυγχάνουσι κοινωνίας / They therefore that eat the members of the bridegroom, and drink his blood, obtain the nuptial communion with him.” [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. On this topic, see E. Drewermann, *Die Spirale der Angst. Der Krieg und das Christentum* (Freiburg: Herder, 19923) 306ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Ibid. 290-199. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. For Celsus: “Εἰ προεῖπον οἱ τοῦ Ἰουδαίων θεοῦ προφῆται τοῦτον ἐκείνου παῖδα ἐσόμενον͵ πῶς ἐκεῖνος μὲν διὰ Μωϋσέως νομοθετεῖ πλουτεῖν καὶ δυναστεύειν καὶ καταπιμπλάναι τὴν γῆν καὶ καταφονεύειν τοὺς πολεμίους ἡβηδὸν καὶ παγγενεὶ κτείνειν͵ ὅπερ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων͵ ὥς φησι Μωϋσῆς͵ ποιεῖ͵ καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα͵ ἂν μὴ πείθωνται͵ διαρρήδην αὐτοὺς τὰ τῶν πολεμίων δράσειν ἀπειλεῖ͵ ὁ δ΄ υἱὸς ἄρα αὐτοῦ͵ ὁ Ναζωραῖος ἄνθρωπος͵ ἀντινομοθετεῖ μηδὲ παριτητὸν εἶναι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα τῷ πλουτοῦντι ἢ φιλαρχιῶντι ἢ σοφίας ἢ δόξης ἀντιποιουμένῳ͵ δεῖν δὲ σίτων μὲν καὶ ταμείου μὴ μᾶλλόν τι φροντίζειν ἢ τοὺς κόρακας͵ ἐσθῆτος δὲ ἧττον ἢ τὰ κρίνα͵ τῷ δ΄ ἅπαξ τυπτήσαντι παρέχειν καὶ αὖθις τύπτειν; Πότερον Μωϋσῆς ἢ Ἰησοῦς ψεύδεται; ῍Η ὁ πατὴρ τοῦτον πέμπων ἐπελάθετο͵ τίνα Μωϋσεῖ διετάξατο; ῍Η καταγνοὺς τῶν ἰδίων νόμων μετέγνω καὶ τὸν ἄγγελον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἀποστέλλει; / If the [prophets](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12477a.htm) of the [God](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06608a.htm) of the [Jews](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08399a.htm) foretold that Jesus would be his son, why did he give them by Moses that they were to become rich and powerful1 and to fill the earth2 and to massacre their enemies, children and all, and slaughter their entire race, which he himself did, so Moses says,\* before the eyes of the Jews? And besides this, if they were not obedient, why does he expressly threaten to do to them what he did to their enemies?1\* Yet his son, the man of Nazareth, gives contradictory laws, saying that a man cannot come forward to the Father if he is rich or loves power or lays claim to any intelligence or reputation? and that he must not pay attention to food or to his storehouse any more than the ravens, or to clothing any more than the lilies\ and that to a man who has struck him once he should offer himself to be struck once again J Who is wrong? Moses or Jesus? Or when the Father sent Jesus had he forgotten what commands he gave to Moses? Or did he condemn his own laws and change his mind, and send his messenger for quite the opposite purpose?” Origen, *Κατά Κέλσου,* 7, 18 and in H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum. Translated With An Introduction and Notes*, 409. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. In every marriage God continues to repeat the mystery of creation namely the coupling of the man with his wife, their union of their flesh in one. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. This Jesus Christ’s command is attested by the Apostle Paul in his *First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Η εντολή αυτή του Ι. Χριστού πιστοποιείται και από τον Παύλο: *“*παραγγέλλω οὐκ ἐγώ, ἀλλὰ ὁ Κύριος / I give this command not I but the Lord” (1st Corinthians 7:10). [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. ##  Cf. S. Despotis, ***Ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὡς Χριστός καί ἡ Πολιτική Εξουσία στούς Συνοπτικούς Εὐαγγελιστές,* (Athens: Athos Publications**, 2005) 224-229.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. See see Luke 23:42-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Cf. Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. S. Agouridis, *Εἰσαγωγή εἰς τήν Καινήν Διαθήκην* (Athens, 1971). [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. See P. Andriopoulos, *Ἡ περί Ἁμαρτίας καί Χάριτος διδασκαλία τοῦ ἀποστ. Παύλου*, 280-281. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Cf. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 450. Μenander, *Fragment*, 654. Diogenes Laertius, 7.85. