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## Paul's Appropriation of Philo's Theory of 'Two Men' in 1 Corinthians 15.45–49

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The present essay focuses on Paul's interactions with Philo's theory of two men in 1 Cor 15.45–49. It argues that instead of rejecting that theory, Paul transforms and reinterprets it in such a way as to substantiate his own doctrine of the resurrection as developed in 1 Cor 15.35–58 (i.e., his doctrine of eschatological bodily change). The essay provides a careful analysis of Philo's theory of two men as well as an exegesis of 1 Cor 15.35–58.

**Keywords:** Paul, Philo, theory of 'two men', death, resurrection, body

### The Thesis

Apart from the testimony of Acts 18.1–17, we have little information about Paul's first visit to the city of Corinth. On the basis of 1 Corinthians 15, however, we may surmise that when he founded the Christian community there, he did not—as he had done in Thessalonica—neglect to talk about the resurrection of the dead. Nothing suggests that the Corinthians did not receive his preaching on the topic well, but apparently at some point after he had left the community, factionalism broke out and some members of the church started to declare, against the apostle's teaching, that 'there is no resurrection of the dead' (1 Cor 15.12).<sup>1</sup>

The present essay will focus on Paul's response to that declaration. In particular, it will focus on the argument that Paul develops in 15.45–49 and its immediate context and on the ways in which that argument interacts with the intellectual pre-suppositions of those Corinthians whose scepticism he quotes in 15.12, cited above. Several scholars have argued that these Christians were influenced by the kind of Hellenistic Jewish philosophy that we find in the literature of Philo of Alexandria and that their rejection of the concept of the resurrection was particularly informed by the theory of 'two men' that Philo, if not invented,

348    1 Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

then at least promoted and developed throughout his writings.<sup>2</sup> I agree with that assessment. In my view, Paul's reasoning in 1 Cor 15.45–49 is almost incomprehensible if we do not assume that Philo's theory played a central role for the position of his critics.

However, even though scholarship has in this way progressed in the sense that it has been able to isolate the relevant *religionsgeschichtliche* context for Paul's argument in 15.45–49, I shall claim that it still has not been able to grasp the true nature of Paul's argumentative strategy in that passage. What has been lacking is a willingness to distinguish between the ways in which Paul interacts with the theory of the two men itself and the ways in which he interacts with the Corinthian sceptics' interpretation and use of that theory. Scholars who assume a 'Philonic' background to 15.45–49 often argue that Paul is acting polemically in these verses,<sup>3</sup> and to a certain extent that makes sense. In 15.46 he discusses the order of 'the psychic' and 'the spiritual' in a way that seems to contradict what the sceptics had been suggesting, and a little earlier, in 15.36, he even identifies these people as morons (cf. ὄφρων σῦ). However, Paul nowhere dismisses or polemicizes against the theory of the two men itself. Rather, as will be elaborated below, what he does in vv. 45–49 is to reinterpret or rewrite that theory and then use it positively in his own exposition of how the doctrine of the resurrection should be rightly perceived.<sup>4</sup>

In the course of this essay, I shall examine why Paul chose to interact with the theory of the two men in that particular way, i.e., why he chose to transform and appropriate it rather than dismiss it. The answer I shall propose is that he did so because his strategic aim in vv. 45–49 and the latter part of ch. 15 as a whole was to convince his critics of the truth of his eschatological preaching by proving that the theory on the basis of which they had so far rejected his doctrine of the resurrection actually supports it once that theory as well as his own doctrine of the resurrection have both been properly understood.

The essay has three parts. In part one, I shall make some preliminary remarks of relevance for the subsequent analysis of 1 Corinthians 15. In part two, I shall

2 For these claims see G. Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten, eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1 Korinther 15* (FRLANT 138; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986); R. A. Horsley, 'Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos: Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians', *HTR* 69.3 (1976) 269–88; G. E. Sterling, "Wisdom among the Perfect": Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity', *NovT* 37 (1995) 355–84; A. C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 1281–5; W. Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (4 vols.; EKK 7/1–4; Zürich: Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1991–2001) 4.274–7.

3 E.g., Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 78, 90–2, 176; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1284.

4 It should be noted that in v. 46 Paul does not suggest that his critics should abandon the theory of the two men, but rather that they should abandon the particular interpretation of that theory that they had so far espoused.

provide a discussion of Philo's theory of the two men and indicate how that theory may have informed the position of the Corinthian sceptics. Finally, in part three, I shall examine the text of the latter part of 1 Corinthians 15 with a view to substantiating my understanding of that text as outlined above.

### 1. Preliminaries

The first remark concerns the prehistory of 1 Corinthians 15 and the position of the Corinthian sceptics. With a number of other interpreters I take it that the concept of the resurrection that these people were rejecting was not quite the same as the one that Paul develops and defends in 1 Corinthians 15. The doctrine of the resurrection presented in that chapter may be summarized in the following manner. At the end of time, when 'the last trumpet' will sound (15.52), the dead will be brought back to life, and their bodies as well as those of the living will be transformed from flesh and blood into spirit (15.44, 51–53). All of them will then ascend to heaven. From a number of passages we know that, according to Paul, people who come to faith receive an infusion of God's spirit into their hearts (cf., e.g., Rom 5.5; 1 Cor 2.12–16; Gal 4.6). What will happen at the eschaton is then that God will convert the bodies of those who will be saved into the same substance that he has already infused into their inner persons. This means that once these individuals arrive in the heavenly regions, they will have been transformed into purely spiritual entities. In that way, they will come to resemble and share the nature of the entities that already reside there—the sun, the moon, and the stars (1 Cor 15.40–41), which likewise, according to Paul, consist of spirit.<sup>5</sup>

