

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE IMMEDIATE JUDGEMENT, INTERMEDIATE STATE AND RESURRECTION

#### 6.0 Introduction

Scripture provides us with no information concerning the state of the saints in death, other than that they are “with Christ.”<sup>1</sup> But those Patristic writers who thought that the soul was judged, and then received its due rewards and punishments immediately after death (thus before the general resurrection), speculated about the nature of the intermediate state and its relationship to the final state of the soul following the resurrection.

[The Greek Fathers’] conceptions of the intermediate state are anything but clear and precise. It was only the final goal of the deification of humanity that they were really concerned with; all else was of minor importance. Thus the great Christian truth, that a time will arrive when at the judgement-seat of Christ every one shall receive according to his deeds, was relegated to the background as a mere mode of redemption, one of the “channels through which it works.”<sup>2</sup>

While some form of continuity with the present body was usually acknowledged, often the relationship between the earthly body and the resurrection (heavenly) body was not readily apparent, thus raising the problem of identity. The different views came to be considered as either “materialistic” or “spiritual” conceptions of the resurrection body, although this distinction was based on a false dichotomy. The doctrine of the resurrection sometimes functioned merely as a formality, with no integral relationship to the structure of the thought of some Patristic writers. Thus anthropological concepts led to the obscuring of a central theme of Scripture.

Whether or not the resurrection body had sexual characteristics arose from the idea that there would be no marriage in the eschaton, and thus no need for sexual organs. This was also based on the view that the soul was without gender, and the resurrection body would be like the soul, thus also lacking gender.

A curious interpretation of Psalm 1:4 led some to believe that the wicked would exist in the resurrection as dust, while this image was interpreted only figuratively by others, seeing the wicked as unstable as the dust, blown here and there by every wind of temptation.

Belief in an immediate, individual judgement following death meant that the judgement on the Last Day could be considered unnecessary, since it merely confirmed the decisions already made regarding each soul. That which Scripture teaches concerning the judgement was thus made problematic as a result of

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<sup>1</sup> See K Hanhart. **The intermediate state in the New Testament**, for a study of this theme.

<sup>2</sup> W Fairweather. **Origen and Greek Patristic Theology**, p. 231.

interpreting it within a conceptual framework shaped by a synthesis between incompatible thought-forms: divine Revelation and pagan philosophical speculation.<sup>3</sup> Anthropological concepts which are fundamentally incompatible with Scripture lie at the basis of many of the difficulties concerning the judgement on the Last Day.

## 6.1 Paradise and the intermediate state

Clement of Alexandria and Origen appear to have been the first to admit all the saints, and not just the martyrs, to Paradise prior to the final resurrection.<sup>4</sup> Through his descent into Hades Christ destroyed the dominion of the devil over humanity, and led the OT saints into Paradise, having opened its gates through his atoning death. Those who subsequently die no longer need wait in Hades (which has been closed by Christ's victory and descent) but can go directly to Paradise.<sup>5</sup>

Ambrose, along with many others, followed Clement and Origen in admitting the souls of the saints to Paradise on death, where they will await the Last Judgement when they will receive the full reward of their merits.<sup>6</sup> Included in these are the martyrs, the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, as well as the devout Christian emperor.<sup>7</sup> However, Ambrose is not always consistent,<sup>8</sup> and in other places draws on the book of Esdras for the idea of "storehouses" for souls,<sup>9</sup> in which there are seven grades of joy for the just in their rest, where they wait for the resurrection to receive their fate. Ambrose correlates the different chambers in these "storehouses" with the "many mansions" of John 14:2.<sup>10</sup> In these storehouses souls have a psychological anticipation of what they shall receive at the judgement. Ambrose says that the just souls experience rest, while those of the wicked are "tormented with the recollection of their vices or tossed about, as it were, on tides of anxiety." The just confidently expect to be acquitted on the day of Judgement, and foresee their future glory which is "a soothing consolation."<sup>11</sup> He also suggests that the soul is "in suspense after death, unaware of the outcome of the judgement until the resurrection (*De Cain et*

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<sup>3</sup> It is a sound methodological principle to suspect any theological or philosophical formulation that generates difficulties in what is otherwise a clear and unambiguous teaching in Scripture, or alternatively, makes clear and unambiguous what Scripture presents as an unsolvable problem (i.e. the origin of evil). By neglecting this principle, we create pseudo-problems for ourselves which cannot be solved.

<sup>4</sup> L Hennessey. "The place of saints and sinners after death." In: **Origen of Alexandria: His world and his legacy**, p. 298.

<sup>5</sup> L Hennessey. "The place of saints and sinners after death." In: **Origen of Alexandria: His world and his legacy**, pp. 299-300.

<sup>6</sup> [Ambrose. *Letter 71.8-9.*] F H Dudden. **The life and times of St. Ambrose**. Vol. 2, p. 653.

<sup>7</sup> Ambrose. *On the death of Valentinian* 44. FC 22, pp. 284-285; *ibid.*, 46. FC 22, pp. 285-286. *On the death of Theodosius* 30. FC 22, p. 321; *ibid.*, 39. FC 22, p. 324.

<sup>8</sup> Brian E Daley. **The hope of the early Church**, p. 100.

<sup>9</sup> [4 Esdras 7.32] Ambrose. *Death as a good* 10.46. FC 65, p. 103.

<sup>10</sup> Ambrose. *Death as a good* 10.45. FC 65, p. 102.

<sup>11</sup> Ambrose. *Death as a good* 11.48. FC 65, p. 104.

Abel 2.2.9)” or else that the punishment of the soul prior to the judgement is “simply the lack of positive consolation (*In Luc* 8.18).”<sup>12</sup>

And so while we await the fullness of time, the souls await their due reward. Some await punishment and others await glory. And yet in the meantime the one group is not without harm nor the other without gain. For the former will be dismayed upon seeing that the reward of glory has been stored up for those who keep the Law of God, that the chambers of those souls are being preserved by the angels, that shame and ruin will be the punishments of their negligence and rebellion, so that they may gaze on the glory of the Most High and blush to come into His sight, for they have profaned His commandments.<sup>13</sup>

In another place Ambrose says that the tombs of the dead are places “in which for a brief space we are hidden, that we may be better able to pass to the judgement of God, which shall try us with the indignation due for our wickednesses.”<sup>14</sup> For the saints, the body is at rest, while the soul is free, and if devout, will be with Christ.<sup>15</sup> The just are considered to be “alive unto God,” in which they “enjoy a bodiless life and are illuminated with the splendour of their merits and are basking in life eternal.”<sup>16</sup> He specifies that this rest is restricted to the saints.<sup>17</sup>

Paulinus of Nola writes of several young men who had died as living in eternal peace, variously described as in Abraham’s bosom, at rest in Paradise, or in heaven.<sup>18</sup> Paulinus seems unsure of the exact location of these souls, and sometimes mentions several possibilities in the one place.<sup>19</sup> Paulinus says of Felix that his death “consigned his flesh to earth but his soul to heaven.”<sup>20</sup> He “brought to an end his days in the flesh, and departed to heaven into eternal life.”<sup>21</sup> He does not neglect the resurrection, and says that the saints will join together before the throne of “Christ the Judge,” but meanwhile they lie in peace in Abraham’s bosom.<sup>22</sup> In the intermediate state, each soul “perceives the fruits which the body sought.” The soul is conscious and “observes with joy the good fruit, and with pain the evil fruit” which it will “harvest in the time to come, when it is recalled to its body” and together body and

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<sup>12</sup> Brian E Daley. **The hope of the early Church**, p. 100.

<sup>13</sup> Ambrose. *Death as a good* 10.47. FC 65, pp. 103-104.

<sup>14</sup> Ambrose. *On belief in the resurrection* 2.68. NPNF 2/10, p. 185.

<sup>15</sup> Ambrose. *Death as a good* 3.8. FC 65, p. 75.

<sup>16</sup> Ambrose. *Cain and Abel* 2.9.31. FC 42, p. 431.

<sup>17</sup> Ambrose. *On belief in the resurrection* 2.91. NPNF 2/10, p. 189.

<sup>18</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Letter* 45.5. ACW 36, p. 249. *Letter* 23.1. ACW 36, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Letter* 32.6. ACW 36, p. 140. *Poem* 31. ACW 40, p. 328. Cf. *Poem* 11, where Paulinus says that “whatever the heavenly region where our common Father sets me, even there I shall have you in mind.” ACW 40, p. 72.

<sup>20</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 18. ACW 40, p. 117.

<sup>21</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 26. ACW 40, p. 254.

<sup>22</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Epitaph*. ACW 40, p. 345. *Poem* 21. ACW 40, p. 178.

soul will share in their just rewards.<sup>23</sup> Thus while the saints enjoy rest after death, they do not receive their full rewards until the resurrection, when these will be shared with the body.

John Cassian critiques those who punctuate the verse from Luke 23:43 differently, viz. “I say to you today, you shall be with me in Paradise.” This, he says, is the view of the heretics, who imagine that this promise was not fulfilled after departing from this life, but will be fulfilled only in the resurrection to come. The souls of the departed are certainly experiencing feelings of both sorrow and joy, and are beginning to “taste beforehand something of what is reserved for them at the last judgement.”<sup>24</sup> The saints, he declares, are “already in the enjoyment of eternal bliss in the kingdom of heaven...”<sup>25</sup>

## 6.2 The story of Lazarus: Luke 16:19-31

Ambrose argues on the basis of this story that “is it not plain from this that rewards and punishments according to deserts await one after death?”<sup>26</sup> Those who prosper in this life have their reward already: there is nothing for them in the future life. They have not struggled for a reward, and thus enjoy themselves now while the righteous labours for a crown.<sup>27</sup>

Gregory of Nazianzus also holds that the ungodly dead are suffering now, like “the rich man wasting away in the flame, and begging for repentance for his friends,” while anxiously anticipating the last judgement, when those who have done evil will enter the “resurrection of judgement, to which they who have not believed have been condemned already by the word which judges them.”<sup>28</sup>

Tugwell indicates that Hilary of Poitiers cites

...the parable of dives and Lazarus as proof that there is an immediate punishment of sinners as soon as they die, while the righteous go to Abraham’s bosom; there both await the judgement, which will allot them either eternal bliss or eternal pain.<sup>29</sup>

A similar position is found in the works of Gregory the Great, who says the rich man

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<sup>23</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 18. ACW 40, pp. 116-117.

<sup>24</sup> John Cassian. *Conferences* 1.14. NPNF 2/11, p. 301.

<sup>25</sup> John Cassian. *Institutes* 12.15. NPNF 2/11, p. 284.

<sup>26</sup> Ambrose. *Duties of the clergy* 1.15.57. NPNF 2/10, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> Ambrose. *Duties of the clergy* 1.16.59-61. NPNF 2/10, p. 11. Cf. *Duties of the clergy* 2.1.2-3. NPNF 2/10, pp. 43-44.

<sup>28</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus. *Oration* 16.9, *On his father’s silence*. NPNF 2/7, p. 250. Note the reference to the wicked being judged already.

<sup>29</sup> [Hilary of Poitiers. *On the Psalms* 2.49] Simon Tugwell. **Human immortality and the redemption of death**, p. 116.

...lifts up his eyes from afar to see Lazarus, because when unbelievers are in the depth through the punishment brought by their condemnation, they gaze at the believers at rest above them before the day of the last judgement.<sup>30</sup>

Further on he expresses this in more detail.

So that sinners may be punished more as they suffer, they see the glory of those they despised; and the punishment of those they loved to no avail also torments them. We must believe that before they receive their recompense at the final judgement, the unrighteous behold some of the righteous at rest. This is so that when they see them in their joy, they may be tormented not only by their own suffering but also by the good the others have received.<sup>31</sup>

The story of the rich man and Lazarus thus provides a basis for some writers on which to hold that the souls of the dead suffer punishment or enjoy rewards immediately after death and before the resurrection and judgement on the Last Day.

### 6.3 The sleep and death of the soul rejected

The idea that the soul was asleep, awaiting the resurrection before it experiences rewards or punishments, was rejected by those who held to an instrumentalist view. Various Patristic writers sought to demonstrate that the term “sleep” which is used of death in Scripture does not mean the soul is unconscious.<sup>32</sup> Concerning the raising of the daughter of Jairus, one of the classical passages for the subject, Origen confesses “I know not why He said, ‘She is not dead, but sleeping,’ stating regarding her something which does not apply to all who die.”<sup>33</sup> Peter Chrysologus also commented on this passage:

And so when Christ had come to the house, and saw the girl wept for as dead, that He might lead these unbelieving souls to faith, He says that she is not dead, but sleeping: that they might come to believe that we can more easily rise from the dead than from sleep. *The girl*, he says, *is not dead but sleeps*. And with God death is indeed a sleep; for God can more swiftly rouse the dead to life, than man can rouse a sleeper from his sleep, and before a man can rouse to action bodies that are deep in sleep, God will have poured the heat of life into bodies long cold in death.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Gregory the Great. *Homily 40. Forty Gospel Homilies of Gregory the Great*, p. 373.

<sup>31</sup> Gregory the Great. *Homily 40. Forty Gospel Homilies of Gregory the Great*, p. 381.

<sup>32</sup> Augustine discusses why sleep symbolises death. *On the Psalms* 3.5. NPNF 1/8, pp. 5-6.

<sup>33</sup> Origen. *Against Celcus* 2.48. ANF 4, p. 449.

