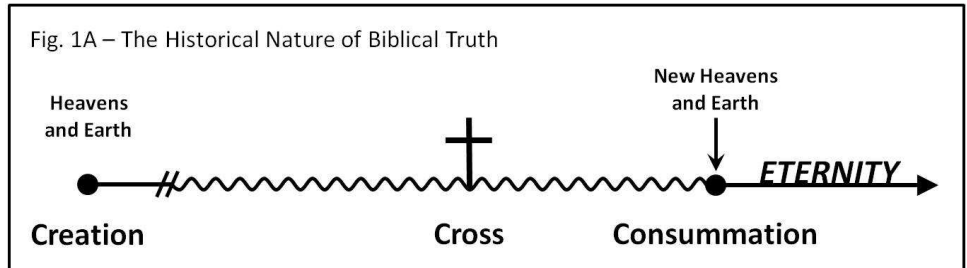


Session 1: Biblical Worldview

I. Biblical Truth and Sound Instruction

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, *who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom*, I give you this charge: ² Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out

of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-- with *great patience and careful instruction*. ³ For the time will come when men will not put up with *sound doctrine*. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers *to say what their itching ears want to hear*. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and *turn aside to myths*. ⁵ But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (^{NIV} 2 Timothy 4:1-5)



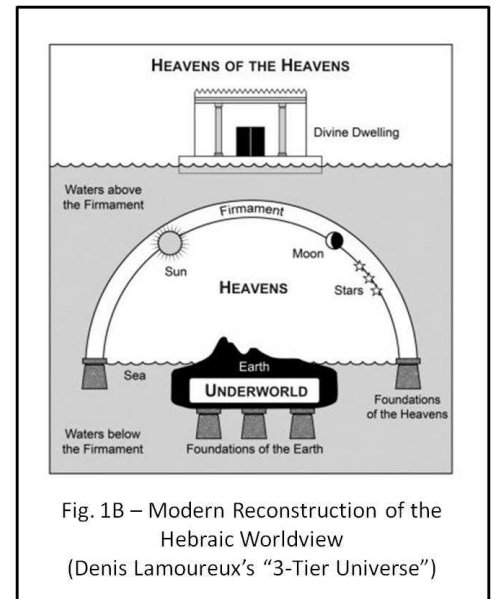
II. Biblical Worldview: “The Heavens and the Earth”