5 This construction of Paul's message in 1 Cor 15 is not universally recognized among NT scholars. Two aspects in particular are controversial. The first concerns the question of Paul's conception of the nature of the spirit or πνεῦμα. Scholars normally take it that πνεῦμα should be conceived as something immaterial and not, as I have suggested here, as a physical substance (e.g., R. B. Hays, *First Corinthians* [Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox, 1997] 272; J. A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 32; New York/London: Doubleday, 2008] 594–6). However, as Dale Martin (*The Corinthian Body* [New Haven/London: Yale University, 1995] 21–5, 115–20) has persuasively shown, practically everyone in the ancient world thought of spirit as something material, so there is little reason to assume that Paul should not have done so. The second element concerns the character of the resurrected 'spiritual body'. Along with, among others, Dale Martin (*Body*, 123–9) and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (*Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit* [Oxford: Oxford University, 2010] 26–38), I take σῶμα πνευματικόν to mean a body *composed of* spirit. Others (e.g., G. D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987] 786; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1276–81), however, take it to mean a body *governed by* (but not composed of) spirit. This is not the place for a detailed discussion of these complex issues. Let me only state here that since in v. 50 Paul emphatically claims that the risen body will not be composed of flesh and blood, it seems reasonable to assume that in v. 44 he intended to explain what it will then be composed of.

This, however, was hardly what he told the Corinthians when he introduced them to the doctrine during his first stay with them, and it certainly was not what they took him to have been telling them. Obviously, we have no hard evidence on how Paul preached the resurrection when he founded the community in Corinth. But since most scholars believe that he established the community there around the time of the composition of his first letter to the Thessalonians,<sup>6</sup> one may suspect that he will have told the Corinthians more or less the same as he put down in writing in 1 Thess 4.13-18. And nowhere in that passage does Paul speak about a pneumatic bodily change. What he tells the Thessalonians is merely that at the end of time the dead 'will rise' (ἀναστήσονται) and that 'all of us' will then be 'snatched away in the clouds' (ἀρπαγησόμεθα ἐν νεφέλαις) and be with the Lord for all eternity. Obviously, Paul may have intended to imply that some form of bodily transformation would be involved in the process, but he does not say so explicitly and what he does say could certainly be taken to suggest that he was expecting the dead to be raised and elevated to the realm of heaven *in the very bodies* in which they had lived and died during their time on earth. After all, that sort of resurrection belief seems to have been around in ancient Jewish thought, as is testified, for instance, by 2 Macc 7.11 and 14.46.<sup>7</sup>

Whether or not Paul was actually expecting that sort of resurrection when he stayed with the Corinthians for the first time, it seems clear from 1 Cor 15.35 that this was how the Corinthians had understood him and furthermore that it was precisely the idea of a fleshly resurrection (rather than the notion of a heavenly afterlife as such) that some of them were now objecting to.<sup>8</sup> If, as I have suggested, the sceptics behind vv. 12 and 35 were in fact influenced by Philo of Alexandria, it is quite understandable that they reacted dismissively to this idea. For as Dale Martin and Jeffrey Asher have pointed out, the idea of human bodies entering the heavenly regions fundamentally contradicted the hierarchical order that most intellectuals in the ancient world, including Philo, ascribed to the

6 E. Best, *A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (BNTC; London: Black, 1972) 7-13; V. P. Furnish, *II Corinthians: Translated with Introduction, Notes and Commentary* (AB 32A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984) 22-4; T. Holtz, *Der erste Brief an die Thessalonicher* (EKKNT 13; Zürich: Benziger, 1986) 19-20; A. J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 32B; New York: Doubleday, 2000) 67-74; G. D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009) 8.

7 Cf., e.g., Martin, *Body*, 120-3. For 2 Macc 7.11 and 14.46 see also N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (COQG 3; London: SPCK, 2003) 150-3 and A. F. Segal, *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in the Religions of the West* (New York: Doubleday, 2004) 271.

8 Martin, *Body*, 120-3; Sterling, 'Wisdom', 355-84; Hays, *Corinthians*, 253; Fitzmyer, *Corinthians*, 560.

cosmos.<sup>9</sup> However, Paul's critics probably found the idea of a fleshly resurrection not only ridiculous, but also unattractive. We will see this once we have considered Philo's theory of the two men.<sup>10</sup>

Before we get so far, however, I must add another preliminary remark. Some of the scholars who interpret vv. 45–49 against the background of Philo's theory of the two men take it that neither Paul nor his readers were actually familiar with Philo's writings. Rather, they suggest that Paul, the Corinthians, and Philo of Alexandria were all drawing on a common intellectual tradition.<sup>11</sup> This is certainly possible. However, why should it be safer to assume that all these people were indebted to a common tradition, the existence of which we may only hypothesize, than to assume that Paul and his readers could actually have been familiar with Philo's own writings (possibly as mediated to them through Apollos), which we know to have existed at the time of the Corinthian correspondence and which we similarly know to have been ingested with enthusiasm by later generations of Christians? In what follows I will allow myself to assume that both Paul and the Corinthian sceptics knew certain ideas of Philo's—and even knew them fairly well. Clearly, the only way to prove the legitimacy of such an approach is to show in detail that it generates a better and more coherent exegesis of Paul's text than we would have been able to produce without it.<sup>12</sup> Let us now turn to Philo and his theory of the two men.

9 See Martin, *Body*, 105–23; J. R. Asher, *Polarity and Change in 1 Corinthians 15: A Study of Metaphysics, Rhetoric, and Resurrection* (HUT 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 117–29.