<sup>34</sup> Peter Chrysologus. *Sermon 34. Mark 5:22-43. On the raising of Jairus' daughter. Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, Vol. 4, p. 327. The correlation of life with heat may reflect simply the coldness of dead bodies, or perhaps an Orphic idea which saw heat as the source of life. Prudentius used this image extensively. He called the soul a “spark of life” [*Apotheosis* 920. Loeb I, p. 189] and a “glowing spark” [*Hamartigenia* 850. Loeb I, p. 265], a “fire”

Chrysologus understood the sleep of death to be rest for the saints, but punishment for the wicked. They are not considered to be living, therefore they are spoken of as asleep. “For, the death of the saints is a sleep, but that of the sinners is truly a death, in so far as in hell they live only for punishment. As far as life is concerned, the sinners perish.”<sup>35</sup> Similarly, Ambrose says that while waiting for the resurrection the wicked will be watchful, implying that they are fearful of their coming fate, while the righteous rest peacefully in expectation of the resurrection.<sup>36</sup>

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 11:30, Peter Chrysologus says: “He speaks again of the dead as sleeping; whom he mourns as buried in their living bodies.”<sup>37</sup> The idea of death as a sleep appears mainly with reference to the bodies of the saints, not their souls,<sup>38</sup> an idea repeated by a number of Patristic writers, for instance Paulinus of Nola, who says: “...those who expired in Christ are buried but not dead, for their bodies are temporarily in tranquil sleep.”<sup>39</sup> The dead will be woken from this sleep, which is not permanent.<sup>40</sup>

The debate between Origen and the Arabian Christians, who are reported to have believed that the soul dies with the body, and is reconstituted at the resurrection, is the most extensive account of the doctrine of the death of the soul from Patristic times. We have little direct evidence of their views which are known mainly from the polemical writings of their theological opponents, such as Origen and Eusebius, to whom these views were inimical. Eusebius recounts the disputation of Origen with these Christians and gives his opinion of their theology.

About the same time others arose in Arabia, putting forward a doctrine foreign to the truth. They said that during the present time the human soul dies and perishes with the body, but that at the time of the resurrection they will be renewed together. And at that time also a synod of considerable size assembled, and Origen, being again invited

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which had its origin in the stars. *Cathemerinon* 10.30-33. Loeb, I, p. 87. The soul is described as a “glowing substance” that is able to perceive “the flashing energy of the bright-glowing godhead.” *Crowns of Martyrdom* 10, 439-442. Loeb II, p. 259. He describes the sense of the presence of God as feeling the soul “aglow” while afterwards it grows “cool.” *Psychomachia* 900-903. Loeb I, p. 343. He often speaks of the coldness of death, and the warmth of the body returning at the resurrection [for example, *Cathemerinon* 9, 101-105. Loeb, I, p. 83; *Cathemerinon* 10, 37-40. Loeb, I, p. 87].

<sup>35</sup> Peter Chrysologus. Sermon 96. *On Matthew 13:24-30*. FC 17, p. 155.

<sup>36</sup> Ambrose. *Duties of the clergy* 1.16.61. NPNF 2/10, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> Peter Chrysologus. *Sermon 34. Mark 5:22-43. On the raising of Jairus’ daughter*. **Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers** 4, p. 326.

<sup>38</sup> Gregory of Nyssa reports Macrina as saying: “...for a season you rest our bodies in sleep and awake them again at the last trump.” *Life of St. Macrina*. Cited in: A C Rush. **Death and burial in Christian antiquity**, p. 18. Rush cites many liturgical texts and cemetery inscriptions which speak of the dead as “sleeping” but distinguishing the sleep of the soul from the sleep of the body is not easy. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-22. Prudentius uses a contemporary view of sleep in which the soul is freed from the body and wanders through the air. *Cathemerinon* 6, 25-35. Loeb I, p. 51.

<sup>39</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 21. ACW 40, p. 194.

<sup>40</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Letter* 13.9. ACW 35, p. 125.

thither, spoke publicly on the question with such effect that the opinions of those who had formerly fallen were changed.<sup>41</sup>

Another discussion of this issue is given in a recently rediscovered work of Origen, the *Dialogue with Heraclides*, which provides independent verification for the account given by Eusebius, as well as a considerable amount of detail not included in his brief notice. Dionysius introduces into the discussion the question as to whether the soul was material, and was corrupted with the body in the grave. This was based on Leviticus 17:11, *The soul of all flesh is blood*, together with Deuteronomy 12:23, *Be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life*. Origen argues in response that Scripture often uses physical terms to describe spiritual realities. Therefore, “blood” in the Leviticus text cannot possibly mean blood. This was taken to mean that Origen was teaching the immortality of the soul.<sup>42</sup> In his response to this comment, Origen seeks to define the different meanings of the word “death.”

To this remark I will say that the soul is immortal and the soul is not immortal. Let us first define the meaning of the word “death,” and to determine all its possible senses. I will try to show all its meanings not by appealing to the Greeks, but all its meanings as found in the divine Scripture.<sup>43</sup>

Chadwick comments that it is “difficult to see that his involved discussion of the various meanings of “death” is of any value in answering the point.”<sup>44</sup> He appears to be more of a Platonist than a Christian, especially since his ideas can be seen to be of a spiritualising and anti-body sentiment. He sees life in the body as a problem for us to be overcome by death.

I know that as soon as I die, I come forth from the body, I rest with Christ. Therefore let us struggle, therefore let us wrestle, let us groan being in the body, not as if we shall again be in the tombs in the body, because we shall be set free from it, and shall change our body to one which is more spiritual. Destined as we are to be with Christ, how we groan while we are in the body!<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical History* 6.37. NPNF 2/1, p. 279. The idea that the soul dies and is reconstituted at the resurrection is also condemned as heretical by Augustine. “Therefore seeing that the author [Eusebius] cites none of them, we are able to announce these heretics as Arabs, who say that souls die and are dissolved together with bodies, and at the end of the age will rise again. But Origen was present at this disputation and said to them swiftly what was correct.” *De haeresibus* 83. PL 42, 46. Also John of Damascus. *De haeresibus* 90. PG 94, 757. One of the earliest works of John Calvin was the **Psychopannychia**, a defence of the immortality of the soul against the sleep of the soul in death. This idea, interestingly enough, he ascribes to Arabs, especially Averroes.

<sup>42</sup> H Chadwick. Introduction. **Origen. Dialogue with Heraclides**. LCC 2, pp. 435-436.

<sup>43</sup> Origen. *Dialogue with Heraclides* 168. LCC 2, p. 453.

<sup>44</sup> H Chadwick. Introduction. **Origen. Dialogue with Heraclides**. LCC 2, pp. 435-436.

<sup>45</sup> Origen. *Dialogue with Heraclides* 166. LCC 2, p. 453. It is possible that Origen here uses the **soma-sema** [the body a tomb] pun of the Greeks, when he says that we are in the “tombs of the body.” This is a pagan image which distorts Christian eschatology and anthropology.

Origen insisted that as soon as the believer dies he is with Christ. If that were not so, it would not be better to die.

Before the resurrection the righteous man is with Christ and in his soul he lives with Christ. But according to you who say that the soul remains in the tomb with the body, it has not left the body, it does not rest, it does not dwell in the paradise of God, it does not repose in the bosom of Abraham. According to you who maintain such absurd doctrines it would not be better to depart and to be with Christ. For one is not with Christ as soon as one departs if the soul is in the blood. If the soul remains in the tombs, how can it be with Christ? But according to my view and that of the word of God, the soul has departed from the troubles, the sweat, and the body, that which can say, "Lord now lettest thy servant depart in peace," is that which departs in peace and rests with Christ.<sup>46</sup>

Quispel compares the views of the Arabian Christians (as revealed in Origen's *Dialogue with Heraclides*) concerning the resurrection of the body, which he sees as "archaic," with those of the African Christians such as Minucius Felix, described by Quispel as "naive." The Arabs held that

...the soul is blood, which implies that the soul after death dwells in the tomb or the body and is not immediately united to Christ. When Origen defends this Pauline position, he is said to teach the immortality of the soul. It is quite clear that Minucius Felix' faith is near to that of the Arabs, whereas Tertullian holds very much the same position as Origen.<sup>47</sup>

Quispel goes on to state that Christianity in Carthage was of Jewish origin, and that their simple Christian belief in the resurrection is a pre-Catholic faith which existed in Africa prior to Tertullian.<sup>48</sup> This demonstrates the slow decline of the early Christian eschatology, which expressed hope in the resurrection and life in the kingdom in which all things would be made new, and the gradual ascendancy of individualised eschatology which emphasised the immediate judgement and fate of the soul on death. In such a theology, the resurrection became increasingly irrelevant, even though it was still defended as a doctrine of the faith, and it was submerged under a growing emphasis on the doctrine of the immortal soul in line with an individualised eschatology. Minucius Felix maintained an older approach against the trend of increasing abstract speculation and priority of reason over revelation. The assumption that the dead who are "with Christ" must therefore be in heaven is unwarranted, as sleeping in the grave until the resurrection is no less to be with Christ, whose presence is not limited to heaven.<sup>49</sup> While the image of sleep when speaking of death in the Scriptures is thus interpreted literally by many (although perhaps not the exact meaning of that image), still this retains the emphasis on the resurrection which is lacking in speculative views of the intermediate state.

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<sup>46</sup> Origen. *Dialogue with Heraclides* 164-166. LCC 2, p. 452.

<sup>47</sup> G Quispel. "African Christianity before Tertullian." In: **Romanitas et Christianitas**, p. 278.

<sup>48</sup> G Quispel. "African Christianity before Tertullian." In: **Romanitas et Christianitas**, p. 278.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Psalm 139:8, Romans 8:38-39.

#### 6.4 The individual judgement of the soul

Instrumentalist anthropology makes possible a judgement prior to the resurrection, since it is the soul which is the person and is responsible for its actions. Thus the soul sinned while the body remained innocent, and would face judgement prior to the resurrection apart from the body. Thus both vices and virtues belonged to the soul, an idea found for instance in Origen,<sup>50</sup> and so a resurrection was not required, as the soul could justly be punished or rewarded without reference to the body.<sup>51</sup>

Thus we have a shift in focus from the judgement of humanity as a whole, to an individualistic conception in which each soul is judged separately immediately after death. This concentrated on the relationship of the individual to God, in isolation from the diverse range of relationships in which that individual stood during life. This emphasis on the vertical dimension of life at the expense of the horizontal dimension thus divides our relationship with God from our relationships with the rest of humanity, and considers that we can be judged individually apart from our communal relationships and responsibilities.

The earliest most explicit presentation of this view is found in Clement of Alexandria, who taught that the righteous enter into their rewards, and the wicked receive their punishments, immediately after death rather than after the resurrection, as was held by the earlier Patristic writers. He says: "For God bestows life freely; but evil custom, after our departure from this world, brings on the sinner unavailing remorse with punishment."<sup>52</sup> This originates in Clement's emphasis on the ethical life, which he understands is the cause of salvation.

No doubt the keeping of God's commandments belongs to a Christian life. Clement realized this clearly. But by making it the condition of grace he reverses the order of the Gospel. Against such conceptions St. Paul wrote a.o. the Epistle to the Galatians. In Clement the moral effort is a condition for salvation, in St. Paul moral effort proceeds from salvation as a task. This is why Clement has no eschatological expectation - though he expects heaven - but not the expectation that at the end of time God will start an entirely new creation [sic]. The believers' penitential efforts are continued after their death. Thus the souls of the believers make their way, each of them separately to heaven.<sup>53</sup>

Clement cites the Greek philosophers Theano and Plato to support his view that there are both punishments and rewards awaiting us immediately after death.<sup>54</sup> From

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<sup>50</sup> Gregory Thaumaturgus. *Panegyric* 12. ANF 6, p. 33.

<sup>51</sup> R M Grant. "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras." *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954) 127.

<sup>52</sup> Clement of Alexandria. *Exhortation to the Heathen* 10. ANF 2, p. 197.

<sup>53</sup> J Wytzes. "The two-fold way. I. Platonic influences in the work of Clement of Alexandria." *Vigiliae Christianae* 11 (1957) 237-238.

<sup>54</sup> Clement of Alexandria. *The Stromata* 4.7. ANF 2, p. 417.

similar comments Clement makes elsewhere, it is evident that he was strongly influenced by the eschatology of Plato in particular.<sup>55</sup> Butterworth claims that the root difference between the New Testament and Clement's eschatological ideas is that the former "postulates a common judgement, equally necessary for all, because all have sinned. This is followed, in those who believe on Christ, by exaltation to an eternal life with God."<sup>56</sup> The combat with paganism was compromised by the Patristic idea that the Greeks had acquired true insights, such as the idea of the judgement after death, from the Old Testament. Although the Patristic writers claimed the Greeks had misunderstood these ideas, for instance failing to grasp the resurrection of the body, and misunderstanding the nature of punishments after death, the basic truth was considered to be there. For instance, Tertullian concurs with Justin that the doctrine of a judgment and subsequent punishments and rewards after death, found in the Greek writers, is taken from the OT prophets.<sup>57</sup>

Origen held that after death there is a provisional separation between the good and the wicked, and "to prepare them for their eternal destinies they pass to an intermediate state of longer or shorter duration, which serves as a probationary school." The judgement itself at the end of the world will be a definitive separation of the good and the wicked.<sup>58</sup>

In Origen's writings there is no difference between the particular judgement and the general judgement, nor is there any speculation about the intermediate period between time and eternity, which would extend from the death of the individual until the general resurrection. This will be the preoccupation of later theology. Rather, after death, each person passes through the process of purification, the baptism of fire: the saints and repentant sinners--the former unscathed and the latter painfully purified--pass on afterwards to heaven, while the hardened, unrepentant sinners are sent to the "eternal fire" of Gehenna.<sup>59</sup>

Salvian wishes to stress, while not denying a future judgement, that God is even now actively judging, and so everything in human life can be seen as an expression of God's providence. While he does not deny the future judgement, or claim that everything that happens to us in this life is just, he does stress that God is even now active in judging, although it seems that the punishment of the wicked, and the rewarding of the righteous, mostly takes place after death, even though the judgement is made while they are alive.

