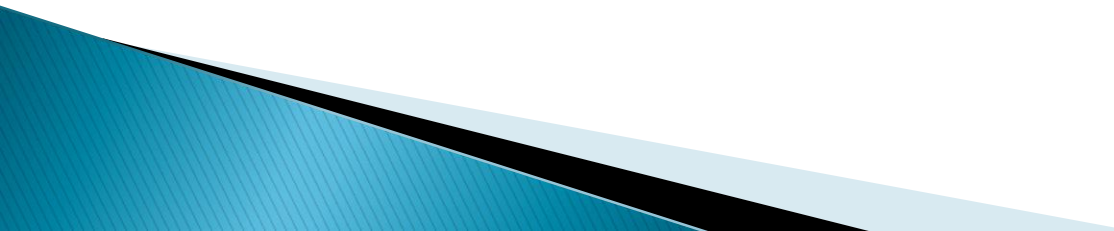


God, Evolution and the Power of Love

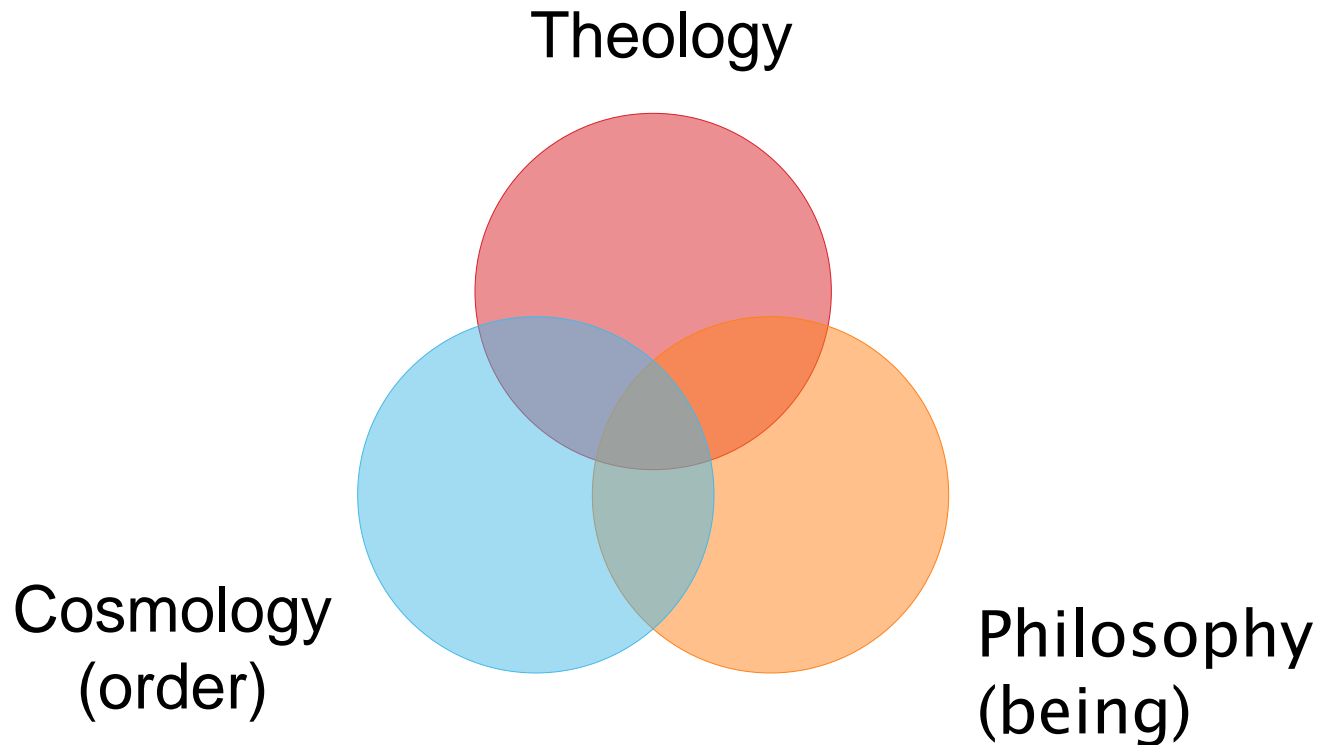
LaGrange, IL,
October 2012

COSMOLOGY → THEOLOGY

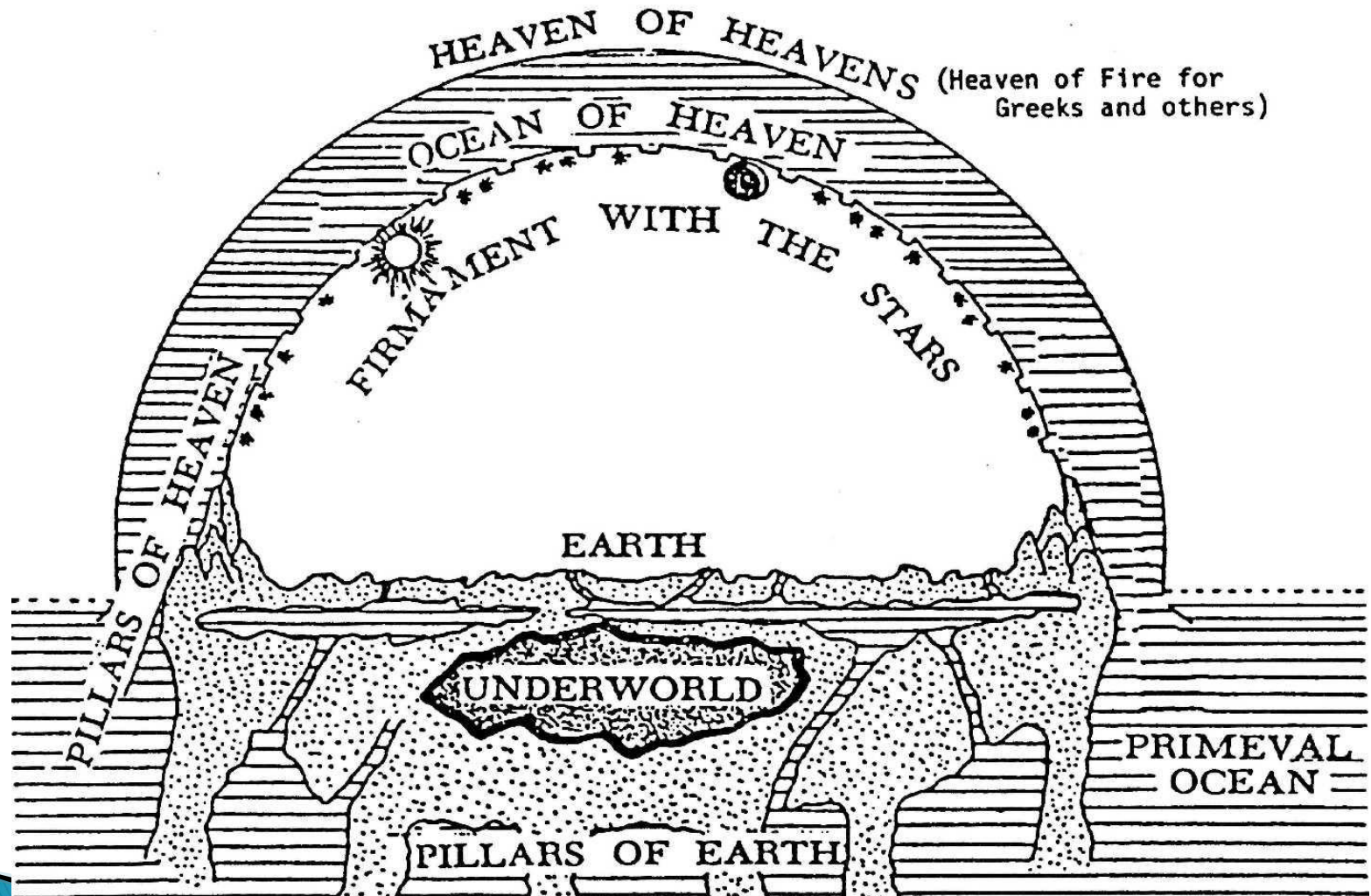
Cosmology was part of theology as long as the cosmos was believed to be God's creation -- the Divine intrinsically related to the universe.

- ▶ Theology is not a particular science; rather it is related to the whole (*Cosmos*).
 - ▶ The very name of “God” is a cosmological notion.
 - ▶ There is no cosmos without God and no God without cosmos.
- 