10 In this essay I try to leave open whether Paul's understanding of the nature of the resurrection developed over time or remained largely uniform throughout his writings. If I were to state my views on this, however, I would say that I consider it likely that at the time of the composition of 1 Thessalonians (and of the formation of the Corinthian community) Paul had not yet given much thought to the question of the form of the resurrection (what mattered to him then was *that*, not *how*, the resurrection was going to take place) and that he developed his theory of eschatological bodily change only in response to the critical reactions of the Corinthian sceptics. Furthermore, I believe that the description of the resurrection in 2 Cor 5.1–10 deviates substantially from the one in 1 Cor 15 since in the former of these texts (or at least in certain parts of it) Paul appears to be open to the idea that the body will not come to take part in the resurrection, but rather be detached from the 'inner person' at the eschaton (5.1–3, 6–8, yet contrast 5.4; cf. also Phil 3.21). As the present argument does not depend on our stance on this issue, I shall not discuss it in detail, though.

11 Sterling, 'Wisdom', 357–67. Thiselton (*Corinthians*, 1284) argues that whether or not Paul and his readers were familiar with Philo's writings 'has little bearing' on our understanding of the text. That, of course, depends on how we actually understand it.

12 There are, I believe, certain passages besides 1 Cor 15 that suggest at least some degree of familiarity on Paul's part with Philo's work. One such passage is 1 Cor 10.1–13 where Paul famously identifies the rock in the wilderness with Christ (ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός) (10.4; cf. Exod 17.6; Num 20.7–11). This interpretation seems to rely on Philo's identification in *Leg.* 2.86 and 3.162 of the rock with logos/wisdom (cf., e.g., U. Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* [BEvT 49; München: Kaiser, 1968] 118). Another is Gal 4.21–31

## 2. Philo's Theory of 'Two Men' and its Reception in Corinth

Philo developed his theory of the two men on the basis of the creation narratives given in the book of Genesis. As is well known, Genesis offers two different accounts of the creation of the human species (one in 1.26-27 and another 2.7). While this has suggested to modern scholarship that the text of Genesis has come down to us as a compound of different sources, it suggested to Philo that God had created two categorically different 'types of people' (*Leg.* 1.31): a 'heavenly man' (οὐράνιος ἄνθρωπος), 'fashioned in the image of God' (cf. Gen 1.26-27), and an 'earthly man' (γῆϊνος ἄνθρωπος), 'moulded out of clay' (cf. Gen 2.7).

Philo never states explicitly how the distinction between these people should be understood, but he comments on their different characteristics at various places throughout his work. In *Opif.* 134-135 and *Leg.* 1.31-32, for instance, he states that the heavenly man is noetic, incorporeal, genderless, 'a kind of idea or type or seal' (ιδέα τις ἢ γένος ἢ σφραγίς) and 'entirely without part in corruptible and terrestrial substance' (φθαρτῆς καὶ συνόλως γεώδους οὐσίας ἀμέτοχος), whereas the earthly man is a sense-perceptible, mortal, and gendered synthesis of body and mind that 'partakes of quality' (μετέχων ποιότητος). In *Leg.* 1.92-96 he explains that the heavenly man is perfect and 'possesses virtue instinctively' (ἔχει τὴν ἀρετὴν αὐτομαθῶς) unlike the earthly man, who is flawed and therefore fully dependent on ethical teaching and other forms of instruction (cf. also *Her.* 45-53). And in *Leg.* 3.97-104 he declares that whereas the earthly man may be able to apprehend the existence of God through inferences based on perception through the senses, the heavenly man is able to 'lift his eyes' and to gaze directly into the essence of the divine.<sup>13</sup>

How should we make sense of this set of contrasts? Or to put it differently, what, according to Philo, are these distinctive types of ἄνθρωποι? Several scholars

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where Paul shows an awareness of at least the kind of allegorical hermeneutical tradition of which Philo was a leading figure. Berndt Schaller ('Adam und Christus bei Paulus: oder: Über Brauch und Fehlbrauch von Philo in der Neutestamentlichen Forschung', *Philo und das Neue Testament: Wechselseitige Wahrnehmungen, I. Internationales Symposium zum Corpus Judeo-Hellenisticum 1.-4. Mai 2003, Eisenach/Jena* [ed. R. Deines and K.-W. Niebuhr; WUNT 172; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004] 143-53, esp. 148) has recently rejected the idea that Philo's theory of two men should play a constitutive role for 1 Cor 15.45-49. His argument relies mainly on the observation that Philo and Paul develop their readings of the earthly and the heavenly men in rather different directions. I agree with Schaller's observation, but fail to see why it should count as an argument against Philonic influence. Authors often disagree with their sources of inspiration. (Paul, for instance, disagreed on numerous counts with the authors of the Psalms though he clearly relied on their works for his own theological reflection.)

<sup>13</sup> See further D. M. Hay, 'Philo's Anthropology: The Spiritual Regimen of the Therapeutae, and a Possible Connection with Corinth', *Testament* (ed. Deines and Niebuhr) 130-5.



have argued that the heavenly man should be conceptualized as the Platonic idea of man and the earthly man as the material manifestation of that idea in the realm of phenomena.<sup>14</sup> This is understandable given that Philo refers to the heavenly man as ἰδέα τις ἢ γένος ἢ σφραγίς in *Opif.* 134. However, as David Runia observes, the fact that Philo describes this man precisely as ἰδέα τις κτλ. suggests that he uses the term 'idea' here in a loose and slightly untechnical sense.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, it is difficult to see how a Platonic idea should be able to possess virtue instinctively and gaze into the divine essence. And as Gerhard Sellin has pointed out, the fact that Philo identifies the two men as διττὰ ἀνθρώπων γένη in *Leg.* 1.31 renders this interpretation almost impossible since, according to a Platonic conceptuality, one γένος cannot operate as the material manifestation of another.<sup>16</sup>

