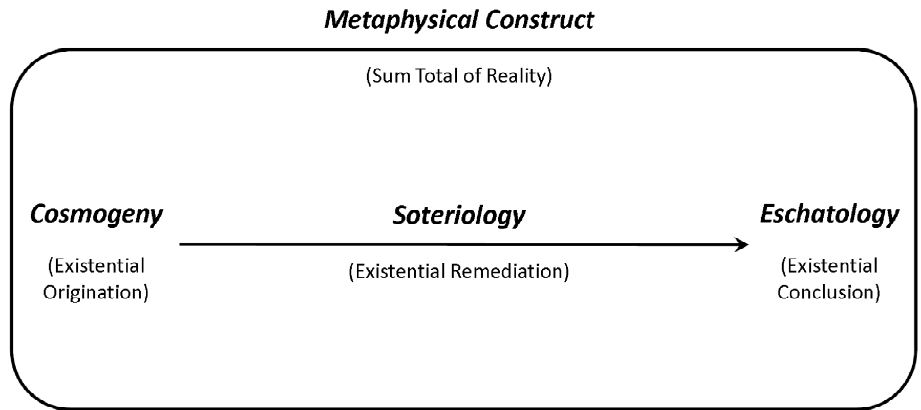


Session 2: The Biblical vs. Western Worldview

I. Introduction: Orthodoxy and Worldview

- A. Worldviews of Non-accountability
- B. Universal Elements of Worldview
 - 1. Metaphysics
 - 2. Cosmogony
 - 3. Soteriology
 - 4. Eschatology

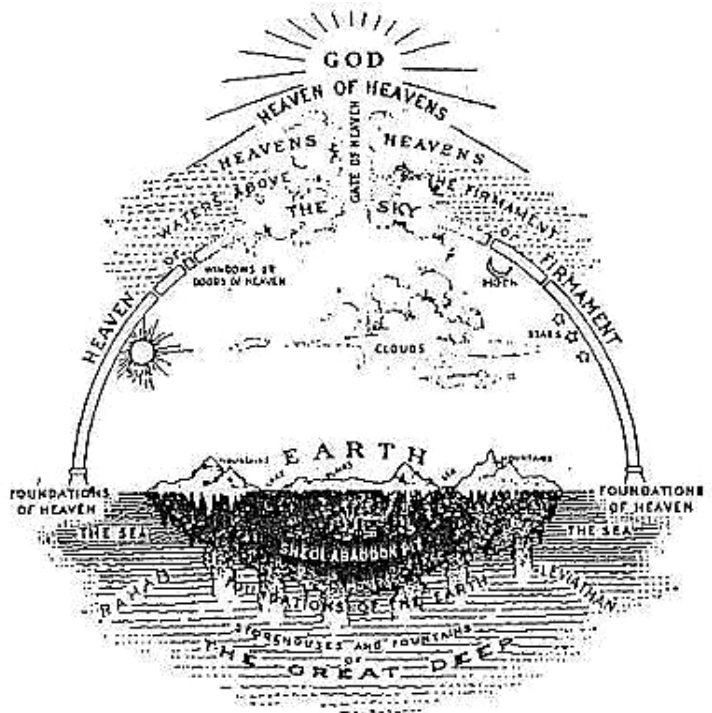


II. The Biblical Worldview: Heavens and Earth

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (^{NIV} Genesis 1:1)

A. The Expanse Amidst the Waters¹

In the beginning, God created the heavens (Hb. *shamayim* nMPA, “heaven” KJV) ***and the earth.*** ² ***The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters*** (Hb. *mayim*)... ⁶ ***And God said, “Let there be an expanse*** (Hb. *raqiya*) ***in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”*** ⁷ ***And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so.*** ⁸ ***And God called the expanse Heaven*** (Hb. *shamayim* nMPA, “sky” NRSV/NIV/NLT). (^{ESV} Genesis 1:1-8)