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. The Apostle Paul uses for the Church the image of the body in order to emphasize that Church does not reseble but it is the Body of Christ. Because of the existence of the schisms that Paul which meets in the Church of Corinth, he underlines Εξ αφορμής των σχισμάτων που συναντά στην Εκκλησία της Κορίνθου ο απόστολος των εθνών σημειώνει in 1st Corinthians 1:13: “μεμέρισται ὁ Χριστὸς / Has Christ been divided?”; In 1st Corinthians 10:16-17 Paul asks: “τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν͵ οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν͵ οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστιν; ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος͵ ἓν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν͵ οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν / The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? (Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.” From the passages that have been used by Paul in this Epistle, we conclude that the concept of the Church as a Body was already known to the recipients of his Epistles (cf. 1st Corinthians 6:15). It was linked to the Community that was gathering together to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist and it conveyed the conviction that the faithful in Christ were like a vine in the vineyard. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Cf. Numbers, 6:24-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. See P. Andriopoulos, op. cit. 281. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. In 1st John 2: 16-17 is noted: “ὅτι πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐστίν. καὶ ὁ κόσμος παράγεται καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ, ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα / for all that is in the world-- the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches-- comes not from the Father but from the world. And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.” James points out: “Πόθεν πόλεμοι καὶ πόθεν μάχαι ἐν ὑμῖν; οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν͵ ἐκ τῶν ἡδονῶν ὑμῶν τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν; ἐπιθυμεῖτε͵ καὶ οὐκ ἔχετε· φονεύετε καὶ ζηλοῦτε͵ καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν· μάχεσθε καὶ πολεμεῖτε. οὐκ ἔχετε διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς· αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε͵ διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε͵ ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε / Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures” (James 4:1-8). [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. For Celsus: “Ἔτι δὲ πῶς οὐκ ἄτοπα ὑμῶν ταῦτα͵ τὸ μὲν σῶμα ποθεῖν καὶ ἐλπίζειν ὅτι αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἀναστήσεται ὡς οὐδὲν ἡμῖν τούτου κρεῖττον οὐδὲ τιμιώτερον͵ πάλιν δ΄ αὐτὸ ῥίπτειν εἰς κολάσεις ὡς ἄτιμον; Ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν τοῦτο πειθομένοις καὶ τῷ σώματι συντετηκόσιν οὐκ ἄξιον τοῦτο διαλέγεσθαι· οὗτοι γάρ εἰσιν οἱ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἄγροικοι καὶ ἀκάθαρτοι καὶ χωρὶς λόγου τῇ στάσει συννοσοῦντες· τοῖς μήν γε τὴν ψυχὴν ἢ τὸν νοῦν εἴτε πνευματικὸν τοῦτον ἐθέλουσι καλεῖν εἴτε πνεῦμα νοερὸν ἅγιον καὶ μακάριον εἴτε ψυχὴν ζῶσαν εἴτε θείας καὶ ἀσωμάτου φύσεως ἔκγονον ὑπερουράνιόν τε καὶ ἄφθαρτον εἴθ΄ ὅ τι καὶ ὅ τι χαίρουσιν ὀνομάζοντες͵ τοῖς τοῦτο ἐλπίζουσιν ἕξειν αἰώνιον σὺν Θεῷ͵ τούτοις διαλέξομαι. Τοῦτο μέν γε ὀρθῶς νομίζουσιν͵ ὡς οἱ μὲν εὖ βιώσαντες εὐδαιμονήσουσιν͵ οἱ δὲ ἄδικοι πάμπαν αἰωνίοις κακοῖς συνέξονται· καὶ τούτου δὲ τοῦ δόγματος μήθ΄ οὗτοι μήτ΄ ἄλλος ἀνθρώπων μηδείς ποτε ἀποστῇ / Furthermore, are not these notions of yours absurd? For on the one hand you long for the body and hope that it will rise again in the same form as if we possessed nothing better or more precious than that\* while on the other hand you would cast it into punishments as though it were of no value. However; it is not worth while discussing this with people who believe this, who are absolutely bound to the body; for they are people who in other respects also are boorish and unclean, who are destitute of reason