In my view, Runia's reading is a lot more convincing. At various places throughout his work Philo indicates that prior to their lives in the flesh human beings pre-existed as pure and disembodied minds (*Gig.* 12; *Somn.* 1.135–138) and once their lives on earth come to an end, they will return to that form of existence (*Leg.* 1.105; 2.77; *Cher.* 114; *Sacr.* 5; *QG* 3.11).<sup>17</sup> According to Runia, it is precisely this contrast between life in the flesh and life as a bodiless mind that is highlighted by the theory of the two men. In Runia's words, 'the contrast that Philo has in mind' is a contrast 'between the "true man" and man in his corporeal existence',<sup>18</sup> and the true man is to be defined 'in eschatological terms' as 'man as he is when he has left the body and all earthly cares behind and as an ἀσώματος φύσις is able to contemplate the divine things without ceasing'.<sup>19</sup>

14 E.g., C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Black, 2nd ed. 1971) 374–5; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1283; Schrage, *Korinther*, 4.275; G. H. van Kooten, *Paul's Anthropology in Context: The Image of God, Assimilation to God, and Tripartite Man in Ancient Judaism, Ancient Philosophy, and Early Christianity* (WUNT 232; Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 2008) 272–97, esp. 272–3; and the literature cited in Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 94 n. 57.

15 D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato* (Philosophia Antiqua; Leiden: Brill, 1986) 337 n. 8. Runia points to a similarly 'loose' use of the term in *Opif.* 74 where Philo describes the rational human mind as τῆς ἀνακεκραμένης βελτίονος ιδέας. Cf. also D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria, On the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (PACS 1; Leiden: Brill, 2001) 323.

16 Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 103.

17 For Philo's understanding of death see H. A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947) 1.395–413; L. L. Grabbe, 'Eschatology in Philo and Josephus', *Judaism in Late Antiquity. Part 4. Death; Life-after-Death, Resurrection, and the World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity* (ed. A. Avery-Peck and J. Neusner; Handbook of Oriental Studies 1, The Near and Middle East; Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 2000) 165–9; G. Buch-Hansen, 'It Is the Spirit that Gives Life': A Stoic Understanding of Pneuma in John's Gospel (BZNW 173; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2010) 379–80.

18 Runia, *Philo*, 337.

19 Runia, *Philo*, 337 n. 9; cf. Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 92–172. See also the analyses in R. A. Baer, *Philo's Use of the Categories Male and Female* (ALGHJ 9; Leiden: Brill, 1970) 22; T. H.

This reading coheres well with the ontological (*Opif.* 134–135; *Leg.* 1.31–32) as well as with the ethical (*Leg.* 1.92–96) and epistemological (*Leg.* 3.97–104) differences that Philo establishes between the two men, given that in his view disembodied minds were ontologically, ethically, and epistemologically superior to ordinary earthly human beings. It thus makes sense, provisionally at least, to define the heavenly man as man as he is prior to and after his earthly existence—i.e., as a pure and disembodied mind—and the earthly man as man as he is during his life on earth—i.e., as a synthesis of mind and flesh.

I write 'provisionally' because this construction needs to be modified in two ways (none of which, though, contradicts Runia's analysis).<sup>20</sup> First, in *Opif.* 135 we learn that after his creation the earthly man was blessed with an infusion of God's spirit (πνεῦμα). Even though he does not say so explicitly, Philo seems to imply that this spirit is what provided the earthly man with life (cf. *Leg.* 1.32) and with the faculty of rational thought (cf. *Leg.* 1.34). However, in the subsequent and rather more detailed analysis in *Leg.* 1.31–42 he specifies that what the earthly man received was not really πνεῦμα in the strict sense of the word, but rather a less powerful version of that substance, viz., πνοή or 'breath', and he then declares that strictly speaking only the heavenly mind, created in the image of God, 'might be said to partake of spirit' (πνεύματος ἂν λέγοιτο κεκοινωνηκέναι) (*Leg.* 1.42). Seen in that light, we may redefine the heavenly man as man as he is as a pure and disembodied mind vivified and enlightened by God's spirit and earthly man as man as he is as a compound of body and mind vivified and enlightened by God's breath.<sup>21</sup>

Second, the above considerations suggest that the notion of heavenly man signifies a mode of existence characteristic of human beings only prior to and after their lives on earth. However, according to Philo, virtuous people may actually be transformed into this mode of existence even while they remain physically connected to the flesh. According to *QE* 2.46, Moses, for instance, experienced such a transformation after he had climbed Mt. Sinai to receive the tablets of the law (cf. Exod 24.12–18). Philo writes:

Why is the mountain covered with a cloud for six days, and Moses called above on the seventh day?... The calling above of the prophet is a second birth better than the first... The divine birth happened to come about for him in accordance with the ever-virginal nature of the hebdomad. For he is called on the seventh day, in this (respect) differing from the earthborn first moulded man, for the

Tobin, *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation* (CBQMS 14; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1983); Buch-Hansen, *Spirit*, 112–34.

<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the second modification to be identified below is anticipated, yet not fully developed, in Runia, *Philo*, 337 n. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Runia refers to *Leg.* 1.42 in Runia, *Creation*, 328, but does not comment on its significance.

latter came into being from the earth and with a body. Wherefore the most appropriate number, six, was assigned to the earthborn man, while to the one differently born (was assigned) the higher nature of the hebdomad (trans. LCL).<sup>22</sup>

Philo does not explicitly state what it means to be 'reborn' in this fashion and thus to be transformed into an οὐράνιος ἄνθρωπος without actually leaving the body in physical terms. However, other factors let us know that it means to be caught by what the Alexandrian otherwise refers to as 'inspiration', 'divine frenzy', or 'prophetic ecstasy'.<sup>23</sup>

For one thing, texts such as *Mos.* 1.158 and *QE* 2.29 unambiguously testify that Moses was prophetically inspired when he rested on the mountain. *De Vita Moses* 1.158 explains that once he had been summoned by God, Moses 'entered into the darkness (τὸν γνόφον) where God was, that is into the unseen and invisible and incorporeal paradigmatic essence of all things (εἰς τὴν ἀειδῆ καὶ ἀόρατον καὶ ἀσώματον τῶν ὄντων παραδειγματικὴν οὐσίαν) and perceived (κατανοῶν) what is imperceptible (τὰ ἀθέατα) to mortal nature'. Likewise, though in a more direct and less artistic style, *QE* 2.29 declares that on the mountain Moses was 'divinely inspired and filled with God' (trans. LCL).

Also, Philo's characterization of the heavenly man matches what he elsewhere says about divine or prophetic inspiration. According to Philo, prophetic inspiration occurs when God allows his πνεῦμα (not his πνοή!) to descend on the minds of virtuous people. In order for such people to obtain inspiration, though, they must in advance have liberated themselves completely of all earthly cares and bodily influences (*Gig.* 54; *Her.* 64; cf. *Leg.* 3.69; *Mos.* 2.68–69) since only then will their minds be pure enough to serve as an abode for the spirit. Philo then explains that once the spirit arrives, it supplants everything in the mind that belongs to its ordinary human constitution (including the πνοή, presumably) and forces the mind to 'leave itself', transcend earthly realities, and give itself over unreservedly to visions of the divine (*Leg.* 3.41; *Her.* 69; *Somn.* 2.232). In this way, the description of the inspired mind matches the description of the heavenly man. It is enlightened, not by God's breath, but by his spirit, and even though it continues to be physically attached to the flesh (and in that way remains earthly), it nevertheless operates as if it were *de facto* disembodied.<sup>24</sup>

However, Philo is very clear that precisely because the prophetic mind remains connected to the flesh, this form of inspiration always comes to an end (*Virt.* 217; *Her.* 45–46, 264–267; *Somn.* 2.232–233); for even though virtuous

22 For the symbolism of six and seven see *Leg.* 1.16.

23 Cf. the discussions in Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 143–55 and Runia, *Philo*, 337 n. 9. Neither of these scholars, though, comments specifically on this particular passage.

24 For Philo's conception of inspiration see further Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 127–55.

people may be able to suppress corporeal stimuli for a while, their bodies always at some point manage to regain at least some level of control. And according to Philo, God's spirit cannot endure to abide in a mind preoccupied with fleshly concerns (*Gig.* 19–20, 28). This means that even though virtuous people may, during their lives on earth, be transformed and reborn as οὐράνιοι ἄνθρωποι, any permanent transformation of that nature must await the moment of death. For only then—when the mind leaves the body in physical and not just ethical and epistemological terms—will it be irrevocably free of its powers and hence able to hold on to the spirit and, as Runia puts it, 'contemplate the divine things without ceasing'.<sup>25</sup>

We may now summarize Philo's theory of the two men in the following way. The heavenly man is man as he is as a pure and disembodied mind vivified and enlightened by God's spirit. The earthly man, by contrast, is man as he is as a compound of body and mind vivified and enlightened by God's breath. Through prophetic inspiration, virtuous people may be transformed into heavenly men during their lives on earth, but it is only at the moment of death, when the mind and the body physically disconnect, that this transformation may become final and irrevocable.

On the assumption that the Corinthian sceptics were familiar with and valued Philo's theory of the two men, it should be clear from this analysis why they will have found the idea of a fleshly resurrection not only bizarre, but also unappealing. These Christians may have believed that they were able to transcend the powers of the flesh when 'by the spirit' they were speaking 'secrets' 'to God', as Paul describes the act of glossolalia in 1 Cor 14.2. But if they shared the outlook on the flesh that Philo had advanced throughout his writings, they would nevertheless have sensed that those powers would never be truly vanquished until after the moment of death when their minds would be physically detached from their bodies. Thus, for them to imagine that their *bodies* should somehow be brought back to life after that blissful event and join the mind in its heavenly afterlife would be quite repulsive. For it would imply that they would never be free of those distractions and inclinations of the flesh that make this present life so constrained and unfulfilling (cf. *Gig.* 31; *Leg.* 3.69–71).

It is possible that prior to Paul's writing of 1 Corinthians these individuals had explicitly pointed to Philo's theory of the two men as a way of elucidating why they had to reject what they had perceived to be the content of Paul's preaching—arguing, for instance, that any final and eschatological transition from an earthly to a heavenly mode of existence must take place through a departure from, and not through some mysterious revivification of, the flesh. It is also possible that the theory of the two men had merely informed their stance in a less explicit manner and that Paul was for some reason aware of that. In any case,

25 Runia, *Philo*, 337 n. 9; cf. Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 113.

as we shall now see, in 1 Corinthians 15 Paul responds to their position by clarifying what his doctrine of the resurrection was really all about (viz. pneumatic bodily change) and by rewriting Philo's theory of the two men in such a way that it explicitly supports and reinforces that doctrine.

### 3. Paul's Transformation and Application of the Theory of 'Two Men' in 1 Corinthians 15

Paul opens his discussion of the form of the resurrection by quoting the critical voices of the Corinthian sceptics: 'How will the dead be raised? With what bodies will they come?' (πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί; ποίῳ δὲ σώματι ἔρχονται;) (15.35). As we have seen, these questions almost certainly reveal that the sceptics were assuming that, according to Paul, the dead would be raised and removed to the realm of heaven in ordinary human bodies. Right from the outset, however, Paul makes it clear that this is not what the resurrection will involve. Rather, the bodies of the deceased will be substantially transformed as a part of the resurrection process (15.37–38). And according to v. 36, death is a precondition for that transformation.<sup>26</sup>

In 15.39–44a Paul then clarifies in what particular way the bodies that rise will be transformed. He says,

Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are both heavenly bodies (σώματα ἐπουράνια) and earthly bodies (σώματα ἐπίγεια), but the glory of the heavenly ones differs from that of the earthly ones. There is one glory for the sun, another glory for the moon, and another glory for the stars. Indeed, star differs from star in glory. So it is also with the resurrection of the dead (οὕτως καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν). What is sown as perishable is raised as imperishable; what is sown in dishonour is raised in honour; what is sown in weakness is raised in strength; what is sown as a psychic body (σῶμα ψυχικόν) is raised as a spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν).