But perhaps you claim this as an additional proof that God neglects everything that happens in this life and reserves his whole care for the

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<sup>55</sup> Clement of Alexandria. *The Stromata* 5.14. ANF 2, p. 466.

<sup>56</sup> G W Butterworth. "The deification of man in Clement of Alexandria." *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1916) 163.

<sup>57</sup> Justin Martyr. *First Apology* 44. ANF 1, p. 177. Tertullian. *Apology* 47. ANF 3, p. 52. Cf. *Ad nationes* 1.19. ANF 3, p. 127.

<sup>58</sup> [Origen. *De principiis* 2.11.6; 2.9.8; *Contra Celsum* 4.9. ] J N D Kelly. **Early Christian Doctrines**, p. 472.

<sup>59</sup> L Hennessey. "The place of saints and sinners after death." In: **Origen of Alexandria: His world and his legacy**, p. 303.

judgement to come, since the good have always suffered, as the wicked have performed, all things evil. This idea does not seem to be that of an unbeliever, especially as it admits the future judgement of God. But we say that the human race is to be judged by Christ, while yet maintaining that now also God rules and ordains all things in accordance with his reason. While we declare that he will judge in the future, we also teach that he always has judged us in this life. As God always governs, so too he always judges, for his government is itself judgement.<sup>60</sup>

Salvian bases his eschatology on a continuation of God's providence: the judgement after death is a continuation of the judgement and government which God exercises in life.<sup>61</sup> We should live our lives in the light of the coming judgement, according to Salvian's theology, because of the danger of eternal fire. This may mean that we forsake family life and take up the ascetical life. Thus Salvian gives an allegorical interpretation of Matthew 18:8-9.

No man should deprive himself of his members, but in the case of certain domestic relationships so necessary to us that we have come to consider them as eyes or hands, it is right to deprive ourselves of their present service in order to escape the torture of eternal fire.<sup>62</sup>

Salvian has a strongly developed sense of justice, which is interesting in the light of his stress on the providence of God which governs all things, and that God is exercising judgement on the wicked even now, although he seems to indicate that the punishment they will experience will come only after death.

A similar view is found in the view of Ambrose that the judgement of God is seen in the fact that the wicked are accused by their consciences and thus die in bitterness, while the righteous die in peace. This is a recompense of divine judgement.<sup>63</sup> Ambrose concludes: "Thus the wicked man is a punishment to himself, but the upright man is a grace to himself - and to either, whether good or bad, the reward of his deeds is paid in his own person," that is, even in this life.<sup>64</sup>

In the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions*, the justice of God is used as an argument by the apostle Peter for the immortality of the soul, since it must survive to be rewarded or suffer punishment.<sup>65</sup> Simon Magus, arguing against Peter, says that as soon as we

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<sup>60</sup> Salvian. *On the government of God* 1.4. E M Sanford, p. 47.

<sup>61</sup> Salvian appears to hold that this judgement follows immediately after death, just as the punishment God metes out in this life follows immediately on the crime. For instance, with respect to the fall of Adam and Eve, Salvian says: "Man transgressed the sacred ordinance, underwent judgement, lost paradise and suffered the penalty of damnation." *On the government of God* 1.6. E M Sanford, p. 50. Similarly concerning the punishment of Sodom, Salvian said: "For they deserved so ill of God that they suffered in this world the Gehenna that is to come in the later judgement." *On the government of God* 4.8. E M Sanford, p. 113.

<sup>62</sup> Salvian. *On the government of God* 3.8. E M Sanford, p. 91.

<sup>63</sup> Ambrose. *Duties of the clergy* 1.12.40-45. NPNF 2/10, p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Ambrose. *Duties of the clergy* 1.12.46. NPNF 2/10, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> Pseudo-Clement. *Recognitions* 3.40. ANF 8, p. 124.

die, the soul is extinguished, and therefore moral restraint in the hope of future reward is futile.<sup>66</sup> Peter then says that if the soul is not immortal, then anarchy and immorality will be the result, if there is no value in righteousness and hope of future reward.<sup>67</sup> Thus a judgement proves the justice of God, since God has required us to live moral lives, and will reward those who do. The emphasis placed in the *Recognitions* on the reward of the virtuous rather than on the punishment of the wicked means the judgement is an incitement to virtue, rather than an inducement to shun evil because of the punishments it will bring.<sup>68</sup>

Sulpitius Severus constantly stressed that judgement was imminent, both the immediate judgement after death for each individual, and the universal judgement for all humankind. Sulpitius held to an individualistic eschatology in which the judgement took place immediately after death, and thereby downplayed the significance of the resurrection of the body.<sup>69</sup> Sulpitius concentrates more on the individual's fate after death than the cosmic aspects of eschatology. The judgement is central in this aspect of his thought. For instance, Martin of Tours; was reported by Sulpitius to have raised a dead man who had not been baptised. "The same man was wont to relate that, when he left the body, he was brought before the tribunal of the Judge, and being assigned to gloomy regions and vulgar crowds, he received a severe sentence." Before he could be led away to his fate, he was restored to his body through the prayers of Martin.<sup>70</sup> Sulpitius expressed his views in a letter which demonstrates a rather morbid outlook: "...there occurred to me, as often happens, that hope of the future which I cherish, along with a weariness of the present world, a terror of judgement, a fear of punishment..."<sup>71</sup> One factor in Sulpitius' morbid theology and fear of the judgement and punishment after death is the ethical emphasis in his thought: salvation comes through meeting the standards of the Commandments, not through faith and trust in Christ. Thus he lacks confidence that he will receive the heavenly reward because he is unsure of his own deserts. He again returns to his theme of enduring suffering, and stresses that this is one way in which to "earn" eternity.

But if you reflect upon eternity, and if you consider the kingdom of heaven, which undoubtedly the Lord will condescend to bestow upon us although we are sinners, what suffering, I ask, is sufficiently great, by which we may merit such things?<sup>72</sup>

This is one consequence of instrumentalist anthropology and immediate individualistic eschatology: an obscuring of the grace of God which alone brings salvation, and a focusing on the merits and defects of the individual. The

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<sup>66</sup> Pseudo-Clement. *Recognitions* 3.41. ANF 8, p. 125.

<sup>67</sup> Pseudo-Clement. *Recognitions* 3.42. ANF 8, p. 125.

<sup>68</sup> Pseudo-Clement. *Recognitions* 8.10. ANF 8, p. 168.

<sup>69</sup> G K van Andel. **The Christian concept of history in the Chronicle of Sulpicius Severus**, p. 135.

<sup>70</sup> Sulpitius Severus. *Life of St. Martin* 7. NPNF 2/11, pp. 7-8.

<sup>71</sup> Sulpitius Severus. *Letter to the Deacon Aurelius*. NPNF 2/11, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup> Sulpitius Severus (doubtful). *Letter to Claudia concerning the last judgement* 2. NPNF 2/11, p. 55.

eschatological judgement as vindication of the saints and punishment of the wicked is thus also obscured in this perspective.

A judgement and allocation of rewards and punishments immediately after death appears to pre-empt an eschatological judgement, which is then redundant and irrelevant.

In one sense the theory of double judgement - an individual judgement at the time of death and a universal judgement at the end of time - was a great success. It established itself as the normal teaching of the western church. But as a way of actually making sense of the unclear inheritance of christian eschatology it rather petered out, since all competence was effectively transferred to the particular judgement, leaving nothing except the resurrection of the body and the consequent rewarding or punishing of the body to the general judgement.<sup>73</sup>

It would seem that the immediate judgement following death could be considered not to pre-empt the judgement of the last day if it ratifies finally the fate of the soul which it commences to experience prior to the last day. However, this is still a pre-empting, since it considers each soul individualistically. The earlier Patristic conception of the judgement was that all humankind would be confronted with their God, whom as a race they have rebelled against. The immediate judgement is intrinsically individualistic and moralistic, rather than in terms of the violation of our covenantal relationship with God. There is little place here for the concept of the “judgement of the nations” such as we find in Scripture [Genesis 18:25, 1 Samuel 2:10, Psalm 9:8, Psalm 50, Psalm 96:10-13, Psalm 98:9, Matthew 25:32].

While the state of the soul is permanent after death, this does not mean that the universal judgement is somehow redundant; simply that there is no possibility for repentance or for further righteous or unrighteous deeds which might thereby alter the outcome of that judgement.

The parable of Dives and Lazarus appears to suggest that immediately upon their death, the rich man goes to the place of torment, while Lazarus is taken to Abraham’s bosom, and there is nothing in the story to imply they are still awaiting a further judgement, or a more definitive punishment or reward [Luke 16:19-26]. On the other hand the dramatic picture of the whole human race being assembled for judgement and allocated the punishment or reward that each individual has merited is too vivid to be disregarded [Matthew 25:31-46, 2 Corinthians 4:10]. Two ways of harmonising these different considerations can be recognised in the literature of the early Christian centuries. One possibility is to postulate a three-stage story: this life, an interim state, and then the judgement leading to everyone’s final reward. This is the picture we found in Justin, apparently representing the normal doctrine of the period: at death people go to nice or nasty waiting-rooms, depending on their moral qualities. There they await the judgement. It is difficult to see quite what the point is of sorting souls out like this into good and bad, only to keep them hanging around until the judgement, and later western doctrine abandoned the whole idea of waiting-rooms...<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Simon Tugwell. **Human immortality and the redemption of death**, p. 119.

<sup>74</sup> Simon Tugwell. **Human immortality and the redemption of death**, p. 115.

Ambrose held that for the righteous the Judgement will be no more than a “crowning,”<sup>75</sup> when their innocence will be clearly manifested,<sup>76</sup> and their reward assigned.<sup>77</sup> Hilary of Poitiers held that after death the righteous rest “in Abraham’s bosom, while the wicked begin to pay the penalty which the Last Day will ratify.”<sup>78</sup> Basil speaks of both the “last day” of the individual at death, after which comes an immediate judgement, and the “conclusion of all human life” when Christ comes to judge all.<sup>79</sup> A similar idea is found in John Chrysostom,<sup>80</sup> as well as in Augustine, who said:

In whatever state his own last day finds each one, in that state the last day of the world will overtake him; such as he is on the day of his death, such each one will be judged on that last day.<sup>81</sup>

The “last day” is thus understood as the day of each person’s death, since it brings him to the great Last Day in which he shall be judged, and the judgement after death is ratified.

### 6.5 Purgatory following the individual judgement

The idea of purgatory is a logical development of the idea of an immediate individual judgement after death. Those who were considered already purged of sin, for instance through martyrdom (whether shedding of blood or asceticism) could enter heaven immediately. Those who are judged and found to be believers, but still retaining some sin, need to be purified before they can enter heaven.<sup>82</sup> The doctrine of purgatory therefore has a negative correlation with the doctrine of the general resurrection and judgement at the end of the age, as in at least some respects, it involves pre-empting that judgement, with punishment for sins commencing immediately after death.<sup>83</sup> That punishment is to purify the believers who will eventually be rewarded, and not to exact retribution on the wicked, as their sins cannot be forgiven. This speculative view of purgatorial suffering has no good Scriptural warrant,<sup>84</sup> but is demanded by the

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<sup>75</sup> Ambrose. *Enarratio in Psalmum* 40.7. PL 14, 1122-1123.

<sup>76</sup> Ambrose. *Hexameron* 2.10.37. FC 42, p. 43.

<sup>77</sup> Ambrose. *Expositio in Psalmum* 118, 7.17. PL 15, 1354.

<sup>78</sup> [Hilary of Poitiers. *Tractate in Psalmos* 51.22f, 57.5, 2.48.] J N D Kelly. **Early Christian Doctrines**, p. 482.

<sup>79</sup> Basil. *Letter* 46.5, “To a fallen virgin.” NPNF 2/8, p. 151.

<sup>80</sup> John Chrysostom. *Homilies on Thessalonians* 9.1. NPNF 1/13, pp. 360-361.

<sup>81</sup> Augustine. *Letter* 199.2. FC 30, pp. 358-359. Cf. also *Letter* 199.3. FC 30, p. 359.

<sup>82</sup> According to the research of Jacques le Goff, purgatory was not seen as a **location** until the twelfth century. **The birth of Purgatory**, p. 227.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. for the opposite approach the comment by F H Dudden that “Gregory of Tours seems to hold the old idea that purgatorial punishment for slight offences was reserved for the day of judgement.” **Gregory the Great: His place in history and thought**, vol. 2, p. 429.

<sup>84</sup> Passages cited as the basis for a doctrine of purgatory include 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, Matthew 5:25-26, 12:31-32, and 2 Timothy 1:16f. Robert Ombres. “Images of healing: The making of

logic of anthropological, soteriological and eschatological doctrines. Ombres is of the opinion that the Old Testament view of death was modified by apocalyptic views, to incorporate the idea that “the division of good and wicked is not always postponed till the Last Judgement but begins at death for each man.” In the apocalyptic writings, for instance 1 Enoch 22, Sheol is divided up into different sections, with distinct rewards or punishments.<sup>85</sup> In 2 Maccabees 12 we find the idea that atonement for sin and purgation is possible between death and the judgement.<sup>86</sup> Ombres cites the Jerome Biblical Commentary which states that this chapter “contains the essence of what would become (with further precisions) the Christian theologian’s teaching on purgatory.”<sup>87</sup> Of course the significance of this passage for theology depends on one’s view of the canon of Scripture, and for Protestants this passage does not hold any canonical authority. The Hellenistic influence in the apocryphal and deuterocanonical books is one source of the conflict between the eschatology they contain and the rest of the Old Testament.