A. The Expanse Amidst the Waters

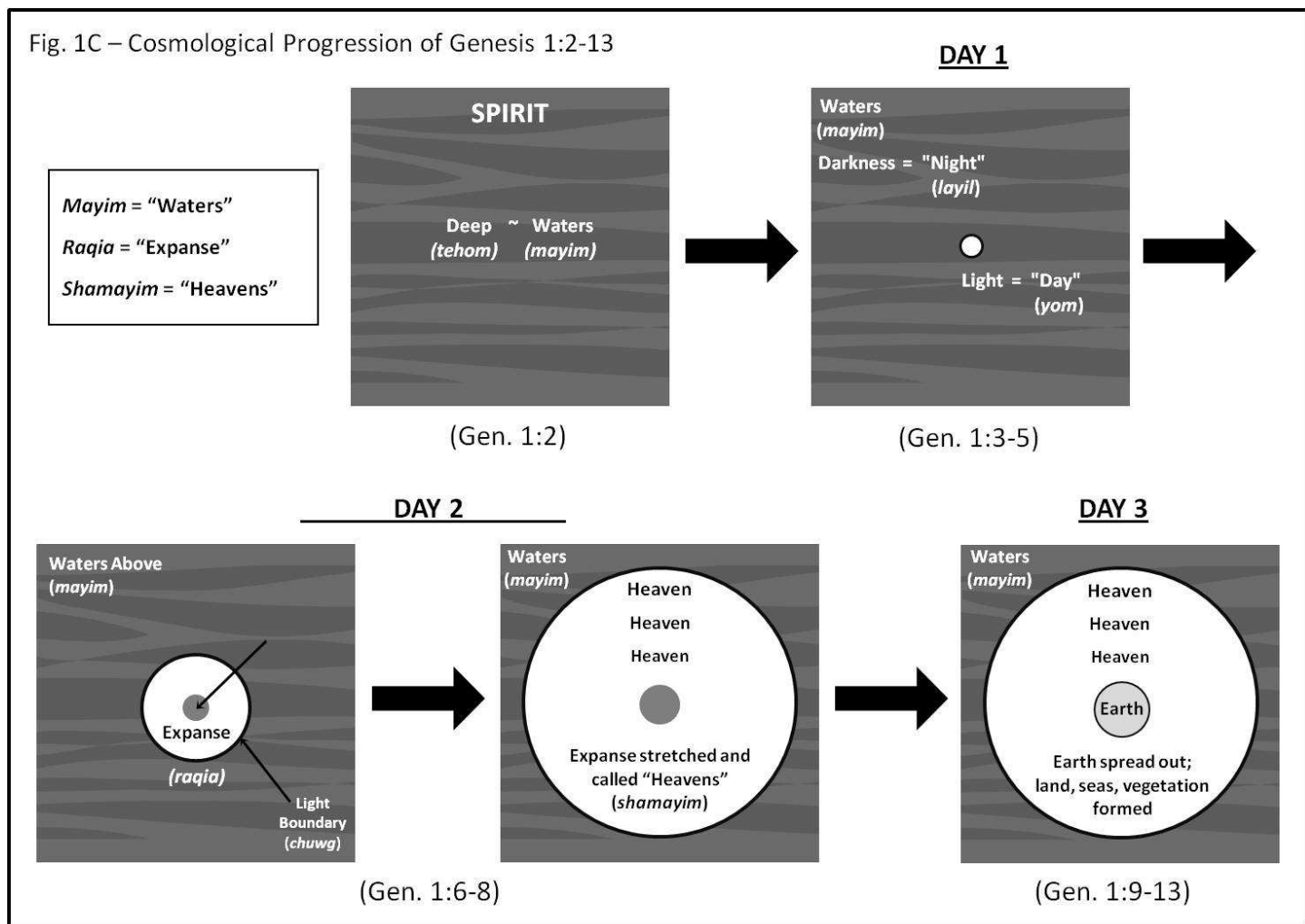
In the beginning, God created *the heavens* [Hb. *shamayim*] and the earth. ² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of *the waters* [Hb. *mayim*]... ⁶ And God said, "Let there be *an expanse* [Hb. *raqiya*] *in 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*]. (^{ESV} Genesis 1:1-8)

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

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)

And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in *the heavens above* and on *the earth beneath*. (ESV Joshua 2:11)

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 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*] and *the heaven of heavens* [Hb. *shameh h'shamayim*], 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*] and *the highest heaven* [Hb. *shameh h'shamayim*] cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built! (^{ESV} 1 Kings 8:27)

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-- whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows-- ⁴ was *caught up to paradise*. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell. (^{NIV} 2 Corinthians 12:2-4)

E. 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*] laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. (^{NIV} Psalm 2:2-4)

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

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* [Hb. *shamayim*]; his eyes see, his eyelids test, the children of man. (^{ESV} Psalm 11:4)

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*

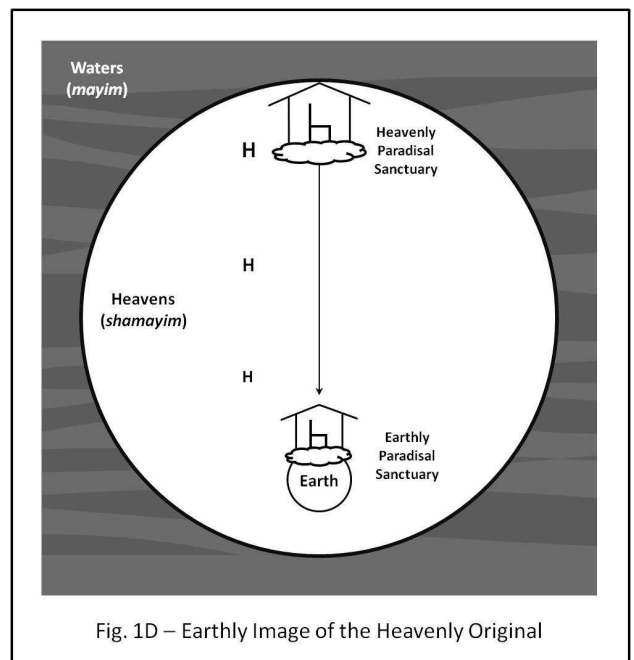


Fig. 1D – Earthly Image of the Heavenly Original

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)