According to some interpreters, Paul's aim in 15.39–41 is to point to the great variety of bodies that exist in the cosmos 'all of which is God's doing in creation'.<sup>27</sup> Since in 1 Corinthians 15 Paul promotes and defends a concept of eschatological bodily change, that claim makes sense to the extent that Paul could very well have been interested in showing, as Gordon Fee puts it, 'that "body" does not necessarily mean one thing', but can mean a variety of things'.<sup>28</sup>

26 On 15.36 see further below and J. A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 32; New York/London: Doubleday, 2008) 588.

27 Fee, *Corinthians*, 782.

28 Fee, *Corinthians*, 782; cf. Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1267 and the literature cited in Asher, *Polarity*, 102 n. 32. According to Schrage (*Korinther*, 4.293), the passage serves 'als eine

However, as Jeffrey Asher has pointed out, the way in which Paul applies these verses to his discussion of the resurrection body in vv. 42–44a reveals that his purpose is slightly more specific than that;<sup>29</sup> for even though Paul certainly discriminates between different types of σώματα ἐπίγεια and σώματα ἐπουράνια, vv. 42–44a demonstrate that his principal aim in vv. 39–41 is not to distinguish between the different species within these categories, but rather to distinguish between these categories themselves. Thus, in 15.42–44a he clarifies that the bodies that belong to the former of these classes are perishable, dishonourable, weak, and 'psychic', whereas those that belong to the latter are imperishable, honourable, powerful, and spiritual and that (cf. οὕτως καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν) whereas the bodies in which Christians presently live and die belong to the former group, the bodies in which they will rise and ascend to heaven will belong to the latter.

Thus, even though Paul will later return to this issue (viz., in 15.52–54), he has already now clarified ποῖω σώματι—'with what bodies'—the dead will be raised. The answer is: with spiritual bodies, i.e., with bodies that share the nature and composition of the sun, the moon, and the stars. In the following section, 15.44b–49, Paul seeks to substantiate that answer exegetically. Formally, the section reads as an exegesis of Gen 2.7. However, I suggest that it was intended to serve just as much, if not more, as an exegesis of Philo and his theory of the two men. Paul writes:

If there is a psychic body, there is also a spiritual one. For so it is written: the first man, Adam, became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. But the first was not the spiritual, but the psychic, and then afterwards the spiritual (ἀλλ' οὐ πρῶτον τὸ πνευματικὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ ψυχικόν, ἔπειτα τὸ πνευματικόν). The first man was of the dusty earth, the second a man of heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of dust, and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven; and just as we have worn<sup>30</sup> the image of the man of dust, so we shall wear the image of the one of heaven (καὶ καθὼς ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ, φορέσομεν<sup>31</sup> καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου) (15.44b–49).

Earlier in ch. 15, in vv. 21–22, Paul introduced a highly significant contrast between the figures of Adam and Christ, arguing that since (ἐπειδὴ) death

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Kritik an einer Degradierung der Leiblichkeit und als Erinnerung daran zu verstehen, daß Gottes Schöpfung immer eine leibliche ist'.

29 Asher, *Polarity*, 102.

30 For this translation of φορέω see LSJ, 'φορέω', 2 and below.

31 Like the majority of interpreters I accept the future indicative of φορέω in spite of its modest manuscript attestation. Cf., e.g., Barrett, *Corinthians*, 369 n. 2; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1288–9; Asher, *Polarity*, 116 n. 51. Fee (*Corinthians*, 787 n. 5), by contrast, favours the aorist subjunctive φορέσωμεν.

entered the world through one ἄνθρωπος (Adam), the dead must also be raised through one ἄνθρωπος (Christ). In 15.44b-49 he absorbs and appropriates Philo's theory of the two men by allowing that theory to merge with the earlier juxtaposition. He does so by identifying Adam and Christ respectively as the earthly and heavenly men (15.45-47) and by defining these men 'Philonically' as paradigms of different modes of existence, each of which may, or may come to, characterize individual human beings (15.48-49). Thus, in v. 49, Paul suggests that whereas he and his readers have previously belonged to the category of earthly man, once their fleshly lives have come to an end and the resurrection become a reality, they will come to belong to that of the heavenly man.

However, Paul not only absorbs the theory of the two men: he also transforms it into a theory about eschatological bodily change. He does so in three ways. First, in 15.45 he explicitly introduces his discourse about Adam and Christ as the earthly and heavenly men, respectively, as scriptural evidence for his claim in v. 44b about the existence of both psychic and spiritual bodies (cf. οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται)—a claim which itself serves to substantiate his previous argument that 'what is sown as a psychic body is raised as a spiritual body' (v. 44a). Thus, right from the outset Paul makes sure that his readers perceive what he says of the earthly and heavenly men in this passage as a discussion of different types of bodies and of the pneumatic transformation of the body that Christ believers can expect.

Second, in 15.46 Paul speaks of the two men, not as Philo would have done as different types of minds or people, but rather as different types of bodies. Scholars have traditionally been puzzled by Paul's use in that verse of the articles τό ... τό in connection with the adjectives 'spiritual' (πνευματικόν) and 'psychic' (ψυχικόν). The trouble is that Paul appears to be referring to the two men (ἄνθρωποι) of v. 45 and that one might then have expected him to use the masculine form of the article (ὁ ... ὁ) instead of the neuter. Some interpreters therefore suggest that τό ... τό really refer to the different bodies (σώματα) mentioned in v. 44.<sup>32</sup> Others, however, maintain that it must refer to the two men in spite of the grammatical difficulty that such a reading involves.<sup>33</sup> Yet others submit that Paul could be referring neither to bodies, nor men, but rather, in a more abstract sense, to spiritual and psychic 'principles', 'orders', 'states', or 'situations'.<sup>34</sup> The solution, however, is probably much simpler: in v. 46 Paul refers to Adam and

32 E.g., Barrett, *Corinthians*, 374-5; B. Spörlein, *Die Leugnung der Auferstehung. Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung zu 1 Kor 15* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1971) 107.