While the basis for the idea of purgatory, the cleansing of the soul by suffering after death, is found in Patristic thought (although derived from pagan ideas partly through the influence of Hellenism),<sup>88</sup> the precise development of this doctrine is obscure.<sup>89</sup>

It was mainly the belief in metempsychosis that made it possible to establish a scale of punishments, a range of intermediate penalties. This was also characteristic of Orphism, “which from the beginning seems to have accepted the belief that between successive periods of earthly existence there comes a period of expiation in Hades.” The influence of Orphism on Christianity has often been stressed. Since there is no

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the traditions concerning Purgatory.” *Eastern Churches Review* 8 (1976) 130. See also K Hanhart. **The intermediate state in the New Testament**, pp. 185-190.

<sup>85</sup> Robert Ombres. “Images of healing: The making of the traditions concerning Purgatory.” *Eastern Churches Review* 8 (1976) 129-130, citing: D S Russell. **The method and message of Jewish apocalyptic 200 BC - AD 100**. London, 1964, p. 360.

<sup>86</sup> Robert Ombres. “Images of healing: The making of the traditions concerning Purgatory.” *Eastern Churches Review* 8 (1976) 130.

<sup>87</sup> Robert Ombres. “Images of healing: The making of the traditions concerning Purgatory.” *Eastern Churches Review* 8 (1976) 130. Citing: R E Brown, J A Fitzmeyer, R E Murphy, eds. **The Jerome Biblical Commentary**. London, 1969, p. 485.

<sup>88</sup> See Harald Hagendahl. **The Latin Fathers and the Classics**, pp. 392-395, where he identifies a passage from Virgil’s *Aeneid* [6.745ff] as the source for the idea of purgatory in Paulinus [*Letter of Faustus of Riez* 4] and Augustine [*The City of God* 21.13]. Hagendahl points out that Faustus rebukes the idea suggested by Paulinus and identifies the source in Virgil that has influenced him. Thus even in Patristic times the problem of synthesis was recognised and resisted.

<sup>89</sup> E F Osborn is of the opinion that the beginnings of the idea of purgatory are found in Clement of Alexandria. **The philosophy of Clement of Alexandria**, p. 80. Other claimed sources include Gregory of Nyssa. *On the soul and resurrection*. NPNF 2/5, pp. 451, 462. *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* 2.3-4. ANF 3, pp. 701-702. Tertullian. *On the soul* 58. ANF 3, pp. 234-235. Ambrose. *Expositio in Psalmum* 118, 3.14-17. PL 15, 1292-1294. *Ibid.*, 20.12-15. PL 15, 1564-1565. *Enarrationes in Psalmum* 36.26. PL 14, 1026-1027. F H Dudden. **The life and times of St. Ambrose**, vol. 2, pp. 660-662. Augustine. *The City of God* 20.9, 21.13, 21.26. NPNF 1/2, pp. 430-431, 463-464, 473-475. Caesarius of Arles. *Sermon* 179, on 1 Cor 3:15. FC 47, pp. 449-456.

evidence of a belief in an intermediate state between celestial happiness and the torments of Hell in ancient Judaism, and since the precursors of Purgatory first appear among Christian Greeks, it has been suggested that the Christian idea of a “purgatory” in which souls not sufficiently guilty to deserve eternal torment might be purified of their sins derives from beliefs of the pagan Greeks and specifically from Orphic doctrine. If such an influence did exist, it must, I think, have affected segments of the Jewish community first. For it is in the apocalyptic writings of the Jews, particularly rabbinical teaching dating from around the time of Christ’s birth, that one finds the earliest forerunner of what was to become the Christian Purgatory.<sup>90</sup>

Le Goff mentions the influence of pagan Greek philosophical and religious ideas directly on Clement of Alexandria and Origen, namely that “the chastisement inflicted by the gods is not punishment but rather a means of education and salvation, part of a process of purification.” This was found in the works of Plato, and from this Clement and Origen deduce “the idea that ‘to punish’ is synonymous with ‘to educate’ and that any chastisement by God contributes to man’s salvation.”<sup>91</sup> Le Goff comments that the idea of purifying or divine fire has a long prehistory in pagan religions, and that the idea of purgatory succeeded in capturing the imagination of the Middle Ages not simply because of a few biblical passages which were understood to speak of it, but because of the ancient traditions that idea incorporated. Le Goff cautions that the concept of divine fire changes its meaning when transferred from pagan religions to Christianity, although certain fundamental elements persist.<sup>92</sup> However, the roots of the idea are in conflict with the perspective of Scripture, so no amount of modification can make it acceptable. This can also be seen in the description given by Le Goff of how judgement and purgation after death involves

...complex judicial proceedings concerning the possible mitigation of penalties, the possible commutation of sentences, subject to the influence of a variety of factors. Belief in Purgatory therefore requires the projection into the afterlife of a highly sophisticated legal and penal system.<sup>93</sup>

Some of the earliest comments claimed to be references to purgatory are not unambiguous. For instance, the interpretation of a passage in Cyprian’s thought claimed to be a reference to a doctrine of purgatory has been challenged. Cyprian wrote:

And you must realised that it is one thing for a man to stand by, awaiting the granting of pardon, and quite another thing for him to achieve the heights of glory; it is one thing for him to be thrown into prison and not to emerge from it until he pays the very last farthing, and

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<sup>90</sup> Jacques Le Goff. **The birth of Purgatory**, pp. 22-23.

<sup>91</sup> [Plato. *Gorgias* 34.478; *Phaedo* 62.113d; *Protagoras* 13.324b; *Laws* 5.728c] Jacques Le Goff. **The birth of Purgatory**, pp. 52-53. Le Goff cites Clement of Alexandria. *The Stromata* 5.14. ANF 2, pp. 465-466. *Ibid.*, 7.2. ANF 2, p. 526. Origen. *De principiis* 2.10.6. ANF 4, p. 292. *On prayer* 29. ACW 19, pp. 113-126.

<sup>92</sup> Jacques Le Goff. **The birth of Purgatory**, pp. 9-11.

<sup>93</sup> Jacques Le Goff. **The birth of Purgatory**, p. 5.

quite another thing for him to receive all at once the rewards of faith and valour; it is one thing for a man to be wracked by long grieving over his sins and to be purged and purified over a lengthy period of time by fire, and it is quite another thing for him to have purged away all his sins by a martyr's death. In a word, to hang in doubt on the day of judgement awaiting the verdict of the Lord is far different from being crowned by the Lord without a moment's delay.<sup>94</sup>

Jay says that while many theologians have stated that Cyprian supported a doctrine of purgatory, “de génération en génération les théologiens semblent se communiquer les uns aux autres sans autre forme d'examen.”<sup>95</sup> Jay says that Cyprian was perhaps the first to use Matthew 5:26 in the sense of penitence, and this has its own interest for the history of doctrine, but that Cyprian is not speaking of purgatory, a purification after death, only the penitence of sinners in the church before death.<sup>96</sup> Eno says that this article by Jay has caused most scholars to abandon this comment in Cyprian as a reference to purgatory.<sup>97</sup>

The verse ‘Non exhibis inde (i.e. ex carcere), donec soluas nouissimum quadrantem,’ presents especial interest in light of the fact that it has been mistakenly cited to show Cyprian's belief in purgatory. Jay's article explains how a misreading of Cyprian's comments led to the incorrect conclusion that Cyprian believed in purgatory.<sup>98</sup>

Fahey comments concerning the passage in which Cyprian is alleged to teach a doctrine of purgatory:

It is important to bear in mind the context of the letter. Cyprian is writing about the possibility of repentance for the sin of apostacy. The reference to “aliud missum in carcere” does not necessarily refer to purification in the afterlife. As Jay points out the “purgari diu igne” can

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<sup>94</sup> Cyprian. *To Antonianus. Letter 55.20.3.* ACW 46, p. 45.

<sup>95</sup> P Jay. “Saint Cyprien et la doctrine du purgatoire.” *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 27 (1960) 133.

<sup>96</sup> P Jay. “Saint Cyprien et la doctrine du purgatoire.” *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 27 (1960) 136.

<sup>97</sup> R B Eno. “The Fathers and the cleansing fire.” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 53 (1987) 191. Similarly, W M Daley states that “The often repeated view that Caesarius originated the concept of Purgatory has been convincingly disputed by Pierre Jay.” [P Jay. “Le purgatoire dans le prédication de saint Césaire d'Arles.” *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 24 (1957) 5-14.] W M Daley. “Caesarius of Arles, a precursor of Mediaeval Christendom.” *Traditio* 26 (1970) 6, n. 15. Brian E Daley comments: “In all three of these Sermons dealing with purgative punishment, Caesarius emphasizes that it will affect both soul and body, and he identifies it with the process of judgement; there is no trace in his writings of the idea that such purgation will be accomplished in the “interim” between death and resurrection, nor does he show any particular interest in the fate of souls before the final judgement.” **The hope of the early Church**, p. 209. Daley notes that it is “ironic that Latin theologians at the Council of Ferrara (1437) tried to support their arguments for the Western mediaeval doctrine of Purgatory with excerpts from these sermons of Caesarius.” *Ibid.*, p. 264, n. 5.

<sup>98</sup> M A Fahey. **Cyprian and the Bible**, p. 275.

refer to penance performed on earth or it can refer to the suffering of judgement, in which case the qualification “diu” is merely metaphorical... The assertion that Cyprian in his use of Matthew 5:26 opted for the existence of purgatory is an over hasty conclusion from a text which contains only a generic reference to penance.<sup>99</sup>

Another argument against interpreting Cyprian’s writings in terms of a doctrine of purgatory is that he says that “in the case of those who had sacrificed, comfort should be brought to them at death; our reasoning was that in the grave (*apud inferos*) there is no confession.”<sup>100</sup> Similarly in his *Testimonies against the Jews*, he includes a chapter, “That one ought to make confession while he is in the flesh,” and cites Psalm 6:5, *But in the grave who will confess unto Thee?* and Psalm 30:9, *Shall the dust make confession unto Thee?*<sup>101</sup> A more explicit passage is in his letter to Demetrianus, where Cyprian stresses the inability to repent after death.

Believe and live, and do ye who persecute us in time rejoice with us for eternity. When you have once departed thither, there is no longer any place for repentance, and no possibility of making satisfaction. Here life is either lost or saved; here eternal safety is provide for by the worship of God and the fruits of faith.<sup>102</sup>

Similarly there are problems with the interpretation of the views of Tertullian. He also cites Matthew 5:25-26, and comments that the Judge will deliver the wicked man to the angel who will execute the sentence, and he will commit him to the prison of hell, “out of which there will be no dismissal until the smallest even of your delinquencies be paid off in the period before the resurrection.”<sup>103</sup> Thus while these expressions of Tertullian appear to speak of a doctrine of purgatory,<sup>104</sup> Mason argues that they actually refer only to the suffering of the soul prior to the judgement, not in an expiatory sense, but as the beginnings of the punishment of the wicked.

But the sufferings of which it speaks [*De anima* 58] are the sufferings of those who are awaiting the condemnation of the Judgement Day. The classes that Tertullian names (except in the one sentence quoted) are not the perfect and the imperfect among the saved: they are the saved and the lost.<sup>105</sup>

A more explicit articulation of the doctrine of purgatory is found in Gregory the Great, who distinguishes the perfectly righteous from those who are lacking

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<sup>99</sup> M A Fahey. *Cyprian and the Bible*, p. 276.

<sup>100</sup> Cyprian. *To Antonianus. Letter 55.17.3*. ACW 46, p. 43.

<sup>101</sup> Cyprian. *Three books of Testimonies against the Jews* 3.114. ANF 5, p. 556.

<sup>102</sup> Cyprian. *An address to Demetrianus* 25. ANF 5, p. 465.

<sup>103</sup> Tertullian. *A treatise on the soul* 35. ANF 3, p. 216.

<sup>104</sup> Tertullian. *A treatise on the soul* 58. ANF 3, p. 235.

<sup>105</sup> A J Mason. “Tertullian and purgatory.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 3 (1902) 599.

somewhat in perfection. These he says must for a time be purified in purgatory.<sup>106</sup> The views of Gregory are spelled out in the *Dialogues*.

Yet, there must be a cleansing fire before the judgement, because of some minor faults that may remain to be purged away. Does not Christ, the Truth say that if any one blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, he shall not be forgiven, 'either in this world or in the world to come.' From this statement we learn that some sins can be forgiven in this world and some in the world to come. For, if forgiveness is refused for a particular sin, we conclude logically that it is granted for others. This must apply, as I said, to slight transgressions...<sup>107</sup>

The idea of Irenaeus that the saints would be vindicated in the world where they had suffered, was reversed in a spurious interpolation in the *Dialogues* which states that the wicked could purge their sins through returning after death to the place where the sins had been committed. Such was the attendant of the baths who had formerly been in life the one in charge of the baths, sent back to do penance there.<sup>108</sup> But a genuine passage from Gregory concerning the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 3:12ff. says:

Although this may be taken to signify the fire of suffering we experience in this life, it may also refer to the cleansing fire of the world to come, and, if one accepts it in this sense, one must weigh St. Paul's words carefully. When he says that men are saved by passing through fire, he is not referring to men who build on this foundation in iron, bronze or lead, that is, in mortal sins which are indestructible in fire. He specifies those who build on this foundation in wood, grass and straw, that is, in venial or trivial sins which fire consumes easily. In this connection we should also remember that in the world to come no one will be cleansed even of the slightest faults, unless he has merited such a cleansing through good works performed in this life.<sup>109</sup>

The correlation of lesser sins which are easily cleansed with the wood, hay and stubble, while more serious sins are pictured as iron, brass and lead, comes from Origen. According to Crouzel, Origen refers to 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 thirty-eight times in his extant works.<sup>110</sup> The gold, silver and precious stones are interpreted as the blessings of the saints,<sup>111</sup> while the wood, hay and stubble are the faults of the

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<sup>106</sup> Gregory the Great. *Dialogues* 4.41. FC 39, p. 248. This passage is declared genuine by Clark, **The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues**, vol. 2, pp. 559-561. This idea also appears in *Dialogues* 4.26. "...there are just souls who are delayed somewhere outside heaven. The delay imposed on them seems to indicate that they are still lacking in perfect justice." FC 39, p. 217.

