



Greek versus Hebrew Mind Set

Through the centuries, many heretics have denied that Jesus was both G-d and man. In John's day people had trouble believing he was human; today more people have problems seeing him as G-d. But Jesus' divine-human nature is the pivotal issue of Christianity. Before you accept what religious teachers say about any topic, listen carefully to what they believe about Jesus. To deny either his divinity or his humanity is to consider him less than Christ, the Savior.

It was easier to believe that holding to some intellectual belief or dogma could be the source of salvation rather than simple submission to the atonement and Lordship of Messiah. As if doctrines constitute divine saving secret knowledge. Many continue to act as if the only people saved are those who share the exact accurate knowledge of the Gospel as they understand it.

Gnosticism involves the relational or experiential knowledge of G-d and of the divine or spiritual nature within us. Gnostics believe that they have secret knowledge about G-d, humanity and the rest of the universe of which the general population was unaware. It became one of the three main belief systems within 1st century Christianity.

A one-sentence description of Gnosticism: a religion that differentiates the evil god of this world (who is identified with the god of the Old Testament) from a higher more abstract God revealed by Jesus Christ, a religion that regards this world as the creation of a series of evil archons/powers who wish to keep the human soul trapped in an evil physical body, a religion that preaches a hidden wisdom or knowledge only to a select group as necessary for salvation or escape from this world. (EarlyChristianwritings.com)

Plato believed that reality existed in the realm of ideas not in the material world. Reality and truth exist only in the concept rather than in the thing itself: (Horsiness) (Unity and diversity). For Plato truth was obtained through philosophy and reality is found in the mind not in the world in which you live. Our existence is dualistic.

Ac 17:16-18 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans (Pleasure is the sole intrinsic good), and of the Stoics (detachment from emotions and indifference to pleasure), encountered him. And some said: 'What will this babblers say?'

When the church separated from the wisdom of the Torah after the expulsion of the Jews they looked for educated men among the Greek universities who had been schooled in Greek thought for their leaders. So they treated the scriptures allegorically looking for the "idea" behind the text rather than taking scriptural literally.

The Hebrew perspective was unified rather than dualistic. Reality exists in both realms the visible and invisible and neither was better. So the physical world was not evil or inferior to the nonmaterial world.

Greek: It's the thought that counts. | **Hebrew:** It's the actions that count.

Constantine 280AD - 387AD

The end of the Roman Empire. The Greek-speaking Eastern Roman Empire, known today as the Byzantine Empire, preserved Greco-Roman legal and cultural traditions along with Hellenic and Orthodox Christian elements for another thousand years. After 395, the emperors in the Western Roman Empire were usually figureheads. (Wik)

[Saint] Augustine 354AD -430AD

In Roman Catholicism and the Anglican Communion, he is a saint and pre-eminent Doctor of the Church, and the patron of the Augustinian religious order. Many Protestants, especially Calvinists, consider him to be one of the theological fountainheads of Reformation teaching on salvation and grace. He was a student of Plato.

[Saint] Augustine, was in his fifties and the bishop of Hippo, when the Visigoths overran Italy and sacked Rome. Augustine saw the refugees pouring into North Africa, including noble families from Rome, and he heard accusations that Rome's destruction was the result of neglect to worship the city's traditional gods.

Christians were responding with uncertainty to these allegations. They believed that their god protected people, and obviously Rome had not been protected. They believed, as had Eusebius, that G-d had linked Rome and Christianity. And, with disaster befalling Rome, they needed a new view on G-d's ties with Rome and with Christians. Augustine supplied it, drawing from the old association of evil with the present world and on the habit to put things into the form of **allegory**. **The church has focused its attention on the hope of escaping this world and get to heaven not to live in it. G-d wants to dwell with us here!**

The church: Goal of salvation is to escape here and go to where G-od is in heaven.

The Bible: Goal of salvation is to be holy that G-d may dwell here among His people and influence others here.

The church: Kingdom of Heaven is Heaven not on earth.

The Bible: Kingdom of Heaven is G-d's reign among His people here on earth.

The church: Messiah is coming to take us away.

The Bible: Messiah is coming to reign over us here.

The church: Get your ticket now or miss the train!

The Bible: Kingdom of Heaven is coming get ready to serve the King!