33 E.g., K.-G. Sandelin, *Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Weisheit in 1 Kor 15* (Meddelanden från Stiftelsen för Åbo Akademi Forskningsinstitut 12; Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1976) 46. Cf. the discussion of the history of research in Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 176-81.

34 Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 189-90; Fee, *Corinthians*, 790-1; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1295; Schrage, *Korinther*, 306-8; Fitzmyer, *Corinthians*, 598; Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology*, 29.



Christ, who were mentioned in v. 45, but not in their capacities of being different types of ἄνθρωποι, but rather different types of σώματα.

Third, Paul's use of the verb φορέω suggests that the εἰκόνες of which he speaks in 15.49 are the bodily natures of Adam and Christ. As numerous scholars have pointed out, φορέω is often used in connection with clothing and the term therefore carries distinct overtones of 'wearing' (cf. ἐνδύσασθαι in 15.53, ἐνδύσεται in 15.54, and ἐπενδύσασθαι in 2 Cor 5.3).<sup>35</sup> In the present context, the only things that believers could be 'wearing' are the different bodies that Adam and Christ each represent. Thus, while in this verse Paul clearly accepts and appropriates Philo's identification of the two men as paradigms of different modes of existence for individual human beings, he suggests that these modes of existence refer, not to their minds, but rather to their corporeal natures.

Through these textual operations, Paul seeks to suggest to his readers that according to the theory of the two men, the final and irrevocable transformation of earthly people into οὐράνιοι ἄνθρωποι will take place, not through a disconnection of the body and a pneumatic transformation of the mind, but rather through a pneumatic transformation of the body. It seems unlikely, though, that at this stage of his argument any of his critics should have been persuaded by his proceedings. After all, up until this moment he has not really justified the amendments he has made to Philo's theory and it would not be hard for anyone familiar with Philo's writings to dismiss them as misguided and out of place.

However, from 15.50 Paul goes on to demonstrate that the particular way in which he has reworked the doctrine of the two men in the previous section may in fact be justified by Philo's own text. He does so by subtly alluding to a passage in which Philo suggests that some people do experience a bodily transformation like the one ascribed by Paul to Christians as part of their transition from an earthly to a heavenly form of existence. Paul introduces this passage by suggesting that he is now going to summarize what has already been established (τοῦτο δέ φημι). To a large extent, this is also what he does. He repeats that human bodies will need to be transformed as part of the resurrection process (15.50-52a) and that they will be transformed in such a way as to obtain immortality and incorruptibility (15.52b-54). However, at one point Paul's argument differs slightly from what has previously been claimed. The text reads as follows:

What I mean, brothers, is this (τοῦτο δέ φημι, ἀδελφοί): flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν θεοῦ κληρονομήσαι οὐ δύναται), nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery (ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω): we shall not all die, but we shall all be transformed (πάντες οὐ κοιμηθήσόμεθα, πάντες δέ

35 Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 190-4; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1289-90.



ἀλλαγησόμεθα), in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed; for this perishable body must put on imperishability and this mortal body must put on immortality (δεῖ γὰρ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι ἀθανασίαν) (15.50–53).

The deviation I have in mind is to be found in the affirmation in 15.51 that ‘we shall not all die, but we shall all be transformed’. Paul presents this affirmation as the climax of his whole exposition (cf. ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω). Precisely for that reason, it is noteworthy that it appears to contradict v. 36, which, as stated above, seems to identify death as a precondition for the kind of transformation that the resurrection will involve.

Scholars sometimes argue that the two verses are not mutually exclusive given that, rightly understood, v. 36 does not really speak about death as a prerequisite for transformation. Thiselton, for instance, writes: ‘Paul is not emphasizing the necessity of death, but “the fact of transformation through death and vivification”’. The grammatical conditional ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ underlines the logical and contingent condition of *discontinuity* in order to allow for a *meaningful and conceivable continuity*.<sup>36</sup> In a similar vein, Fee argues that ‘Paul’s concern is with death as a precondition of life, not in the sense that *all must die* but in the sense that the seed itself demonstrates that *out of death* a new expression of life springs forth’.<sup>37</sup> These readings seem slightly forced and unnecessarily complex and they certainly go beyond what Paul could have expected his audience to take v. 36 to mean. It should be recalled that in the preceding verse, Paul has quoted the question of how the dead will be raised. Given that this constitutes the immediate context for v. 36, it seems implausible that the Corinthians should have been able to interpret Paul’s ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ in any other way than to imply that one must necessarily die in order to come to experience the kind of transformation of which the remainder of ch. 15 speaks.

I see no reason to assume that Paul should not have anticipated that his readers would interpret v. 36 in this simple and straightforward manner. Why, then, does he now suggest in v. 51 that we shall not all die, but nevertheless all be transformed? The answer, I believe, is that through the precise wording of v. 51 he was trying to direct his readers’ attention to a specific passage in Philo’s writings (QG 1.86—and through that passage Mos. 2.288) where Philo suggests that some people are in fact removed to heaven at the end of their lives, not through a separation of mind and flesh, but precisely through a transformation of the flesh.

<sup>36</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1264 (his emphasis). The quotation in double marks is from Barrett, *Corinthians*, 370.

<sup>37</sup> Fee, *Corinthians*, 781 (his emphasis).