<sup>107</sup> Gregory the Great. *Dialogues* 4.41. FC 39, p. 248.

<sup>108</sup> [Gregory the Great. *Dialogues* 4.57. FC 39, pp. 266-267.] Cf. the discussion by Jacques Le Goff concerning the punishment of sinners in this world after their death. **The birth of Purgatory**, pp. 93-94.

<sup>109</sup> Gregory the Great. *Dialogues* 4.41. FC 39, p. 249.

<sup>110</sup> H Crouzel. **Origen**, p. 245. See for instance Origen. *De principiis* 2.10.4. ANF 4, p. 295. *Against Celsus* 5.15. ANF 4, p. 549. *Against Celsus* 6.70. ANF 4, p. 605.

<sup>111</sup> Origen. *Against Celsus* 4.13. ANF 4, p. 502.

sinners,<sup>112</sup> and the crimes of the wicked which are like iron, brass and lead.<sup>113</sup> While other Patristic writers use only the distinction of sins and virtues,<sup>114</sup> Gregory the Great, following Origen, makes a further distinction of wickedness which exceeds that of the sinners, thus producing another source for the categorisation of the saints, the sinners and the wicked which influences the interpretation of Psalm 1:5.<sup>115</sup> This threefold distinction in the exegesis of 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 appears also in Ambrosiaster, who follows Hilary of Poitiers and Ambrose in distinguishing three categories, which he interprets as the saints, who go straight to heaven at the time of the resurrection; the wicked, who go straight to hell; and the sinners, who are purged for a time before being admitted to Paradise.<sup>116</sup> Concepts in theological anthropology are thus relevant to the development of the doctrine of purgatory, although that latter doctrine is more closely tied to developments in soteriology, as it is based on a specific understanding of how sin is dealt with and how we are saved.

## 6.6 The resurrection in instrumentalist thought

While Patristic writers who adopted an instrumentalist approach to anthropology often still maintained an interest in the doctrine of bodily resurrection, it did not generally play as significant a part in their thought as it did with those who held to unitary views. There were, however, some interesting ideas developed within this framework which are profitable to explore.

### 6.6.1 The reconstitution of the body

The dispersal of the particles of the body is not a problem for Origen's view of the resurrection; his view of the identity of the present body with the resurrection body focuses on the *eidōs* or form of the body, which is the only remaining element of the body which survives in the resurrection.<sup>117</sup> He insists that the body has no part in the eschatological life, and suggests instead that the form of the body is changed and it is the seminal reason which is raised, giving form to the substance which comprises the

<sup>112</sup> Origen. *Exhortation to martyrdom* 36. ACW 19, p. 179.

<sup>113</sup> Origen. *Against Celsus* 5.15. ANF 4, p. 549. *Homily in Numbers* 25.5. PG 12, 769. *Homily in Ezekiel* 1.13. PG 13, 679. See H Crouzel. "L'exegese origénienne de 1 Cor 3, 11-15 et la purification eschatologique." In: **Epektasis**, p. 277. Origen also refers to the "lead of wickedness" [*Against Celsus* 4.13. ANF 4, p. 502] without making the three-fold distinction used elsewhere, or referring to the iron, brass and lead as a separate category.

<sup>114</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem. "Then if any man's works are of gold, he shall be made brighter; if any man's course of life be like stubble, and unsubstantial, it shall be burnt up by the fire." *Catechetical Lectures* 15.21. NPNF 2/7, p. 110. Also Caesarius of Arles. *Sermon* 179.8-9. FC 47, p. 455.

<sup>115</sup> See Chapter Eight.

<sup>116</sup> [Ambrosiaster. *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Corinthios primam* 3.14-15. PL 17, 211] Jacques le Goff. **The Birth of Purgatory**, p. 61.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. the criticisms of Methodius. *On the resurrection* 12. ANF 6, p. 375. Dennis comments: "For Gregory [of Nyssa], however, the *eidōs* is what provides the means for the reassembly of the body's atoms. Thus he uses an argument of Origen's to support and explain something which Origen denied, the restoration of the exact substance of the body." T J Dennis. "Gregory on the resurrection of the body." In: **The Easter sermons of Gregory of Nyssa**, p. 59.

eschatological spiritual body. It is certainly not the original substance of the body which is involved, although its outward appearance will bear a resemblance to that of the earthly body.<sup>118</sup> It was not a problem for Origen, therefore, that in his view the bodies of those eaten by wild beasts become part of the beasts; their bodies cannot be resurrected in their former state.<sup>119</sup> The original particles are so mingled with other particles that they cannot be separated out again; but he believes that this was not necessary.<sup>120</sup>

Origen based his arguments on contemporary scientific views concerning the continuity of particles. He held that the form of the body endures, but the substance of which the body is composed can change without loss to the body. There is therefore no need for the resurrection body to have material identity with the body of this present life, since the particles of the body had changed throughout life while still retaining its identity. His use of the doctrine of permanent “flux” of the particles which make up things comes from the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, who inspired the search for something permanent in immortality, that which is outside of time and transcends the flux of all things within time.<sup>121</sup> Thus Origen held that it is not the continuity of the body, but of the form which gives shape to the particles which make up the body, that is the locus of the identity of the body buried and the body raised, and it is this which enables us to recognise individuals in the resurrection.

Origen comments that only the *simpliciores* expect to see the parts of the body restored in the resurrection. Since the particles of the body change throughout life, and digested food does not become a permanent part of our beings, although it takes on the nature of the one eating it for a time, changing particles can thus be part of several bodies. “Whose body then shall it be in the resurrection?”<sup>122</sup> This view is in

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<sup>118</sup> Origen. *Selections in Psalms. Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, pp. 232-233. Origen addressed the question of the Gnostics concerning the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:50, *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven*, by allegorising the meaning of “flesh and blood.” He said: “If the will of God is done on earth as it is done in heaven, we shall all be heaven. *Flesh* which *profiteth nothing*, and *blood* which is akin to flesh, *cannot possess the kingdom of God*. But if they be changed from flesh and earth and dust and blood to heavenly substance, it may perhaps be said that they will inherit it.” *Treatise on Prayer* 26.6. ACW 19, p. 92. While he thus avoids the Gnostic problem, he can only do so by using a hermeneutical method typical of Gnosticism. Cf. Trigg’s comment on Origen’s interpretation of NT eschatology: “One of the more interesting features of the *Commentary on Matthew* is its tendency to psychologize the Gospel’s apocalyptic eschatological imagery. Thus, when the Gospel predicts that Christ will come “on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt 24:30), it refers to his appearance to the perfect in their reading of the Bible.” J W Trigg. **Origen: The Bible and philosophy in the Third Century church**, p. 212.

<sup>119</sup> H Chadwick. “Origen, Celsus and the resurrection of the body.” *Harvard Theological Review* 41 (1948) 89.

<sup>120</sup> L Boliek. **The resurrection of the flesh**, pp. 44-45.

<sup>121</sup> See the discussion of Heraclitus by Bertrand Russell. **History of Western Philosophy**, pp. 63-65.

<sup>122</sup> Origen. *Selections in Psalms. Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, pp. 231-232.

direct contrast to the views utilised by Athenagoras,<sup>123</sup> which Origen sneers at. That does not mean that Origen knew the *De resurrectione*,<sup>124</sup> but the ideas he expressed concerning the resurrection were not unique to that treatise. Grant acknowledges that the argument used would not have convinced Origen,<sup>125</sup> but this could also be seen as an argument that did not convince him, which he sought to refute in his *Commentary* on Psalm 1.

J C M van Winden says concerning Athenagoras' view of the strict identity between the resuscitated and the earthly body, there is "no trace of Origen's view on this problem."<sup>126</sup> Similarly, Boliek comments:

Whether or not Origen was acquainted with the refined theory of Athenagoras [on digestion and cannibalism], his own opinion was in agreement with that of the pagan objectors and not with the Christian apologists.<sup>127</sup>

On this issue we see one of the major differences between Athenagoras and Origen. The former believed the body was made up of the same particles throughout life, and that these particles, while being mingled again with other particles after death, are able to be separated out and reconstituted as the original body.

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<sup>123</sup> Grant has argued that the treatise *On the resurrection of the dead* attributed to Athenagoras should be dated and interpreted as a post-Origenist text, written in refutation of Origen's doctrine of the resurrection. For instance, he suggests that the comment "what is impossible for men is possible for God" [*De resurrectione* 9] is a refutation of Origen's view that the *simpliciores* take refuge, when faced with difficulties, in the idea that "everything is possible for God" [*Selecta in Psalmos* 1.5. **Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen**, p. 231]. Origen comments that he proves the possibility of the resurrection because of the power of God, not by an affirmation but by an argument. *Contra Celsus* 5.22. ANF 4, p. 553. Similarly, Athenagoras believed that the resurrection is not unworthy of God (*De resurrectione* 10), while Origen held that the idea of physical resurrection involved "unworthy ideas" [*Selecta in Psalmos* 1. **Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen**, p. 232]. R M Grant. "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras." *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954) 125-126. Vermander argues that the similarities between Athenagoras and Origen do not demonstrate the existence of an attack by one on the other, but by their common debate with a third party, the pagan Celsus. J M Vermander. "Celse et l'attribution à Athénagore d'un ouvrage sur la résurrection des morts." *Melanges de Science Religieuse* 35 (1978) 125-134. Others who reject Grant's thesis are L W Barnard. **Athenagoras**. Bernard Pouderon. "L'authenticité du traité sur la résurrection attribué à l'apologiste Athénagore." *Vigiliae Christianae* 40 (1986) 226-244. Idem, "'La chair et le sang.' Encore sur l'authenticité du traité d'Athénagore." *Vigiliae Christianae* 44 (1990) 1-5. I find their rebuttals persuasive, and will consider the treatise authentic.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. L W Barnard. "The father of Christian anthropology." *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 63 (1972) 3/4: 270.

<sup>125</sup> R M Grant. "Athenagoras or Pseudo-Athenagoras." *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954) 125. Cf. Origen. *De principiis* 2.1.4. ANF 4, pp. 269-270.

<sup>126</sup> J C M van Winden. "In defence of the Resurrection." In: **The Easter Sermons of Gregory of Nyssa**, p. 104.

<sup>127</sup> L Boliek. **The resurrection of the flesh**, p. 44.

In contrast to Origen, Ambrose held that the resurrection body would be formed out of the dust of the former body,<sup>128</sup> a view held also by Rufinus. However widely this dust has been dispersed, it will be brought together again by the power of God. The soul is the “principle of immortality” which will at the resurrection gather these particles again and unite them with the soul, thus restoring the identical body to that which had died. “The result is that each soul has restored to it, not a composite or alien body, but the actual one it formerly possessed...”<sup>129</sup>

Paulinus of Nola stresses that God knows the whereabouts of each particle, and keeps them intact so at the resurrection the identical bodies can and will rise again.

None of His natural creation dies, for everything everywhere is enclosed in the Creator’s arms. Those whom water has devoured with its rivers, seas, and fish, those whom birds and beasts have torn asunder, all are owed to God by the earth.<sup>130</sup>

Paulinus also addresses the problem of bodies which have been consumed by animals. He stresses that this human flesh is returned to the earth in the animal’s excretions, and thus returns to the earth through the animal. This flesh cannot become part of the bodies of these animals, since it has in it a “rational seed” which is intrinsically human and remains alive in the flesh, and thus it cannot become animal flesh. Nor will our bodies have animal flesh caught up with it in the resurrection, since “only that flesh which was the vessel of the rational soul will experience the power of the resurrection,” and thus it is that “when the trumpet sounds every region of earth will restore our bodies from their hidden seeds.”<sup>131</sup>

Augustine’s view of this problem of the resurrection of human corpses which had been consumed by animals is that while particles can be used in the bodies of others, this is only as a loan and at the resurrection they must be returned to the one in whom they first became human flesh.<sup>132</sup> Augustine does not mention the problem of how that which has been dispersed into dust and possibly become part of the flesh of others will be separated out. Some may find that though the particles of their flesh form the flesh which they had at the first, they were not the first who had these particles and animated them as a human body. A different approach is taken by

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<sup>128</sup> [Ambrose. *De Abraham* 2.64. PL 14, 510] F H Dudden. **The life and times of St. Ambrose**, Vol. 2, p. 650.

<sup>129</sup> Rufinus. *Commentary on the Apostle’s Creed* 43. ACW 20, pp. 80-81.

<sup>130</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 31. ACW 40, pp. 317-318.

<sup>131</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 31. ACW 40, pp. 318-319.

<sup>132</sup> Augustine. *Enchiridion* 88. NPNF 1/3, p. 265. *The City of God* 22.20. NPNF 1/2, p. 498. Cf. his comments elsewhere: “But it really makes little difference, so far as we are concerned, what states our dead body passes through in nature’s mysterious transmutations. By the awesome power of our Creator the body will be fashioned again and called forth from the dead. And yet even in this there may be a lesson for the wise, teaching them to entrust everything to the providence of their Maker, who governs all things great and small by His hidden power, who knows the very numbers of the hairs on our head. Thus, no anxious care for our lifeless bodies should make us dread any form of death, but with trust and courage we should not hesitate to prepare ourselves for whatever may await us.” *The literal meaning of Genesis* 3.17.26. ACW 41, p. 93.

Quodvultdeus who does not emphasise the identity of the particles in the present and eschatological bodies. Each body, he says, returns to the earth from which it has been made, and that God is able to re-create it again from there, using the argument that it is easier to re-create something that has once existed than to create from nothing that which does not exist.<sup>133</sup> Gregory the Great also discussed this problem.