and suffer from the disease of sedition? But I will discuss the matter with those who hope that they will possess their soul or mind eternally with God {whether they wish to call this mind spiritual, or a holy and blessed intellectual spirit,3 or a living soul,4 or a super-celestial and indestructible offspring of a divine and incorporeal nature, or whatever name they care to give it). Their opinions are right in this respect at least, that those who have lived good lives will be happy, while people who are totally wicked will be afflicted with eternal evils. And this doctrine may never be abandoned either by them or by any other person.” See Origen, *Κατά Κέλσου*, 8:49 and in H. Chadwick, op. cit. 488. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. See K. Belezos, *Γυναῖκες καί Ἀπόστολος Παῦλος* (Athens, 2012) 198. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. See the relevant comments by John Chrysostom in P.G. 57:248. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Duty is a task. It is lower than an accomplishment, which is performed with deep moral awareness. Well known is Cicero’s work on tasks, fashioned after Panaitios’s *On Duty*. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. The only exception is the following prompt: “Τὸ λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, ὅσα ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ, ὅσα σεμνά, ὅσα δίκαια, ὅσα ἁγνά, ὅσα προσφιλῆ, ὅσα εὔφημα, εἴ τις ἀρετὴ καὶ εἴ τις ἔπαινος, ταῦτα λογίζεσθε / Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things”(Filippians 4:8). Cf. J. Karavidopoulos, *Ἀποστόλου Παύλου Ἐπιστολές πρός Ἐφεσίους, Φιλιππησίους, Κολοσσαεῖς, Φιλήμονα* (Τhessaloniki: Pournaras Publications, 1981) 375-379. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Cf. r. stark, “Epidemics, Networks, and Conversion,” in his *The Rise of Christianity. How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries* (San Francisco, CA.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997) 86: “For something distinctive did come into the world with the development of Judeo-Christian thought: the linking of a highly *social* ethical code with religion. There is nothing new in the idea that the super natural makes behavioral demands upon humans-the gods have always wanted sacrifices and worship. Nor was there anything new in the notion that the supernatural will respond to offerings-that the gods can be induced to exchange services for sacrifices. What was new was the notion that more than self-interested exchange relations were possible between humans and supernatural. The Christian teaching that God loves those who love him was alien to pagan beliefs. MacMullen has noted that from the pagan perspective ‘what mattered . . . that the service that the deity could provide, since god (as Aristotle had log taught) could feel no love in response to that offered’ [see R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 1981) 53]. Equally alien to paganism was the notion that because God loves humanity, Christians cannot please God unless they love one another. Indeed, as God demonstrates his love through sacrifice, humans must demonstrate their love through sacrifice on behalf of one another. Moreover, such responsibilities were to be extended beyond the bonds of family and tribe, indeed to ‘all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1st Corinthians 1:2). These were revolutionary ideas.” [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. M. Wolter, “Paulinische Ethik als angewandte Ekklesiologie,” *Sacra Scripta* VΙ (2008) 45-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. See Romans 13:8-14: “Καὶ τοῦτο εἰδότες τὸν καιρόν, ὅτι ὥρα ἤδη ὑμᾶς ἐξ ὕπνου ἐγερθῆναι. Νῦν γὰρ ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν. Ἡ νὺξ προέκοψεν, ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἤγγικεν. Ἀποθώμεθα οὖν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκότους, ἐνδυσώμεθα [δὲ] τὰ ὅπλα τοῦ φωτός. Ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ εὐσχημόνως περιπατήσωμεν, μὴ κώμοις καὶ μέθαις, μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελγείαις, μὴ ἔριδι καὶ ζήλῳ, ἀλλὰ ἐνδύσασθε τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιεῖσθε εἰς ἐπιθυμίας / Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires*.”