In QG 1.86 Philo argues that 'the end of worthy and holy men [such as Enoch, Moses, and Elijah] is not death but translation' (trans. LCL). In this particular passage, Philo does not explain what translation means except by hinting that it involves a certain kind of bodily assumption of the translated person into the realm of heaven. In *Mos.* 2.288, however, where he describes the end of Moses' life, he is more informative. When Moses 'was to make his departure from this place to heaven and leave mortal life for immortality', he writes,

...he was summoned by the father, who resolved his twofold nature of body and soul into a single unity, transforming his whole being into the most sun-like mind (ὁς αὐτὸν δυνάδα ὄντα, σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν, εἰς μονάδος ἀνεστοιχείου ὅλον δι' ὅλων μεθαρμοζόμενος εἰς νοῦν ἡλιοειδέστατον) (cf. also *Sacr.* 8).

This account reveals that Philo's concept of translation was modelled on the Stoic idea of ἐκπύρωσις.<sup>38</sup> According to the Stoics, the world is a compound of two principles, the active and the passive, both of which are material entities. The active principle is spirit (πνεῦμα, also known as the mind of the world), the passive principle matter (ὕλη) or unqualified substance (ἄποιος οὐσία). These principles coexist in what the Stoics refer to as blending (κρᾶσις). At certain intervals, however, the world dissolves and burns up in an all-consuming world fire (ἐκπύρωσις) and through that fire the cosmos transforms from a blend of matter and spirit into pure spirit. This spirit then gives birth to a new world (composed of both principles), which eventually also burns up. In that way the world perpetually oscillates between destruction and re-creation.<sup>39</sup>

What Moses experienced at the end of his life was apparently a sort of personal microcosmic world conflagration. When summoned by God, the two principles of his nature, i.e., his body and mind, were dissolved and transformed into pure mind. Philo's debt to the Stoics is evident both from his use of the technical term ἀναστοιχειοῦν<sup>40</sup> and from the fact that the mind into which Moses' twofold nature was transformed had a certain fiery, i.e., ἐκπύρωσις-like, character (cf. ἡλιοειδέστατον). Furthermore, Philo seems to have believed that Moses' mind was pneumatic both before and after his translation into heaven. Thus, *Mos.* 2.289 explains that Moses was inspired when the translation was initiated and since, as we have seen, Philo believed that heavenly minds by definition 'partake of spirit' (*Leg.* 1.42), we may assume that it remained that way even

38 For this reading of QG 1.86 and *Mos.* 2.288 see Buch-Hansen, *Spirit*, 375-6, 381-6.

39 For an introduction to Stoic physics see A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1987) 162-83, 266-343; D. N. Sedley, 'Hellenistic Physics and Metaphysics', *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (ed. K. Algra et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2002) 382-411.

40 For this term see, e.g., Philo's summary of the position of Chrysippus in *Aet.* 94 (*SVF* 2.618) and Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology*, 33-5, 221 n. 89.

after the translation had come to an end. Thus, just as according to the Stoics all that remains after the ἐκπύρωσις of the world is the pneumatic mind of the cosmos, so according to Philo all that remained after the translation of Moses was the pneumatic mind of the lawgiver.

I am suggesting that the Pauline ‘not all will die, but all will be transformed’ was designed to evoke in the minds of the Corinthian sceptics the Philonic ‘not death, but translation’ of *QG* 1.86 and through that the description of the end of Moses’ life in *Mos.* 2.288. It should be clear from this analysis why Paul should wish to achieve this effect. The similarities between the Philonic concept of translation and Paul’s description of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 are quite impressive. Both thinkers conceptualize translation/resurrection as a relocation of the resurrected/translated individual from an earthly to a heavenly position and as a transformation of the individual’s entire physical being into the kind of substance—viz., πνεῦμα—that God has already infused into the inner person (i.e., into the mind or the heart) of the translated/resurrected individual at some point before his or her life has come to an end. And just as Paul suggests that resurrected believers will come to resemble and share the nature of the celestial bodies, so Philo describes the nature and appearance of the Jewish lawgiver after his translation to heaven as being ‘most sun-like’. *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin* 1.86 and *Mos.* 2.288 thus provided Paul with exactly the kind of ‘Philonic authorization’ that he needed for altering the theory of the two men the way he did.<sup>41</sup>

### Conclusion

If the preceding analysis is correct we may conclude that in the second half of 1 Corinthians 15 Paul is at work trying to convince his critics that even though Philo never speaks explicitly about a somatic transformation in the context of his theory of the two men, he would nevertheless have agreed that virtuous people’s final and irrevocable conversion into οὐράνιοι ἄνθρωποι may take place through a pneumatic transformation of the flesh. Thus, the theory of the two men could not be used to reject the Pauline doctrine of the ἀνάστασις, as they had apparently assumed. (Clearly, one reason why they had assumed this was that Paul had not yet clarified to them that he did not expect the resurrection to be fleshly in nature.)

It is difficult to determine why Paul chose to respond to his critics in this particular way. However, he may well have surmised that these individuals were so

41 It is therefore slightly inaccurate when Sellin (*Auferstehung*, 224–5) writes that ‘Verwandlung ist die paulinische Alternative zu einem (philonischen) “hinübergehen”, zur Leibablegung und Entweltlichung’. That alternative is actually Philonic in origin. Engberg-Pedersen (*Cosmology*, 33) notices the parallel between 1 Cor 15.35–58 and *Mos.* 2.288, but doubts that the latter passage played any formative role for Paul’s argument.

involved with Philonic philosophy that the only way to convince them of the truth of his own eschatological preaching was to show them that Philo would himself have been convinced of it. Hence, instead of setting up a contrast between them, he chose to suggest that as soon as his own eschatology and Philo's philosophy had been properly understood, it would become clear that they actually cohered perfectly well.