The flesh of a man is eaten by a wolf, the wolf is devoured by a lion, the lion dies and is turned into dust. How, then, at the resurrection will the flesh of the man be restored and distinguished from the flesh of the wolf and the lion?<sup>134</sup>

Gregory's answer is that just as it is possible for a body containing flesh, bones, blood, nerves and so on to be formed from a father's semen and a mother's blood which merge as a liquid mass, so that thus distinct things come from one substance, so by the power of God in the resurrection human flesh can be distinguished from the flesh of animals. Thus some dust, coming from the flesh of lions and wolves, will not be raised, while the dust which comes from human flesh will be raised.<sup>135</sup>

Similarly Macarius Magnes answered this objection from his opponent that just as fire can purify minerals while preserving them undestroyed, so God can preserve the essence of human bodies and raise them. Macarius asserts that all "the things that have been scattered" will be gathered together, so that nothing will perish, and the body will be raised again entire.<sup>136</sup>

### 6.6.2 The resurrection of the wicked as dust

One possible consequence of the discussion about the reconstitution of the resurrection body from the dispersed particles which originally comprised the body in this life, is the idea that the bodies of the wicked in the resurrection would continue as dust.

In the works of Clement of Alexandria we find the image of the dispersal of dust being used of the punishment of the wicked.<sup>137</sup> This idea is based on Psalm 1:4, where the wicked are compared to the dust blown by the wind.<sup>138</sup> This view is found in Theodoret's commentary on Psalm 1, where he says that "Those who are trampled on by opposing spirits imitate the dust which is easily carried this way and that by opposing winds."<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Quodvultdeus. *Dimidium Temporibus* 18.29. SC 102, pp. 645, 647.

<sup>134</sup> Gregory the Great. *Homily in Ezekiel* 2.8.8. PL 76, 1032D. Translation cited from: J P McClain. **The doctrine of heaven in the writings of Saint Gregory the Great**, p. 16.

<sup>135</sup> Gregory the Great. *Homily in Ezekiel* 2.8.8. PL 76, 1033A-B.

<sup>136</sup> Macarius Magnes. *Apocriticus* 4.30. Translations of Christian Literature, pp. 158-159.

<sup>137</sup> Clement of Alexandria. *The Instructor* 1.10. ANF 2, p. 233.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Ambrose, who correlates this passage with Job 21:18. *The prayer of Job and David* 5.18. FC 65, p. 364.

<sup>139</sup> Theodoret. *On Psalms* 1.5. PG 80, 872C.

Curiously, Hilary of Poitiers took this image literally, and he thought that the wicked will be raised for their punishment to exist as dust.

The ungodly have no possible hope of having the image of the happy tree applied to them; the only lot that awaits them is one of wandering and winnowing, crushing, dispersion and unrest; shaken out of the solid framework of their bodily condition, they must be swept away to punishment in dust, a plaything of the wind. They shall not be dissolved into nothing, for punishment must find in them some stuff to work on, but ground into particles, imponderable, insubstantial, dry, they shall be tossed to and fro, and make sport for the punishment that gives them never rest.<sup>140</sup>

This seems to imply that the wicked are not raised again in their bodies, but instead are to be punished as dust, alluding to Genesis 3:19, *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.*<sup>141</sup> They are to be punished in this form, remaining as the dust into which their bodies had disintegrated on death. They will not cease to exist, but will exist as dust, being blown to and fro through the world forever.

And the Prophet, seeing that the change of their solid substance into dust will deprive them of all share in the boon of fruit to be bestowed upon the happy man in season by the tree, has accordingly added: *Therefore the ungodly shall not rise again in the judgement.* The fact that they shall not rise again does not convey sentence of annihilation upon these men, for indeed they will exist as dust; it is the resurrection to judgement that is denied them. Non-existence will not enable them to miss the pain of punishment; for while that which will be non-existent would escape punishment, they, on the other hand, will exist to be punished, for they will be dust. Now to become dust, whether by being dried to dust or ground to dust, involves not loss of the state of existence, but a change of state. But the fact that they will not rise again to Judgement makes it clear that they have lost, not the power to rise, but the privilege of rising to judgement. Now what we are to understand by the privilege of rising again and being judged is declared by the Lord in the Gospels where He says: *He that believeth on Me shall not be judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already. And this is the judgement, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than light.*<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Hilary of Poitiers. *Homily on Psalm 1*, 19. NPNF 2/9, p. 241.

<sup>141</sup> The application of Genesis 3:19 to this situation appears in Jerome. "Just as it is said to the sinner: *Dust you are, and unto dust you shall return*, so, likewise, to the saint: heaven you are, and unto heaven you shall return." *Homily 46, On Psalm 133* (134). FC 48, p. 350. Cf. also Augustine. *On the Psalms* 7.4. NPNF 1/8, p. 21. *On the Psalms* 102.15. NPNF 1/8, p. 499. Pseudo-Rufinus. *Commentary on Seventyfive Psalms of David* 1.4. PL 21, 648D.

<sup>142</sup> Hilary of Poitiers. *Homily on Psalm 1*, 20. NPNF 2/9, p. 241.

Hilary thus here stresses that existing as dust is not a denial of the resurrection, but a specification of the state in which the wicked experience that resurrection. They will not be judged, because they have already been judged, since they have not believed. Augustine also comments on the punishment of the wicked who are reduced to dust.

*And I will beat them as small as dust before the face of the wind. And I will beat them small; for dry they are, receiving not the shower of God's mercy; that borne aloft and puffed up with pride they may be hurried along from firm and unshaken hope, and as it were from the earth's solidity and stability.*<sup>143</sup>

His comparison of the ungodly as dust are repeated in his comments on Psalm 29:10 [30:10].

For if I shall not rise immediately, and My body shall become corrupt, *shall dust confess unto thee?* that is, the crowd of the ungodly, whom I shall justify by My resurrection?<sup>144</sup>

The comparison of the ungodly with dust is seen in other passages in his commentary on the Psalms, frequently citing Psalm 1:4 in that connection. He allegorises that verse and interprets the wind as temptation, the dust as the ungodly, and the inability of dust to resist the wind as the lack of resistance of the ungodly to temptation.<sup>145</sup> He interprets the phrase, "For our soul is bowed down to the dust," to mean that the righteous as persecuted by the ungodly, i.e., the dust.<sup>146</sup> The ungodly lack discernment and insight, because they have been blinded by the dust, that is, they are totally absorbed with the things pertaining to this earth.<sup>147</sup> While Augustine identifies the dust with the ungodly and their way of life, he does not interpret their resurrection state as one of being as the dust.

<sup>143</sup> Augustine. *On the Psalms* 17.43. NPNF 1/8, p. 53. Cf. *On the Psalms* 7.4. NPNF 1/8, p. 22. "This is that dust which *the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth* [Psalm 1:4], to wit, vain and silly boasting of the proud, puffed up, not of solid weight, as a cloud of dust carried away by the wind. Justly then has he here spoken of the glory, which he would not have brought down to dust. For he would have it solidly established in conscience before God, where there is no boasting. *He that glories*, saith the Apostle, *let him glory in the Lord*. This solidity is brought down to the dust, if one through pride despising the secrecy of conscience, where God only proves a man, desires to glory before men." Cf. Gregory the Great. *Morals on Job* 11.30.42. LF 21, p. 27.

<sup>144</sup> Augustine. *On the Psalms* 30.10. NPNF 1/8, p. 68.

<sup>145</sup> Augustine. *On the Psalms* 35.6. NPNF 1/8, p. 80. Cf. Diodore of Tarsus. "Just as with relation to the just he spoke of what is firm and lasting, so with relation to the impious, that which is perishable and unstable. For dust follows the motion of the winds and does not have its own place to stay." *In Psalmum* 1.4-6. Corpus Christianorum Series Graecae 6, p. 11. Athanasius describes the wicked as those who are not rooted in Christ. "And it is because of this, because they have no root, but are of the same nature as the dust of the earth blown by the wind. By the wind you will understand the threat of God which says, *Depart from me, you cursed ones, into eternal fire.*" *Expositions of the Psalms*. PG 27, 61D-64A. John Chrysostom also interprets Psalm 1:4 to refer to the winds of temptation that buffet the sinner and drive him along. *Homilies on the Statues* 8.4. NPNF 1/9, p. 397.

<sup>146</sup> Augustine. *On the Psalms* 44.20. NPNF 1/8, p. 145. Cf. *On the Psalms* 7.4. NPNF 1/8, pp. 21-22. *On the Psalms* 22.16. NPNF 1/8, p. 59.

<sup>147</sup> Augustine. *On the Psalms* 74.20. NPNF 1/8, p. 348.

Jerome compares the happy man of Psalm 1 with the wicked man, whom he therefore sees as unhappy. Jerome does not follow the interpretation of Hilary, that the wicked man will exist as dust to be blown around by the wind. His interpretation has a more ethical emphasis, referring to the delusion brought on the wicked man by the devil, which drives him around so he loses control over himself. There is a similarity with Augustine's view, as Jerome also says that the insubstantial character of the wicked is as the dust.

He who is just is compared to the tree in the Garden of Eden; he who is wicked is compared to dust which the wind drives away. Dust may come from the soil but has ceased to be soil. The wicked are *like dust which the wind drives away*. Holy Writ says the wicked man will be so unhappy that he is not even dust from the earth. Dust does not seem to have any substance, but it does, of course, have a kind of existence of its own. There is no body to it, yet what substance it does have is really by way of punishment. It is scattered here and there and is never in any one place; wherever the wind sweeps it, there its whole force is spent. The same is true of the wicked man. Once he has denied God, he is led by delusion wherever the breath of the devil sends him.<sup>148</sup>

Jerome explicitly refers Psalm 1:4 to the present state of the wicked, not to the future judgement. Jerome's interpretation of both the just man and the wicked man is an ethical one in connection with this life. It is only with vs. 5 that Jerome introduces the future life. The wicked will not arise to the judgement because he has lived under the influence of the devil in this life.

The resurrection of the wicked is thus distinguished from that of the saints through the image of the dust being applied to the wicked, sometimes literally, sometimes allegorically. Similarly, the saints are seen as belonging to heaven and not to the earth. This approach to eschatology is thus inherently anti-creational, and is ultimately rooted in a dualistic anthropology which presupposes a dichotomy between body and soul; the soul being heavenly and the body earthly. This can be seen in the comments of Jerome.

*When his spirit departs he returns to his earth.* When he has returned to his earth, what happens? *On that day his plans perish*; all the self-reliance of princes vanishes; all their plans perish... *When his spirit departs.* Whose? Man's. *When his spirit departs.* The psalmist used "spirit" here for "soul." *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* When his spirit departs he returns to the earth; not that the spirit returns to earth, for the spirit is not of earth; the spirit takes flight, and man returns to his dust. On that day, all his plans perish.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Jerome. *Homily 1, On Psalm 1*. FC 48, pp. 10-11.

<sup>149</sup> Jerome. *Homily 55, On Psalm 145* (146). FC 48, p. 393.

The problems with which we are concerned thus lead to an unusual and somewhat bizarre understanding of the nature of the resurrection of the wicked; a direct consequence of a mistaken starting point.

### 6.6.3 “Materialist” and “spiritual” views of the resurrection body

The nature of the resurrection body was a subject of dispute among the Patristic writers. The millennialists were often accused of holding to a “materialist” view of the resurrection body, while the “spiritual” conception of Origen and his followers appeared to many to deny the resurrection of the body completely.

Barnard claimed that there was a significant shift in the conception of the resurrection body in the second century, specifically in Justin Martyr, Tatian and Irenaeus, who replaced “the Pauline belief in the *transformation* of the body (‘sown a natural body raised a spiritual body’)” with reanimation. He cites Justin’s comment that “we expect to receive again our own bodies, though they may be dead and cast into the earth...”<sup>150</sup> and Tatian’s view that even though the body is destroyed by fire or wild beasts, still “God the ruler, when He wishes, will restore to its original state the substance that is visible only to Him.”<sup>151</sup> Similarly, he cites the view of Irenaeus that “salvation would be incomplete without the physical frame.”<sup>152</sup>

Barnard also attacked Tertullian for asserting that in the resurrection we shall have hair, eyes and teeth, which he sees as “extreme.”<sup>153</sup> This interpretation seems to reflect Barnard’s view of the nature of the resurrection body, rather than provide evidence that the second century writers saw the resurrection body simply as the reanimation of the present body, and not its glorification and transformation. They were concerned to demonstrate the *identity* of the resurrection body with the present body,<sup>154</sup> as well as the power of God to raise the dead, and none of the citations Barnard gives proves they did not hold to a transformation of this body in the resurrection.<sup>155</sup> It is this body that must be saved; if it is replaced with a totally different (“spiritual”) body, that identity was absent, and opened the way to heretical Gnostic or Docetic views. While all these authors did stress the transformation of the body in the resurrection, it was left for later writers to expound that aspect more explicitly in the face of attacks such as that by Celsus, who derided the resurrection of

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<sup>150</sup> Justin Martyr. *First Apology* 18. ANF 1, p. 169.

<sup>151</sup> Tatian. *Address to the Greeks* 6.2. Oxford Early Christian Texts, p. 13.

<sup>152</sup> [Irenaeus. *Against Heresies* 4.18.5. ANF 1, p. 486. Ibid., 5.1.1. ANF 1, p. 527. Ibid., 5.6.12. [sic, 5.6.2] ANF 1, p. 532] L W Barnard. **Athenagoras**, pp. 127-128.

<sup>153</sup> [Tertullian. *On the resurrection of the flesh* 35. ANF 3, p. 571.] L W Barnard. **Athenagoras**, p. 133.

<sup>154</sup> For instance, Justin argues that because matter is indestructible, God can refashion bodies from the same material. *Fragments of the lost work on the resurrection* 6. ANF 1, pp. 296-297.