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).¹

G. 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)

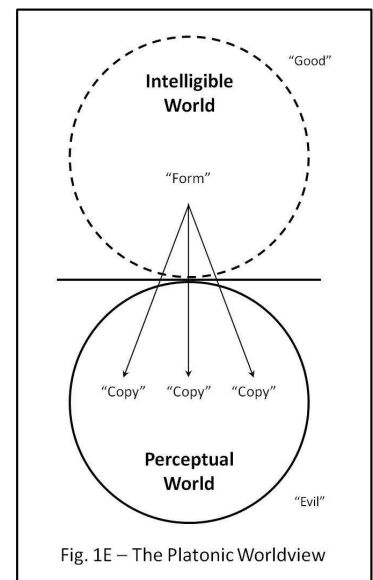
In that day the LORD will punish *the powers in the heavens* (Hb. *shamayim*) above and the kings on the earth below. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days. ²³ The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for the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

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)

III. Greek Worldview: Material vs. Immaterial

A. Plato (c.427-347 BC), Aristotle (384-322 BC), and Alexander (356-323 BC)

The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato. I do not mean the systematic scheme of thought which scholars have doubtfully extracted from his writings. I allude to the wealth of general ideas scattered through them.²



¹ A.V. Wallenkampf and W.R. Leshner, eds., *The Sanctuary and the Atonement* (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing, 1981), 5; quoting L. Goppelt, "τύπος," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 8, ed. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley and G. Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 256-257.

² A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology* (1929), Corrected Edition, ed. D. R. Griffin and D. W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1979), 39.

B. Alexandria and “Christoplatonism”

And again he says, “We shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” We are therefore to suppose that the saints will remain there [in their progress to immateriality] until they recognize the twofold mode of government in those things which are performed in the air... If anyone indeed be pure in heart, and holy in mind, and more practiced in perception, he will, by making more rapid progress, quickly ascend to a place in the air, and reach the kingdom of heaven, through those mansions, so to speak, in the various places *which the Greeks have termed spheres, i.e., globes, but which holy Scripture has called heavens*; in each of which he will first see clearly what is done there, and in the second place, will discover the reason why things are so done: and thus he will in order pass through all gradations, following Him who hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, who said, ‘I will that where I am, these may be also.’³

C. The “Dark Ages” and Medieval Scholasticism

These are ‘the doctrines’ of men and ‘of demons’ produced for itching ears of the spirit of this world’s wisdom... *Indeed heresies are themselves instigated by philosophy*. From this source came the Aeons, and I know not what infinite forms, and the trinity of man in the system of Valentinus, who was of Plato’s school. From the same source came Marcion’s better god, with all his tranquility; he came of the Stoics. Then, again, the opinion that the soul dies is held by the Epicureans; while the denial of the restoration of the body is taken from the aggregate school of all the philosophers... *What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians?* Our instruction comes from ‘the porch of Solomon’ [cf. Acts 3:5], who had himself taught that ‘the Lord should be sought in simplicity of heart.’ *Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition!* We want no curious disputation after possessing Christ Jesus, no inquisition after enjoying the gospel! With our faith, we desire no further belief. For this is our palmary faith, that there is nothing which we ought to believe besides.⁴

D. The Renaissance, Enlightenment and Darwinism

Any complete philosophy of existence requires a carefully worked out theory of the universe, in technical terms a *metaphysics*, an ontology, or a world-view. As we have already seen, Humanism believes that Nature itself constitutes the sum total of reality, that matter-energy and not mind is the foundation stuff of the universe, and that supernatural entities simply do not exist. This nonreality of the supernatural means, on the human level, that human beings do not possess supernatural and immortal souls; and, on the level of the universe as a whole, that our cosmos does not possess a supernatural and eternal God.⁵

³ Origen, *On First Principles*, 2.11.5-6 (ANF, 4:299); emphasis added.

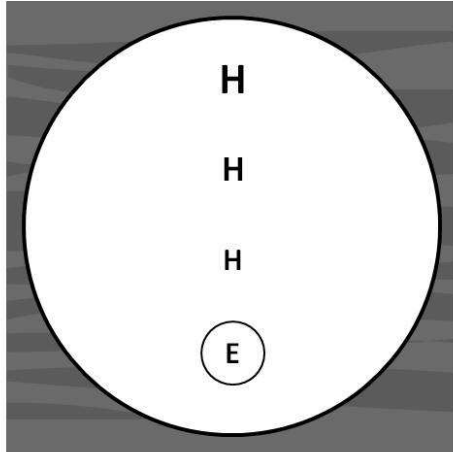
⁴ Tertullian, “Pagan Philosophy the Parent of Heresies,” *Prescription Against Heretics*, Ch. 7 (ANF, 3:246-47); emphasis added.