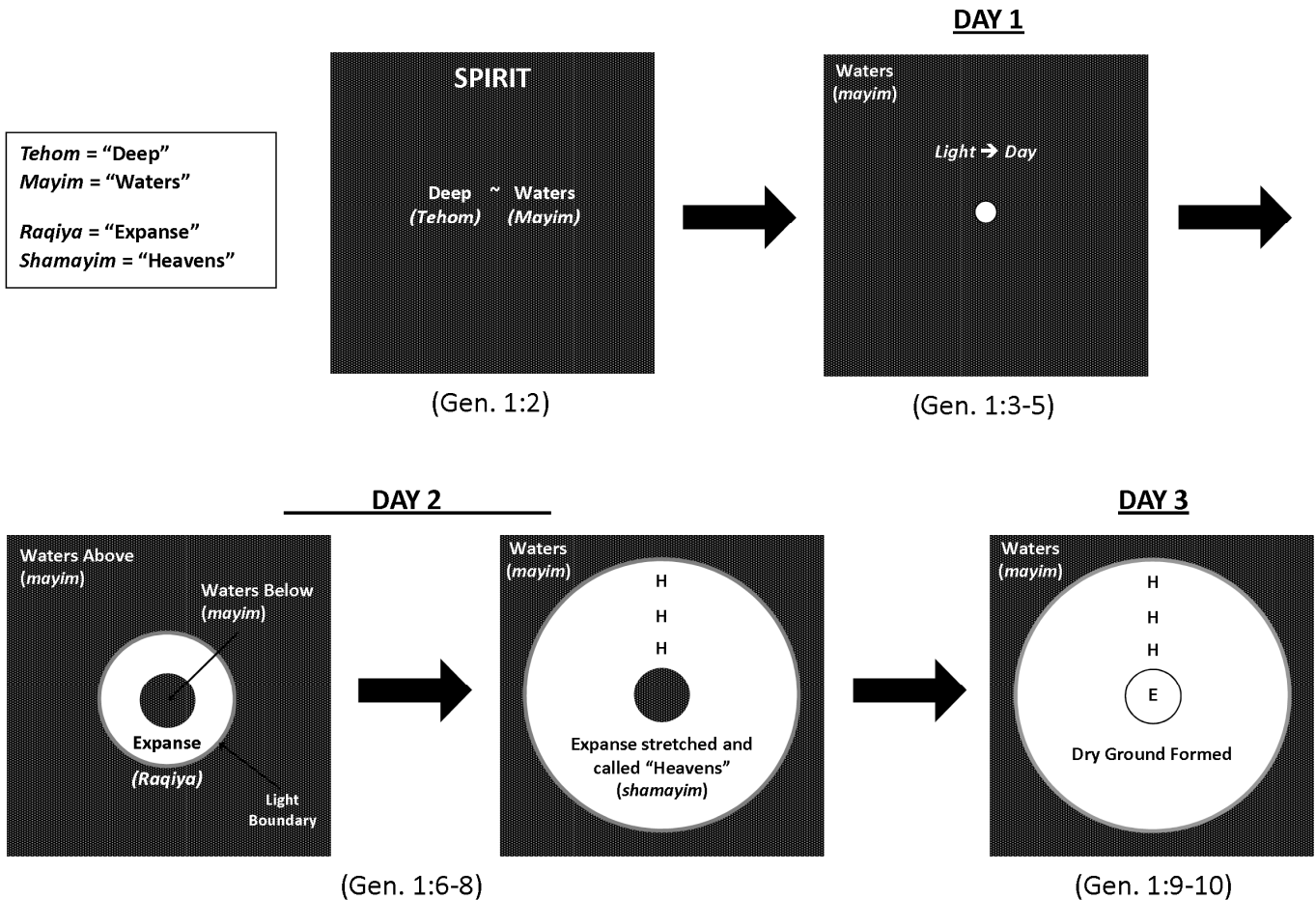
¹ Many scholars have misunderstood the nature of the *raqiya* as a hard dome leading to the mistranslation of the Latin *firmamentum*, e.g. “Figure 2: The Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe,” in George L. Robinson, *Leaders of Israel* (New York: Association Press, 1913), 13.