<sup>155</sup> Each of these authors **did** hold to the transformation of the body in the resurrection. For example, Justin. *Fragments of the lost work of Justin on the resurrection* 4. ANF 1, p. 295. Tatian. *Address to the Greeks* 6.2. Oxford Early Christian Texts, p. 13 [i.e. the restoration of the flesh in “its original state.”] Irenaeus. *Against Heresies* 5.13.3. ANF 1, p. 540. Tertullian. *On the resurrection of the flesh* 52. ANF 3, p. 586.

...those who are long since dead, which latter will arise from the earth clothed with the self-same flesh (as during life); for such a hope is simply one which might be cherished by worms. For what sort of human soul is that which would still long for a body that had been subject to corruption?<sup>156</sup>

This anti-bodily sentiment is typical of the Greeks who rejected the resurrection as distasteful as well as impossible. Celsus seems to think that the resurrection is only a reanimation and not also a transformation, and it is probably in the light of such attacks that the transformation was stressed more explicitly in later authors.

Barnard suggests that while Athenagoras was not as crassly materialistic as some other Patristic writers, he was only marginally better, since “he believed in the re-animation of the particles of *this* body,” although he quotes 1 Corinthians 15:53, that this body must put on incorruption.<sup>157</sup> Barnard also cites a passage in which Athenagoras discusses the constant changes the body undergoes, which culminates in the change at the resurrection. Barnard comments:

While this is not exactly Origen’s argument that the body is like a river which preserves a certain form, although its matter is constantly changing, Athenagoras may have been feeling his way towards a doctrine of bio-spiritual evolution such as Origen held and which was to incur the wrath of Methodius. But he is too strongly under the influence of the New Testament, and too conscious of the attacks of sceptics against belief in the resurrection of the body, to carry his thoughts further.<sup>158</sup>

It is strange that Barnard says Athenagoras was unable to develop his thoughts in what seems for Barnard to be the “right” direction because he was too strongly under the influence of the New Testament. Surely that prevented Athenagoras from Origen’s mistake of accepting a de-natured resurrection. Barnard says that Jerome also is thoroughly materialistic in his views of the resurrection, but that in the thought of Gregory of Nyssa the attempt is made to refine this materialism.<sup>159</sup> Barnard’s complaints are made against a conception of the resurrection as merely a reanimation of the physical body rather than its transformation into a spiritual body, a view not held by any of the Patristic authors he cites, and probably not by any others also,<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Celsus. *The True Word*. Cited in: Origen. *Against Celcus* 5.14. ANF 4, p. 549.

<sup>157</sup> [Athenagoras. *Concerning the resurrection of the dead* 18.5. Oxford Early Christian Texts, p. 135.] L W Barnard. **Athenagoras**, p. 133.

<sup>158</sup> [Athenagoras. *Concerning the resurrection of the dead* 12.5-8. Oxford Early Christian Texts, pp. 117, 119] L W Barnard. **Athenagoras**, pp. 133-134. Although transformation is not strongly emphasised by Athenagoras it is nevertheless present. He holds that in the resurrection we will “then abide with God and with his help remain changeless and impassible in soul as though we were not body, even if we have one, but heavenly spirit...” *A Plea for Christians* 31.3. Oxford Early Christian Texts, p. 77. For Athenagoras “incorruptibility” means eternal duration and cessation of change.

<sup>159</sup> [Jerome. *Against John of Jerusalem* 3. Gregory of Nyssa. *On the soul and the resurrection*] L W Barnard. **Athenagoras**, p. 133, note 73.

<sup>160</sup> The appeal to the raising of the dead as proof of the resurrection, which we find in a number of Patristic writers, does not mean that they thought of the eschatological body as merely

since it is this transformation which ensures that the doctrine of resurrection is truly biblical.<sup>161</sup>

Grant also has problems with the Patristic doctrine of the resurrection body. He esteems the resurrection of the flesh inconsistent with the spiritual nature of the resurrection body, and his views influence his interpretation of the soundness or otherwise of Patristic thought, as is obvious in his comments on Augustine.

Augustine gave fresh life to the philosophical defence of Christian faith in the resurrection. But in his exegetical work we find a definite retrogression. Two views are to be found in his writings. The earlier, more biblical view, sets forth the resurrection of the body but not of the flesh; the later, explicitly upheld in his *Retractationes* and *De civitate dei*, contradicts Paul while claiming to interpret his thought. We must hold that Augustine's earlier judgement was more nearly right than his later one.<sup>162</sup>

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reanimated. Rather, this demonstration of the power of God to raise the dead applied also to the resurrection, since it was irrelevant how long the person had been dead. Generally speaking, however, they also stressed that the eschatological body was transformed and not simply revived. For instance, Cyprian distinguishes between the raising of the dead and the resurrection, when he tells the story of Tabitha. When Peter commanded Tabitha to rise, Cyprian says that "death is suspended, and the spirit is restored, and, to the marvel and astonishment of all, the revived body is quickened into this worldly light once more." She was not resurrected, according to Cyprian, but "recalled to life." *On works and alms* 6. ANF 5, p. 477. The same insistence on the distinction between "raising the dead" and the eschatological resurrection can be found in many Patristic writers. Augustine stresses this point in his *Enchiridion*, where he says that the resurrection of the body is "not a resurrection such as some have had, who came back to life for a time and died again, but a resurrection to eternal life, as the body of Christ Himself rose again." *The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love* 84. NPNF 1/3, p. 264. Cf. the comment by Kelly that Augustine "admitted in so many words that the clause *TO THE LIFE EVERLASTING* was added so as to exclude the assumption that the resurrection of believers would follow the precedent of that of Lazarus rather than that of Christ." [*Letter 102 to Deogratias* 2-7. NPNF 1/1, pp. 414-415. Augustine refers to Romans 6:9 as the basis for his idea.] J N D Kelly. **Early Christian Creeds**, p. 387. The same distinction is found for instance in Tertullian, *On the resurrection of the flesh* 38. ANF 3, pp. 572-573; Aphrahat. *Demonstrations* 8.14-15. NPNF 2/13, pp. 379-380; John Chrysostom. *On the incomprehensible nature of God* 2.44. FC 72, p. 89. John of Damascus. *On the Orthodox Faith* 4.27. NPNF 2/9, p. 100. In the *Teaching of Addaeus the Apostle* those raised from the dead during the earthly ministry of Christ are said to be "restored to life again" thus indicating a distinction between resurrection and raising the dead (who will die again). *Teaching of Addaeus the Apostle*. ANF 8, pp. 657-659.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. the use made by Gregory the Illuminator of Paul's image of the body being planted as a seed in 1 Corinthians 15, with the discussion there of its resurrection in glory. Gregory says: "And as a simple ear falls upon the earth, grows, takes root, bears a stem, sends out branches, forms knots, increases, becomes full of ears, bearing many from one ear, and prepares them for the use of the sowers; just the same is to be seen here. The souls of the just rise up from the tomb, the same bodies with the same spirit bearing works of the labour of righteousness will rise from the tombs to the kingdom. Each little one, each single soul, will receive and gain countless glorious compensation a myriad and a thousand fold. Then, as they rise, they will put on glory, as the grain when it shows maturity in itself is placed and stored in the granaries." *The Teaching of Saint Gregory* 529. R W Thomson, p. 124.

<sup>162</sup> R M Grant. **Miracle and natural law in Graeco-Roman and early Christian thought**, p. 261.

The problem of the resurrection being conceived as a “crude resuscitation” was one which continued to cause problems not only for pagans but also for many Christians as they were more and more influenced by pagan philosophical concepts of soul and matter. It was not considered possible for the body, fleshly matter, to be made “spiritual” as Paul the apostle asserts. This is because of an unbiblical dualism between “spirit” and “flesh” which saw them as separate substances, rather than as principles of life and of disobedience, the way in which Paul used them. Thus having lost sight of the fact that the resurrection is not a mere resuscitation but is a transformation of the body, the resurrection fell more and more into the background, and the independent and immortal life of the soul became increasingly the focus of Christian thought.

The resurrection involves the transformation of the body from corruption to incorruption, which is the special work of the Holy Spirit in the eschaton. Those who have difficulty with the idea of resurrection life on this earth correlate this with a “materialistic” conception of the resurrection, since “flesh and blood” cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But this difficulty is removed if the resurrection is seen in Biblical terms as a transformation which does not destroy the creatureliness of human life on this earth, and not simply a resuscitation.<sup>163</sup>

For Origen, resurrection bodies will be no longer fleshly but spiritual. He argues that if we had to live in the sea, we would have bodies like those of fish; similarly, as we are to live in heaven, we must have an appropriately “heavenly” body. The form remains, but the substance changes. “But it will be flesh no more, though the features which once existed in the flesh will remain the same features in the spiritual body.” He uses 1 Corinthians 15:44 and 1 Corinthians 15:50 to support this view.<sup>164</sup>

Origen interpreted Paul’s phrase “the spiritual body” to mean that at the resurrection we will be clothed a second time with our present bodies, which will be changed from their present material substance to something else altogether in which there remains nothing of the flesh. Origen uses the Stoic concept of the *spermatikos logos* (seminal word or reason), the indestructible germ in the body, to explain the continuity and characteristic form of the body, so that the body retains its outward form in this life, and in the resurrection, even though the particles of which it is composed are continually changing.<sup>165</sup> This *spermatikos logos* has the power to attract the raw elements (air, water, earth and fire) and impress upon them the new form of the resurrection body. At the resurrection God will activate the latent germ which will in an instant generate the new body from surrounding matter, but it will not have the

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<sup>163</sup> Cf. R F Capon’s comment on the story of Lazarus [Luke 16:19-31], that the rich man thinks of resurrection only in terms of a return to the former life, and not as a transformation. **The parables of grace**, p. 157.

<sup>164</sup> Origen. *Selections in Psalms. Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, p. 233.

<sup>165</sup> Origen. *Selections in Psalms. Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, p. 235. Cf. also Jerome. *To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem* 26. NPNF 2/6, p. 436, where he expounds Origen’s use of this concept.

former flesh or form.<sup>166</sup> Origen does not deny the doctrine of the resurrection; he simply reinterprets it in line with his speculative metaphysics.

The spiritualising interpretation of the resurrection, rooted in the allegorical hermeneutics developed by Origen, can be seen in various disputes in the Patristic era, for instance, in the controversy between Gregory the Great and Eutychius, patriarch of Constantinople. The latter held that the resurrected and glorified body will be “impalpable and more subtile than wind and air.” This view had been previously espoused by John Philoponus, who held to an Aristotelian philosophy. In his book on the resurrection, John

...distinguished between the matter and form of the body, and maintained that, through death, the matter of the body fell into the ‘indeterminate,’ and therefore for a resurrection it would be necessary that new matter should be formed. The resurrection would thus resemble a new creation.<sup>167</sup>

Gregory responded to this idea by citing Luke 24:39, *Handle me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have*. Gregory asserted, against the views of Eutychius, that when it says *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, this does not mean the flesh of the body, but flesh in the sense of sin and corruption. The former, Gregory maintains, will be in the kingdom, but not the latter. The flesh will reign in eternal incorruption, because death has been overcome.<sup>168</sup>

The same tension can be seen in the answer of Macarius to the charge that the idea that the saints would be caught up in the clouds at the second coming of the Lord (1 Thess. 4:15-17) was “full of twaddle.” Macarius answers that this passage must be interpreted allegorically.

We must act as reasoning beings, and look for a mystic meaning in the words. He means that at Christ’s second coming the godly will be caught up from the corruption of this life. Just as the water in the sea is heavy, and yet is drawn up into the air in clouds, so shall man be drawn up by angelic might. For the “cloud,” which is sometimes high and sometimes near the earth, signifies the angels, who both rise to heaven and descend to the earth in the course of their service.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> L. Boliek. **The resurrection of the flesh**, p. 49. Cf. also p. 51. For further discussion of the idea of the *spermatikos logos*, see C J Gousmett. “Creation order and miracle according to Augustine.” *Evangelical Quarterly* 60 (1988) 3:218-222. This may also be linked with the Jewish idea of the “resurrection bone,” or sacrum, which was reputed to be the basis on which the new body would be built. This idea is found in Tertullian, who says that “It is certain not only that bones remain indurated, but also that teeth continue undecayed for ages - both of them the lasting germs of that body which is to sprout to life again in the resurrection.” *On the resurrection of the flesh* 42. ANF 3, p. 576. See the interpretation of the ‘seed’ imagery of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 by Eusebius. *On the Theophania* 1.43. Samuel Lee, p. 35.

<sup>167</sup> J P McClain. **The doctrine of heaven in the writings of Saint Gregory the Great**, p. 87 and n. 34.

<sup>168</sup> Gregory the Great. *Morals on Job* 14.56.72-73. LF 21, pp. 166-167.

<sup>169</sup> Macarius Magnes. *Apocriticus* 4.12. Translations of Christian Literature, p. 122.

In his dialogue *Eranistes*, Theodoret says that after his resurrection, in order to convince the disciples that he was not a ghost, Christ partook of food even though his body was immortal and required no food. This was to prove that the flesh had been raised. This does not mean that after the general resurrection everyone will partake of food, since some things done by Christ are peculiar to his office and not a general rule. He argues that the bodies of those that rise “become incorruptible and immortal,” and that we will be raised perfect in body, although the Lord himself was raised still bearing the scars of his sufferings. This does not mean, however, that the body of Christ is not now incorruptible, impassible and immortal. This does not mean either that the nature of the body has been changed, but the corruption of the body is changed into incorruption, and its mortality into immortality. The same considerations apply to the general resurrection.<sup>170</sup>

[The body of the Lord] was not changed into another nature, but remained a body, full however of divine glory, and sending forth beams of light. The bodies of the saints shall be fashioned like unto it.<sup>171</sup>

The change from the belief in the identity of the body buried with the body raised (and also glorified) can be seen in this discussion which implies that the resurrection body will have little in common with the present body, as it is transformed into an “ethereal body,” and not a physical one.