⁵ Corliss Lamont, *The Philosophy of Humanism*, 8th ed. (Amherst: Humanist Press, 1997), 126.

Fig. 1F – Contrast of Biblical vs. Christoplatonic Metaphysical Characteristics

**Biblical
"Heavens"**

- Plural
- Continuous
- Physical
- Dynamic



VS.

**Christoplatonic
"Heaven"**

- Singular
- Discontinuous
- Non-physical
- Static

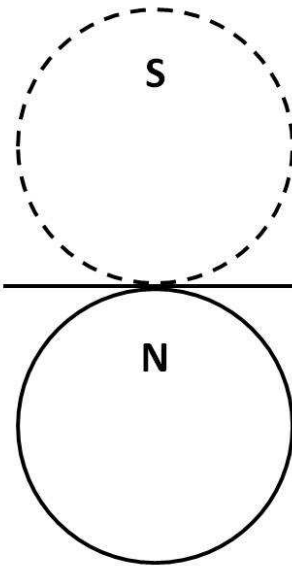
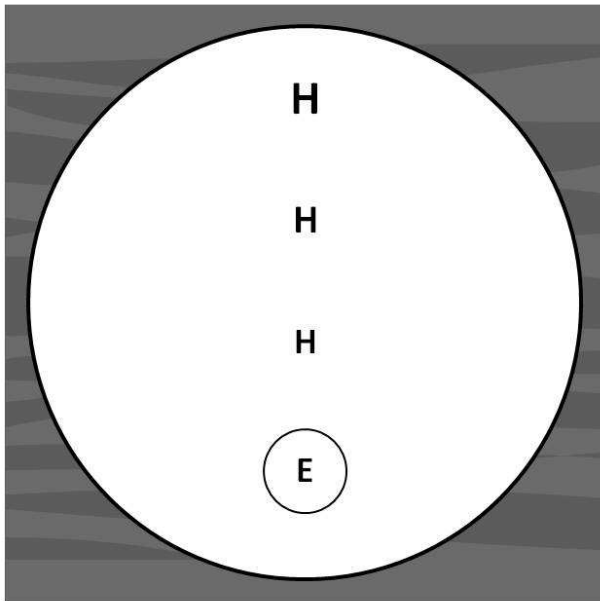
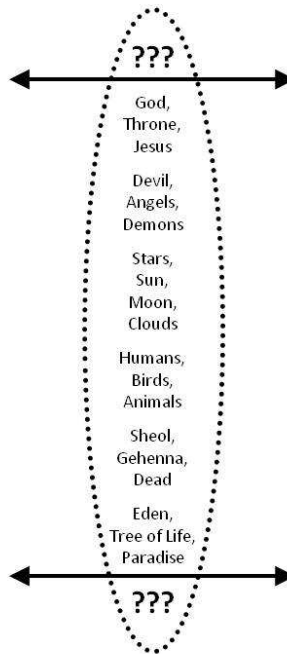


Fig. 1G – Contrast of Metaphysical "Fit" of People, Places, and Things

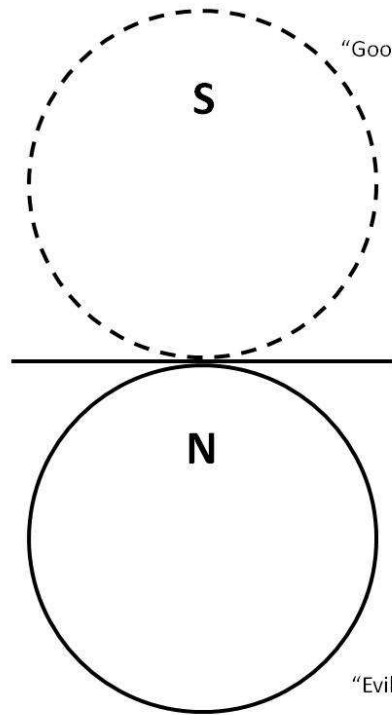
"Very Good"



Hellenistic Lens



"Good"



"Evil"