B. The Stretched Expanse (cf. Job 9:8; Ps. 104:2; Is. 42:5; 44:24; 51:13; Jer. 10:12; Zech. 12:1)

Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it (^{ESV} Isaiah 42:5)

Bless the LORD, O my soul! ... You are clothed with splendor and majesty, ² covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. ³ He lays the beams (Hb. qarah, “rafters” NLT) of his chambers (Hb. aliyah, “upper chambers” NASB/NKJV/NIV) on the waters (Hb. b'mayim, “in the waters” NASB/KJV/NKJV); he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; ⁴ he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire. ⁵ He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. (^{ESV} Psalm 104:1-5)

Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded? ²² He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. ²³ He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. (^{NIV} Isaiah 40:21-23)



- C. The Heavens Above the Earth (cf. Gen. 6:17; 7:19; 11:4; 28:12; Deut. 4:40; 11:21; 30:12; Jos. 2:11; 1 Ki. 8:22ff; 2 Chr. 7:1; Job 28:24; Ps. 50:4; 85:11; 113:6; Is. 14:12; 24:21; 44:23; 51:6; Jer. 10:11; Mt. 3:16; 28:2; Jn. 1:51; 3:13; 6:33ff; Acts 1:9ff; 7:55f; 10:11ff; Eph. 4:8ff; 1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 12:10ff; 18:1; 21:2)

I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. (^{NIV} Genesis 6:17)

Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other. (^{NIV} Deuteronomy 4:35-40)

As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. (^{ESV} 2 Chronicles 7:1)

Sing for joy, O heavens, for the LORD has done this; shout aloud, O earth beneath. Burst into song, you mountains, you forests and all your trees, for the LORD has redeemed Jacob, he displays his glory in Israel. (^{NIV} Isaiah 44:23)

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said... "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (^{ESV} Acts 1:9-11)

- D. The Physicality of the Heavens (cf. Ex. 24:9ff; 1 Ki. 22:19ff; Is. 6:1ff; Ez. 1; 10:1ff; Dan. 7:9; Acts 7:55f; 2 Cor. 12:2ff; Rev. 4:2ff; 11:19; 15:5ff)

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him stood the seraphim... ³ And one called to another... ⁴ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke... ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. (^{NIV} Isaiah 6:1-6)

As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. ¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. (^{NIV} Daniel 7:9-10)

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know-- God knows. ³ And I know that this man... ⁴ was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell. (^{NIV} 2 Corinthians 12:2-4)

When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. ³ Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. (^{NIV} Revelation 8:1-3)

- E. The Heaven of Heavens (cf. Deut. 10:14; 1 Ki. 8:27; 2 Chr. 2:6; 6:18; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 148:4)

Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven (Hb. shamayim nMPA, "heavens" NIV/NLT) and the heaven of heavens (Hb. shameh h'shamayim, "highest heavens" NASB/NKJV/NIV/ NLT), the earth with all that is in it. ¹⁵ Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. (^{ESV} Deuteronomy 10:14-15)

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven (Hb. shamayim nMPA, "heavens" NIV) and the highest heaven (Hb. shameh h'shamayim, "heaven of heavens" KJV/NKJV) cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built! (^{ESV} 1 Kings 8:27)

- F. The Temple in the Heavens (cf. Ps. 11:4; 28:2; 29:9; 96:6; Is. 6:1; Mic. 1:2; Hab. 2:20; Jon. 2:7; Heb. 8:2; 9:24; Rev. 11:19; 15:5ff)

The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven; his eyes see, his eyelids test, the children of man. (^{ESV} Psalm 11:4)

Hear, O peoples, all of you, listen, O earth and all who are in it, that the Sovereign LORD may witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. ³ Look! The LORD is coming from his dwelling place; he comes down and treads the high places of the earth. (^{NIV} Micah 1:2-3)

Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ² a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices... those who offer the gifts according to the Law; ⁵ who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle... (^{NASB} Hebrews 8:1-5)