* Cf. Colossians 3:3-6: “ἀπεθάνετε γὰρ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ ἐν τῷ θεῷ. ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῇ, ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ. Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν ἀκαθαρσίαν πάθος ἐπιθυμίαν κακήν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἥτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία, δι᾽ ἃ ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ [ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας / for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.” [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. As L. Schmidt indicates: “In ancient Greek literature the term *hope* mostly means an elusive idol, a creature of fantasy. In Hesiod’s *Works and Days* hope is situated in Pandora's jar and bears a negative connotation as it widens the gap between god and people. Later in Aeschylus (*Prometheus*, 250) hope is considered a gift. In Theognis hope is called only *ἐσθλή θεός* (1135-1146). Hope is connected with the posthumous perspective (Plato, *Politeia*, 1.331. Isocrates 1.39. 8, 34) because the future is uncertain and no one can place their hopes in the assistance of gods. From the ancient Greek point of view, to act on time and correctly are almost identical. Thus Paul’s thesis that non-Christians do not have hope is justified (1st Thessalonians 4:13). See L. Schmidt, “Ἡ Ἠθική τῶν Ἀρχαίων Ἑλλήνων, greek trans. D. Olympiou, Vol. 1 (Athens: Savvalas. 1901) 92ff. Also and as J. Holzner: *Παῦλος,* greek. Trans. Archbishop Jerome of Athens and All Greece (Athens: Damaskos Publications, Αθήναι 1973, 498 asserts: “Under the influence of the Orphic mysteries the ancient faith in immortality, most often occurs in sepulchral inscriptions from the 5 BCE as the 5 CE. The souls were located either in the *Ἠλύσια*, the home of the gods (Virgil, Aen. 6), or in the ether, in a star, on the "island of the blessed" (Pythagoreans). It is not clear if, after death, conscience and personality are maintained. Stoics believe that the world is united with the universal soul. The hope of personal survival was extremely Limited (1st Thessalonians 4:13). But philosophy does not succeed in overcoming the popular belief. Thus the pagan soul was somewhat prepared to receive the joyous message. In Christianity, the vague hope took a personal tone of ‘σύν Χριστῷ’ thanks to Paul.” See J. Holzner, op. cit. 498. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Cf. J. Karavidopoulos, *Ἀποστόλου Παύλου Ἐπιστολές πρός Ἐφεσίους, Φιλιππησίους, Κολοσσαεῖς, Φιλήμονα*, 360-363. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. These *lists of behavior* were possibly integrated to the early Christian worship. The *Didache*, that has a Eucharistic character begins with the doctrine of the two routes (cf. Justin, *Apology*, 65.1). Pliny, (*Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus*), nephew of the elder Pliny, Tacitus’ friend, a favorite of the Emperor Trajan, and a proconsul of Bithynia that is located in Bursa, Asia Minor (111-112 AD) in one of his three hundred letters is asking the emperor if the name *Christian* is itself a crime. He notes that some Christians who worshiped the emperor’s image, claimed that their greater error was that they used to gather in a certain hour of the day, namely before sunrise, in order to praise Christ as God and to swear that they would not kill, steal, rob, or commit adultery, and that they would not fallen from the faith or deny their legacy. From the two deaconesses slaves that he tortured he did not find anything but a meaner and excessive superstition (*superstitio prava, immodica*). [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. According to Celsus: “Ὁρῶμεν δὴ καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας οἰκίας ἐριουργοὺς καὶ σκυτοτόμους καὶ κναφεῖς καὶ τοὺς ἀπαιδευτοτάτους τε καὶ ἀγροικοτάτους ἐναντίον μὲν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ φρονιμωτέρων δεσποτῶν οὐδὲν φθέγγεσθαι τολμῶντας͵ ἐπειδὰν δὲ τῶν παίδων αὐτῶν ἰδίᾳ λάβωνται καὶ γυναίων τινῶν σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀνοήτων͵ θαυμάσι΄ ἄττα διεξιόντας͵ ὡς οὐ χρὴ προσέχειν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τοῖς διδασκάλοις σφίσι δὲ πείθεσθαι· καὶ τοὺς μέν γε ληρεῖν καὶ ἀποπλήκτους εἶναι καὶ μηδὲν τῷ ὄντι καλὸν μήτ΄ εἰδέναι μήτε δύνασθαι ποιεῖν͵ ὕθλοις κενοῖς προκατειλημμένους͵ σφᾶς δὲ μόνους ὅπως δεῖ ζῆν ἐπίστασθαι͵ καὶ ἂν αὐτοῖς οἱ παῖδες πείθωνται͵ μακαρίους αὐτοὺς ἔσεσθαι καὶ τὸν οἶκον ἀποφανεῖν εὐδαίμονα· καὶ ἅμα λέγοντες ἐὰν ἴδωσί τινα παριόντα τῶν παιδείας διδασκάλων καὶ φρονιμωτέρων ἢ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν πατέρα͵ οἱ μὲν εὐλαβέστεροι αὐτῶν διέτρεσαν͵ οἱ δ΄ ἰταμώτεροι τοὺς παῖδας ἀφηνιάζειν ἐπαίρουσι͵ τοιαῦτα ψιθυρίζοντες͵ ὡς παρόντος μὲν τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῶν διδασκάλων οὐδὲν αὐτοὶ ἐθελήσουσιν οὐδὲ δυνήσονται τοῖς παισὶν ἑρμηνεύειν ἀγαθόν͵ ἐκτρέπεσθαι γὰρ τὴν ἐκείνων ἀβελτηρίαν καὶ σκαιότητα͵ πάντῃ διεφθαρμένων καὶ πόρρω κακίας ἡκόντων καὶ σφᾶς κολαζόντων· εἰ δὲ θέλοιεν͵ χρῆναι αὐτοὺς ἀφεμένους τοῦ πατρός τε καὶ τῶν διδασκάλων ἰέναι σὺν τοῖς γυναίοις καὶ τοῖς συμπαίζουσι παιδαρίοις εἰς τὴν γυναικωνῖτιν ἢ τὸ σκυτεῖον ἢ τὸ κναφεῖον͵ ἵνα τὸ τέλειον λάβωσι· καὶ ταῦτα λέγοντες πείθουσιν / In private housesalso we see wool-workers, cobblers, laundry-workers, and the most illiterate and bucolic yokels, who would not dare to say anything at all in front of their elders and more intelligent masters. But whenever they get hold of children in private and some stupid women with them, they let out some astounding statements as, for example, that they must not pay any attention to their father and school-teachers, but must obey them; they say that these talk nonsense and have no understanding, and that in reality they neither know nor are able to do anything good, but are taken up with mere empty chatter. But they alone, they say, know the right way to live, and if the children would believe them, they would become happy and make their home happy as well. And if just as they are speaking they see one of the school-teachers coming some intelligent person, or even the father himself the more cautious of them flee in all directions; but the more reckless urge the children on to rebel. They whisper to them that in the presence of their father and their schoolmasters they do not feel able to explain anything to the children, since they do not want to have anything to do with the silly and obtuse teachers who are totally corrupted and far gone in wickedness and who inflict punishment on the children. But, if they like, they should leave father and their schoolmasters, and go along with the women and little children who are their playfellows to the wooldresser’s shop, or to the cobbler s or the washerwoman’s shop, that they may learn perfection. And by saying this they persuade them.” See Origen, *Κατά Κέλσου,* 3:55.28 and in H. Chadwick, op. cit. 165-166. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. See G. Galitis, *Ἡ πρός Τίτον Ἐπιστολή τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Παύλου. Ὁ Ποιμένας καί οἱ αἱρετικοί* (Thessalonica: Pournaras Publications, 1995) 299-306. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. See R. Stark, op. cit. 82: “At the height of the second great epidemie, around 260, in the Easter letter already quoted above, Dionysius wrote a lengthy tribute to the heroie nursing efforts of local Christians, many of whom lost their lives while caring for others. ‘Most of our brother Christians showed unbounded love and loyalty, never sparing themselves and thinking only of one another. Heedless of danger, they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ, and with them departed this life serenely happy; for they were infected by others with the disease, drawing on themselves the sickness of their neighbors and cheerfully accepting their pains. Many, in nursing and curing others, transferred their death to themselves and died in their stead…The best of our brothers lost their lives in this manner, a number of presbyters, deacons, and laymen winning high commendation so that death in this form , the result of great piety and strong faith, seems in every way the equal of martyrdom.’ Dionysius emphasized the heavy mortality of the epidemie by asserting how much happier survivors would be had they merely, like the Egyptians in the time of Moses, lost the firstborn from each house. For ‘there is not a house in which there is no one dead-how I wish it had been only one.’ But while the epidemie had not passed over the Christians, he suggests that pagans fared much worse: ‘Its full impact fell on the heathen.’ Dionysius also offered an explanation of this mortality differential. Having noted at length how the Christian community nursed the sick and dying and even spared nothing in preparing the dead far proper burial, he wrote: ‘The heathen behaved in the very opposite way. At the first onset of the disease, they pushed the sufferers away and fled from their dearest, throwing them into the roads before they were dead and treated unburied corpses as dirt, hoping thereby to avert the spread and contagion of the fatal disease; but do what they might, they found it difficult to escape.’ . . . Thus, a century later, the emperor Julian launched a campaign to institute pagan charities in an effort to match the Christians. Julian complained in a letter to the high priest of Galatia in 362 that the pagans needed to equal the virtues of Christians, for recent Christian growth was caused by their ‘moral character, even if pretended,’ an d by their ‘benevolence toward strangers and care for the graves of the dead.’ In a letter to another priest, Julian wrote, ‘I think that when the poor happened to be neglected and overlooked by the priests, the impious Galileans observed this and devoted themselves to benevolence.’ And he also wrote, ‘The impious Galileans support not only their poor, but ours as well, everyone can see that our people lack aid from us’ [quoted in P. Johnson, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Atheneum, 1976) 75; D. Ayerst and A. S. T. Fisher, *Records of Christianity*, Vol. 1 (Oxford:Blackwell. 1971) 179-181]. Clearly, Julian loathed ‘the Galileans.’ He even suspected that their benevolence had ulterior motives. But he recognized that his charities and that of organized paganism paled in comparison with Christian efforts that had created "a miniature welfare state in an empire which for the most part lacked social services” [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Cf. K. Siamakis, *Χριστιανικοί Πάπυροι* (Thessalonica, 1992) 7: “In the collection of the Egyptian papyri a letter from the oldest Psenosirios has been discovered which conveys in a special way Christian charity. A woman abandoned her son Nilus, who grew up in the hands of Christians who found him. This woman then lived as a political (=prostitute) in the central town adjacent to the *Great Oasis*. At one point she died battered by some, and the authorities of the city, in view of the fact that prostitutes were not buried in cemeteries, sent her body to be buried in the *Great Oasis*. As a favor to her son, the Christians undertook her burial. The Egyptian Greek-speaking elder of the Great Oasis Psenosiris received her body and handed it over for safekeeping to some good and faithful undertakers. He then wrote a letter to the elder Apollo in the central town, to inform him of the delivery and tell him that before the burial of the dead woman he would be waiting for her son Nilus, to come and see what her murderers did to his mother.” [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Cf. Athenagoras, *Πρεσβεία περί τῶν Χριστιανῶν*, 3. Βλ. Κ. Siamakis, *Ἐξωχριστιανικές Μαρτυρίες γιά τό Χριστό καί τούς Χριστιανούς*, 79, note 3: “The *Thyesteia* dinners are equivalent to cannibalism (see Euripides, *Ifigeneia*, T. 812, *Pausanias Comments*, 2.18.1) because in the Eucharist Christians sacrifice Christ and eat his flesh and drink his blood. The Oedipal mixtures are identical with incest because Christians have their women also as sisters (*in Christ*).” [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Beyond their gathering Christians are also drew strength from the institution of the family, which Christianity reconstituted According to the Epistle to Diognetus, Christians: “τεκνογονοῦσιν· ἀλλ΄ οὐ ῥίπτουσι τὰ γεννώμενα**.