Origen says that the condition of the wicked is not to be understood in physical terms, as the outer darkness into which the wicked are cast is one which lacks intellectual light, that is, a condition of error and ignorance, a view arising from his intellectualistic view and from his allegorising hermeneutics. The resurrection bodies of the wicked will be “dark and black” to reflect their inner condition.<sup>172</sup> Macarius of Egypt sees the distinctions between the resurrection bodies of the righteous and those of the wicked as already present in this life, although hidden.

And just as the kingdom of darkness and sin are hidden in the soul until the day of resurrection when the very body of sinners will be covered over with the darkness that is now hidden in the soul, so also the kingdom of light and the heavenly image, Jesus Christ, now mystically illumines the soul and holds dominion in the souls of the saints. Indeed, Christ is hidden from the eyes of men; and only with the eyes of the soul is he truly seen, until the day of resurrection, when even the body

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<sup>170</sup> Theodoret. *Eranistes*, Dialogue 2. NPNF 2/3, pp. 198-199. See also Augustine. *Letter* 102, to Deogratias 6-7. NPNF 1/1, pp. 415-416, where he also deals with Christ eating after the resurrection, and the retention of his scars.

<sup>171</sup> Theodoret. *Eranistes*, Dialogue 2. NPNF 2/3, p. 200. Clement of Alexandria says that through spiritual illumination the believer becomes light. This could be a precursor of the idea that the bodies of the believer become light in the resurrection, or even a “realised” form of that idea, since Clement says that “having in anticipation grasped by faith that which is future, after the resurrection we shall receive it as present...” *The Instructor* 1.6. ANF 2, p. 216.

<sup>172</sup> Origen. *De Principiis* 2.10.8. ANF 4, p. 296.

itself will reign with the soul which now, having attained the kingdom of Christ, rests and is illumined by the divine life.<sup>173</sup>

We can deduce from this that Macarius held that the resurrection bodies of the wicked would reflect the fate which they were to receive.

#### 6.6.4 The sexual characteristics of the resurrection body

The idea that the resurrection body would not have any gender appears in a number of Patristic writers, with both unitary and instrumentalist anthropological models. This is because they see the soul as lacking gender, while the male or female gender of the body is a temporary phenomenon,<sup>174</sup> which is no longer appropriate after the resurrection. The body will then perfectly reflect the nature of the soul, that is, it will be sexless, not having genitals or gender characteristics. Gender is then an “accident” and not part of the “essence” of the person. Clement of Alexandria comments: “Souls are neither male nor female, when they no longer marry nor are given in marriage.”<sup>175</sup> Similarly, Cyril of Jerusalem held that the soul is genderless, and that “all souls are alike both of men and women: for only the members of the body are distinguished.”<sup>176</sup> Augustine suggested that the soul was created prior to the body, and that the differences of gender apply only to the body, not to the soul.<sup>177</sup> But while Cyril and Augustine held that the soul lacked gender, they denied that in the resurrection the body would also lack gender.

However, Gregory of Nyssa says: “But when all shall become one in Christ we will be divested of the signs of this distinction [gender] together with the whole of the old man.”<sup>178</sup> He gives as his reason that God is without gender, and therefore the “image of God,” the interior person, is without gender.<sup>179</sup> Gregory based the idea that gender is transitory on Galatians 3:28. The “state of unity in Christ in which the distinction between male and female no longer exists, is an eschatological reality that is fully realized only after the resurrection.”<sup>180</sup> This is perhaps correlated with the view that in

<sup>173</sup> Macarius of Egypt. *Homily 2.5. Intoxicated with God*, p. 35.

<sup>174</sup> This can be seen also in the pagan view that a female was a “misbegotten male.” Aristotle says that the male is the most completely formed, best endowed with the powers of procreation, and the hottest. If there is a lack of generative heat then creation is not perfected and a female results. *De generatione animalium* 2.3. [737a]; 4.6 [775a]. **The Works of Aristotle**. This view appears in Galen. *On the usefulness of the parts of the body* 14.6. Margaret Tallmadge May, vol. 2, pp. 628-632. Cf. Peter Brown. **The body and society**, p. 10.

<sup>175</sup> Clement of Alexandria. *Stromateis* 6.12. ANF 2, p. 503.

<sup>176</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem. *Catechetical Lectures* 4.20. NPNF 2/7, p. 24.

<sup>177</sup> Augustine. *The literal meaning of Genesis* 6.7.12. ACW 41, p. 186. Cf. also *ibid.*, 7.24.35. ACW 42, p. 26; *ibid.*, 10.2.3. ACW 42, p. 98. Ambrose. *On Cain and Abel* 1.47. FC 42, p. 400.

<sup>178</sup> Gregory of Nyssa. *In Cant.* 7. Cited in V E F Harrison. “Male and female in Cappadocian theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990) 441. This idea can be found in Aphrahat. *Demonstrations* 22.12. NPNF 2/13, p. 406.

<sup>179</sup> [Gregory of Nyssa. *On the making of man* 16.7-9. NPNF 2/5, p. 405.] V E F Harrison. “Male and female in Cappadocian theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990) 441.

<sup>180</sup> V E F Harrison. “Male and female in Cappadocian theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990) 442.

the resurrection we shall be “like the angels,” who are considered to be without gender.

Basil states in his homily on Psalm 114 that there will be no fleshly temptations in the eschaton, since there will be no gender distinction, as “there is no male and female in the resurrection.”<sup>181</sup> Also, Gregory of Nazianzus says that the distinction of gender belongs to the body but not to the soul. This distinction is only temporary, as it will not exist in the resurrection body.<sup>182</sup> The Cappadocians interpret Galatians 3:28 to mean that in the resurrection there is no gender, and since the soul is created in the image of God, who has no gender, the soul too lacks gender.<sup>183</sup>

This is in stark contrast to those who held that we shall be raised as males and females. For instance, Justin Martyr rejected as sophistry the argument that the raising of the body with sexual differentiation means that sexual activity must follow if sexual organs of reproduction are not to be redundant. While the body will rise with all its members, it is not necessary for those members to function as they do now. And even now, he says, while all women have wombs, not all become pregnant, and both men and women can retain their virginity without destroying their humanity. He says that lust is not a necessary aspect of human life, and therefore there is no loss if sexual activity is abolished.<sup>184</sup> Justin considers that the flesh partakes of salvation, and that it is the whole body which is raised; therefore, any argument which undermines confidence in the resurrection is *ipso facto* false, since it denies the true faith.<sup>185</sup>

Augustine also held that the resurrected body has all organs, including genitals. He explicitly based his views on Matthew 22:30, arguing that Jesus did not refute the Sadducees by saying that in the resurrection there will be no women (as some argued we will all be men in the resurrection, and thus conformed to Christ: a male). Rather than denying there will be different genders, he denied that we will marry or give in marriage. He notes that it would have been easier to solve the problem by stating there would be no women, but he did not do this, but instead stated that “They will not be given in marriage,” which applies to females, “nor will they marry,” which refers to males. He affirms that the feminine gender has its place in creation, but the subordination of women, resulting from their function in reproduction, will pass away with the end of concupiscence. Thus there will be males and females in the

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<sup>181</sup> [Basil. *Homily on Psalm 114*. PG 29, 492C] V E F Harrison. “Male and female in Cappadocian theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990) 451.

<sup>182</sup> [Gregory of Nazianzus. *Oration 7.23*. NPNF 2/7, p. 237. *Oration 8.14*. NPNF 2/7, p. 242.] V E F Harrison. “Male and female in Cappadocian theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990) 459.

<sup>183</sup> [Gregory of Nazianzus. *Oration 7.23*. NPNF 2/7, p. 237.] V E F Harrison. “Male and female in Cappadocian theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 41 (1990) *passim*.

<sup>184</sup> Justin Martyr. *Fragments of the lost work of Justin on the Resurrection* 3. ANF 1, p. 295.

<sup>185</sup> Methodius speaks of virginity as an “angelic transformation of the body.” *The Symposium* 2.7. ACW 27, p. 57. Methodius cites *Wisdom* 4:1-2 to the effect that it is better to have virtue than children. *The Symposium* 1.3. ACW 27, p. 46. John Bugge comments that for the Patristic writers the practice of virginity anticipates and even hastens the return to asexuality in the eschaton. *Virginitas*, p. 31 and n. 6.

resurrection,<sup>186</sup> although Augustine accepts that there is no gender in God, and that the soul created in the image of God therefore has no gender [citing Galatians 3:28].<sup>187</sup>

In contrast to this, Hilary of Poitiers thinks that the bodies of women will not have generative organs in the resurrection, an idea mentioned in connection with Matthew 22:30. He accepts the very point rejected by Augustine, in that he holds that Jesus refutes the Sadducees by stating that there will be no “women” in the resurrection; rather, they will be like the angels.<sup>188</sup> A similar view is found in Paulinus of Nola, who reports the deathbed vision recounted by a man called Baebianus.

“I see a flaming orb of light, a circle into which no woman enters. How fortunate I am to have been granted while still in the flesh a vision of the eternal world, in which there is no need for marriage since sex plays no part in immortal bodies!”<sup>189</sup>

Jerome earlier held the Origenist view that the resurrection body would lack sexual characteristics,<sup>190</sup> but later insisted that the resurrection body would have all its organs and members.<sup>191</sup> Jerome came to admit that sexual organs are not necessarily superfluous in the resurrection, since even in this life it is possible to live virginally without making use of them.<sup>192</sup>

However, in Tertullian we can see confusion as to whether or not the resurrection body will have genitals, and if so, what use they could possibly have.<sup>193</sup> This problem arises from the idea that gender is a purely external (bodily) matter, and not a characteristic of the person as such. In Genesis 1 we read that God created human beings as male and females, not as genderless souls which occupy bodies with gender differences. Thus a person is a male or a female, we are not genderless souls which merely have a gendered body that will have these characteristics discarded at the resurrection. We are persons of gender, not persons with a (non-inherent) gender. Nor are human beings androgynous, split into two genders that will be re-united at the

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<sup>186</sup> [Augustine. *The City of God* 22.17. NPNF 1/2, pp. 495-496.] Kari E Børresen. “Augustin, interprète du dogme de la résurrection.” *Studia Theologica* 23 (1969) 153.

<sup>187</sup> [Augustine. *On the Trinity* 12.7.12. NPNF 1/3, p. 160.] Kari E Børresen. “Augustin, interprète du dogme de la résurrection.” *Studia Theologica* 23 (1969) 144.

<sup>188</sup> [Hilary of Poitiers. *On Matthew* 23.4. PL 9, 1045B-1046A.] P T Wild. **Man’s divinization according to St. Hilary**, p. 125.

<sup>189</sup> Paulinus of Nola. *Poem* 33. ACW 40, pp. 341-342.

<sup>190</sup> Jerome. *In Ephesians* 5.29. PL 30, 837. *Against Jovinian* 1.36. NPNF 2/6, p. 374. *Letter* 84.5. NPNF 2/6, p. 178.

<sup>191</sup> [Jerome. *Letter* 108.23-24. NPNF 2/6, p. 208. *Against John of Jerusalem* 29-35. NPNF 2/6, pp. 438-443] Brian E Daley. **The hope of the early Church**, pp. 102-103. Jerome took Ephesians 4:10-16 to mean that women would be given male bodies in the resurrection, but in *Apology* 1.29 [NPNF 2/3, p. 497] he seems to retract this view. Frederick van Fleteren. “Augustine and the resurrection.” In: **Studies in Medieval Culture** 12, pp. 13, 15 n. 30.

<sup>192</sup> Jerome. *Against John of Jerusalem* 31. NPNF 2/6, p. 440.

<sup>193</sup> Tertullian. *On the resurrection of the flesh* 61. ANF 3, p. 593.

resurrection.<sup>194</sup> Gender is thus intrinsic to our humanity, and not merely an external, non-essential characteristic.

## 6.7 Conclusion

The Patristic writers who used an instrumentalist anthropology held that everybody would be judged immediately after death, and the saints then admitted to heaven while the wicked were punished. The story of Lazarus in Luke 16 was one text used to support this contention. This shifted the focus from the eschatological day of Judgement to the end of each person's life, and an individualistic approach came to predominate. The idea that the soul was unconscious, waiting for the resurrection, was rejected.

Because some Christians had not lived perfect lives, the concept of purgatory was developed to explain how they were purified to be made fit for heaven. This development was possible only in the context of an instrumentalist anthropology in which the soul alone was responsible for sin.

The idea of the resurrection caused problems, as earlier formulations seemed to be materialistic, emphasising the restoration of the original particles of the body. For thinkers such as Origen, using philosophical concepts, this was not strictly necessary, and the identity of the resurrection body with the body buried was located in the form and not the matter of the body. This enabled Origen and others to deal with the persistent paradox of the resurrection of bodies whose particles had been incorporated into the bodies of animals, and perhaps through them, other human beings.

The rejection of "materialistic" concepts of the resurrection body led some Patristic writers to dispute the idea that the resurrection body would have a gender, based on the idea that the sexual organs would be redundant and therefore not present. It was argued that the body would be like the soul, which was created in the image of God, who has no gender, and therefore the soul also lacks gender. Others argued for the integrity of the resurrection body based on the view that human beings are created as males and females, and not as genderless souls who use a body with gender as an instrument for this life only. This raised further problems with respect to the identity of the body buried and the body resurrected, problems which arise solely because of an instrumentalist anthropology.

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<sup>194</sup> This view, which appears in Basil of Ancyra, originates with Plato and Jewish legend. Peter Brown. **The body and society**, p. 268. Augustine refutes the idea that Adam was androgynous. *The literal meaning of Genesis* 3.22.34. ACW 41, pp. 98-99.