After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, ⁶ and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple... ⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished. (^{NASB} Revelation 15:5-8)

- G. The Throne in the Heavens (cf. 1 Ki. 22:19; 2 Ki. 19:15; Ps. 2:4; 103:19; 113:5; 123:1; Is. 6:1; 40:22; 63:15; 66:1; Jer. 17:12; Ez. 1:26ff; 10:1; Dan. 7:9; Rev. 4:2ff; 20:11)

The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One... ⁴ The One enthroned in heaven (Hb. shamayim nMPA, "heavens" ESV) laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. (^{NIV} Psalm 2:2-4)

The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. (^{ESV} Psalm 103:19)

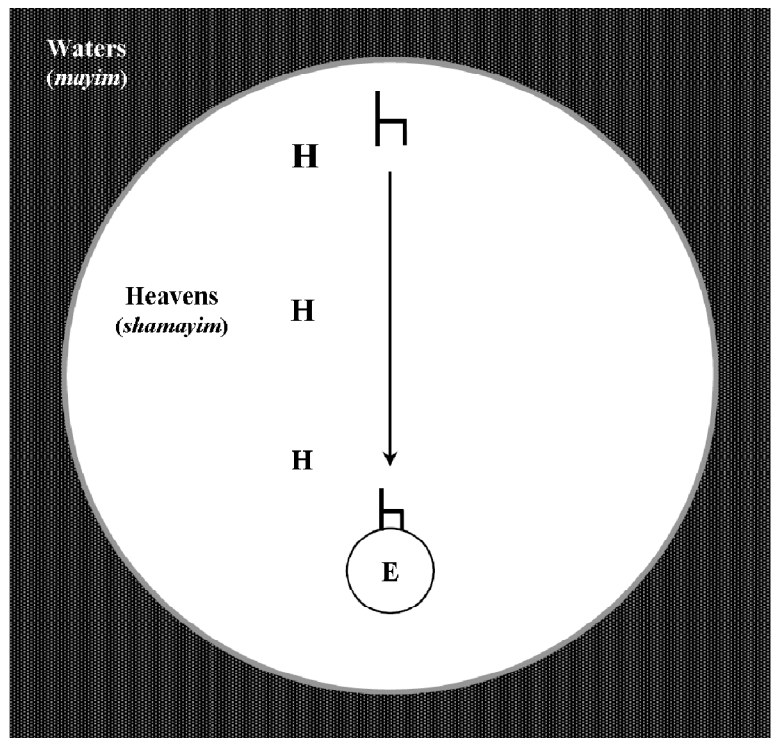
Look down from heaven (Hb. shamayim nMPA) and see from your lofty throne, holy and glorious. Where are your zeal and your might? (^{NIV} Isaiah 63:15)

- H. The Powers in the Heavens (cf. Job 1:6f; Ps. 82:1ff; Is. 24:21; 34:5; Dan. 7:9ff; Eph. 1:10; 21; 3:10; 6:12; Phil. 2:10; Col. 1:16; Rev. 12:7ff; 14:6)

In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days. ²³ The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders, gloriously. (^{NIV} Isaiah 24:21-23)

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (^{ESV} Ephesians 6:11-12)

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (^{NASB} Colossians 1:16-17)



“Older Jewish commentators claimed that Moses was shown a material structure actually existing in heaven and that the articles of furniture he made were facsimiles of existing articles in heaven... Archeological researches in this century have shed new light on Near Eastern thought patterns concerning heavenly/earthly relationships. ‘Behind Ex 25,’ says Goppelt, ‘stands the ancient oriental idea of a mythical analogical relation between the two worlds, the heavenly and the earthly, the macrocosm and the microcosm, so that lands, rivers, cities, and