** Τράπεζαν κοινὴν παρατίθενται͵ ἀλλ΄ οὐ κοίτην / Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not expose them. They share their meals but not their marriage bed.” As J. Holzner, indicates: “the sensitivity towards one’s wife is expressed in the inscriptions of the catacombs: *Dulcissimae uxori*. Never would a Gentile sing for his faithful wife, but only for his mistress. In the Roman funerary inscriptions breastfeeding of children from their mothers was celebrated as something unheard of, while abortions and the abandonment of infants were accepted as normal. That's why Paul describes the pagan world as affectionless and merciless (Romans 1: 31).”See J. Holzner*,* op. cit. 435. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Cf. I. Vlachos, *Ὑπαρξιακή Ψυχολογία καί Ὀρθόδοξη Ψυχοθεραπεία* (Levadeia, GR.: Monastery of Theotokos, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. S. Karagiannis, *Ὁ Ἔρως στή Ζωή τῶν Ἀρχαίων Ἑλλήνων*, Vol. 3 (Athens: Zetros Publications, 2006) 654. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. See Abba Issac, 30:81: “Ελεήμων καρδία εστι καύσις καρδίας υπέρ πάσης της κτίσεως, υπέρ των ανθρώπων και των ορνέων και των ζώων και των δαιμόνων και υπέρ παντός κτίσματος και εκ της μνήμης αυτών και εκ της θεωρίας αυτών ρέουσιν οι οφθαλμοί αυτού δάκρυα. Εκ της πολλής και σφοδράς ελεημοσύνης της συνεχούσης την καρδίαν και εκ πολλής καρτερίας σμικρύνεται η καρδία αυτού και ου δύναται βαστάξης ή ακούσαι ή ιδείν βλάβην τινά ή λύπην μικράν εν τη κτίσει γινομένη. Και δια τούτο και υπέρ των αλόγων και υπέρ των εχθρών της αλήθειας και υπέρ των βλαπτόντων αυτού εν πάση ώρα ευχήν μετά δακρύων προσφέρει του φυλαχθήναι αυτούς και ιλασθήναι αυτοίς ομοίως και υπέρ της φύσεως των ερπετών εκ της πολλής αυτού ελεημοσύνης της κινούμενης εν τη καρδία αυτού αμέτρως καθ' ομοιότητα του Θεού*.*” [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. In Roman Catholicism, particularly with Tertullian and Augustine, sin lost the sense of disease-failure (*error*, *aegitudo*) and was transformed into a juridical category, into a crime (*crimen*) and a breach of justice of a patriarch God. Based on the misinterpretation of Romans 5:12, it was considered that the fall of Adam and Eve automatically drew the criminalization and punishment of humankind, and that finally the satisfaction of God's justice was achieved by the sacrifice of His only begotten Son (Anselm). Luther, who grew up in a strict patriarchal family in Eisleben and lived in Roman Catholic Augustinian monastery in Erfurt, in response to the view of the Roman Catholic Church that the restoration of human nature is accomplished by priestly acts, good works and the sacraments, considered that the concept of the original Sin completely distorted human nature and that humankind is saved only through faith (Romans 1: 17). Among Protestants an emphasis on the ‘social gospel’ was given since deeds may not constitute a means of justification, but are proof of God's favor. Calvinists above all suffered from an internal uncertainty over whether they belonged to the elite. If their behavior was exemplary, they could feel confident that they would go to Heaven. Thus was established an ascetic morality, which meant abstinence from the pleasures of life, in combination with self-discipline and hard work for the self-confirmation of the moral calling. Obtaining money which ought not to be spent but to be saved also constituted it a component of *In God we trust* (which shows prominently in the American dollar). [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. See S. Sakkos, *Η Έρευνα της Γραφής* (Thessalonica: Apolytrosis Publications, 1969) 58-100, 74-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Cf. Epistle of James 1:27: “Θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανοὺς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν, ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου / Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. See M. Farantos, “Ὁ Θεολόγος καί τό Μέλλον τῆς Θεολογίας,” Offprint from the Festschriftfor Professor *Κ. Μουρατίδης. Πρόμαχος Ορθοδοξίας* (Athens, 2004) 464. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)