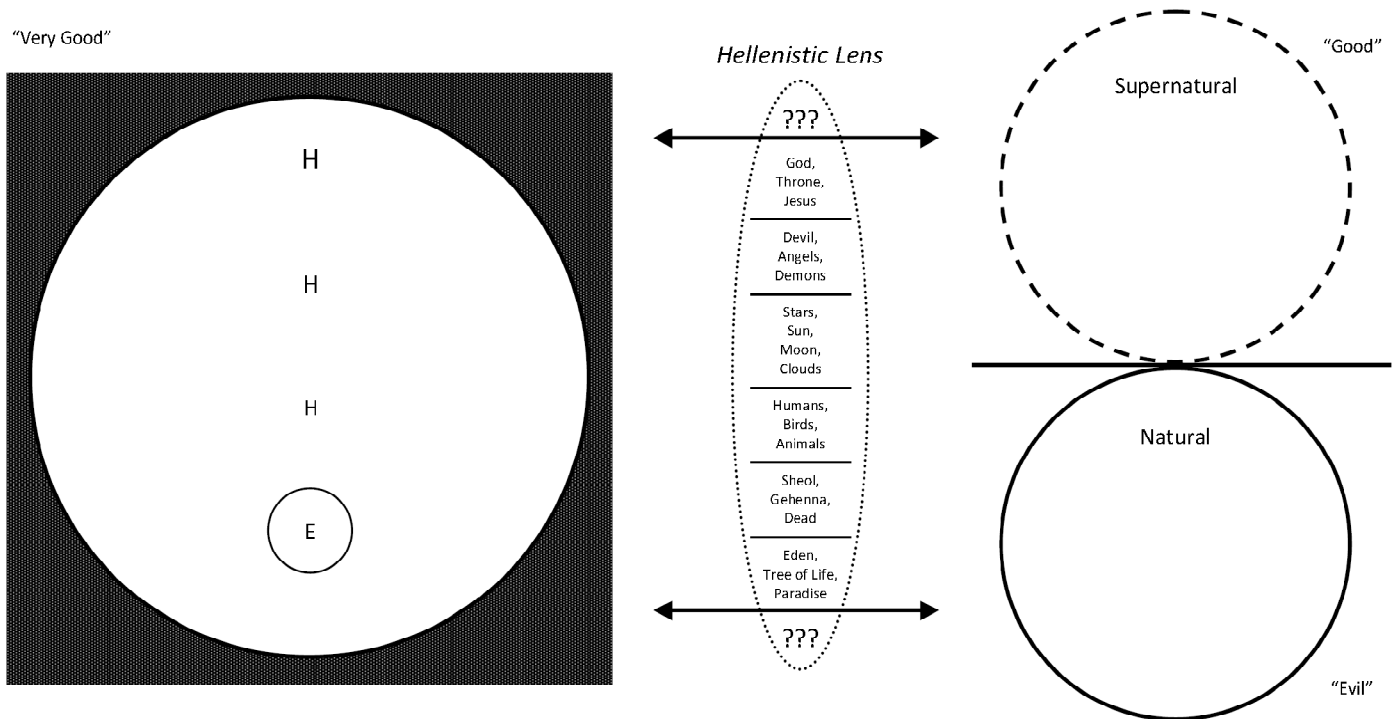
especially temples have their originals.’... Although some modern scholarship rejects the concept that the tabnith model reflects a heavenly reality, there is a wide consensus today that it did (in view of current understanding of ancient Near Eastern thought patterns).”²

III. The Hellenistic Worldview: Material vs. Immaterial

A. Humanity and Progressive Anthropocentrism

B. Historical Context of “Christonaturalism”

1. Plato (c.427-347 BC) and Aristotle (384-322 BC)³
2. Alexander (356-323 BC) and Alexandria
3. The “Dark Ages” and Medieval Scholasticism
4. The Renaissance and Enlightenment
5. Darwinism and Freudianism



² Arnold V. Wallenkampf in A. Wallenkampf & W.R. Leshner, eds., *The Sanctuary and the Atonement* (Washington, D.C.: The Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1981), 5.

³ “All Christian theology is dependent, to an extent at least, on contemporary Greek philosophy, primarily Platonism, but some Christian thinkers fall particularly strongly under Platonic influence, and properly merit the title of Christian Platonists.” [David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 5:380.]