Ingredients for God-Talk



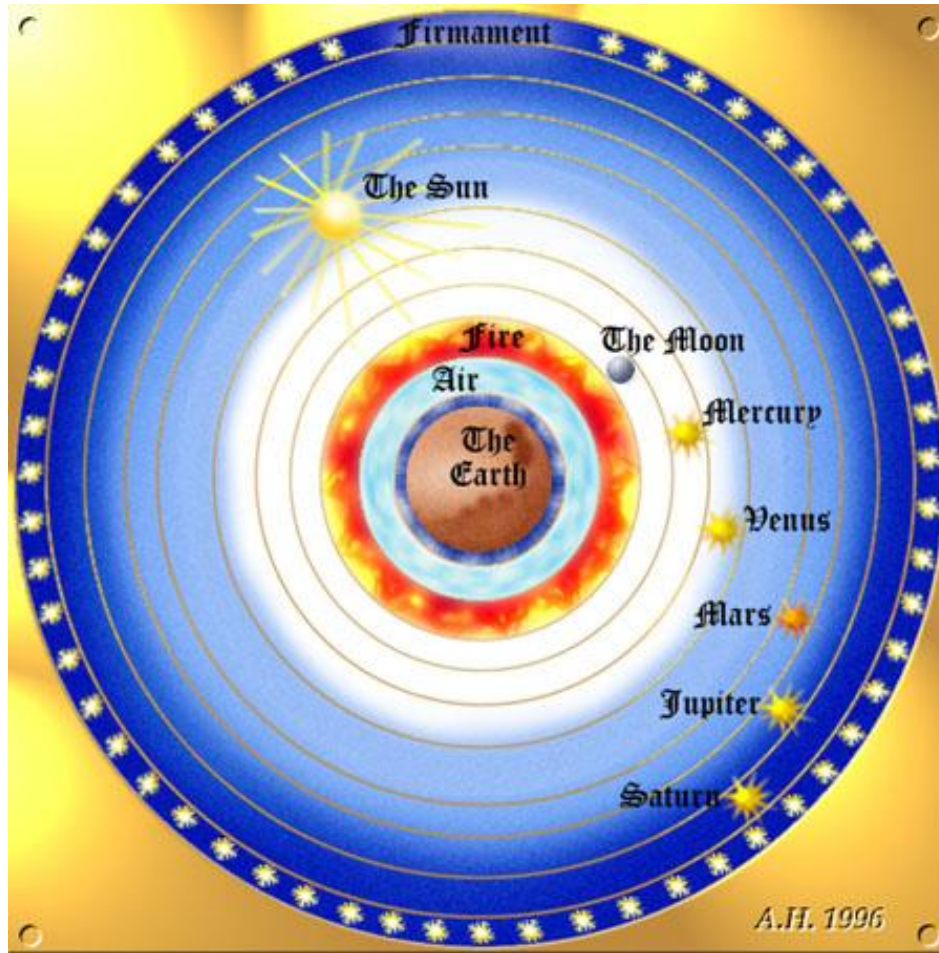
Cosmology of the Hebrew World



Axial Consciousness

- ▶ 800 – 200 BCE
- ▶ Human person as individual arose
- ▶ Autonomy, freedom, transcendence
- ▶ World religions
- ▶ Monk as archetype

The Greek Cosmos



Plato's Allegory of the Cave

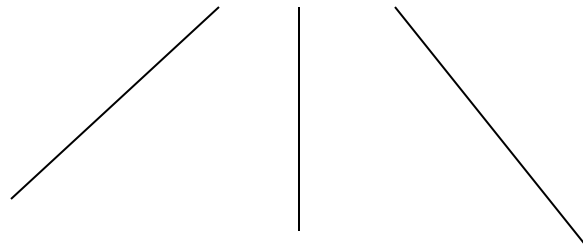
Plato's Cave



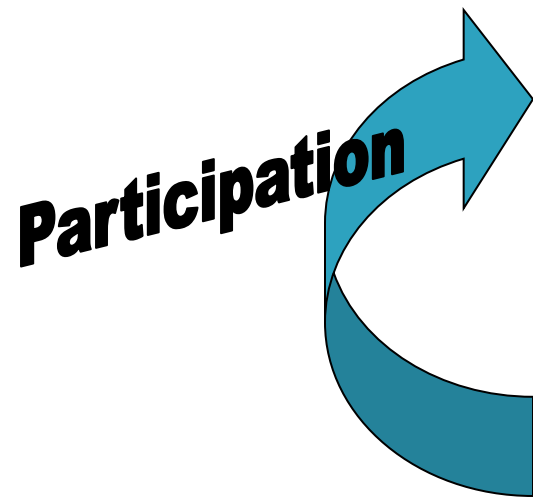
GOOD



FORMS



Sensible Reality
(Matter)



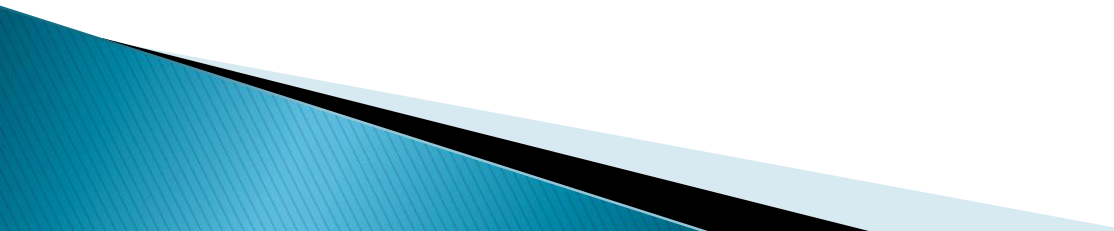
**spirit, soul,
immortality**



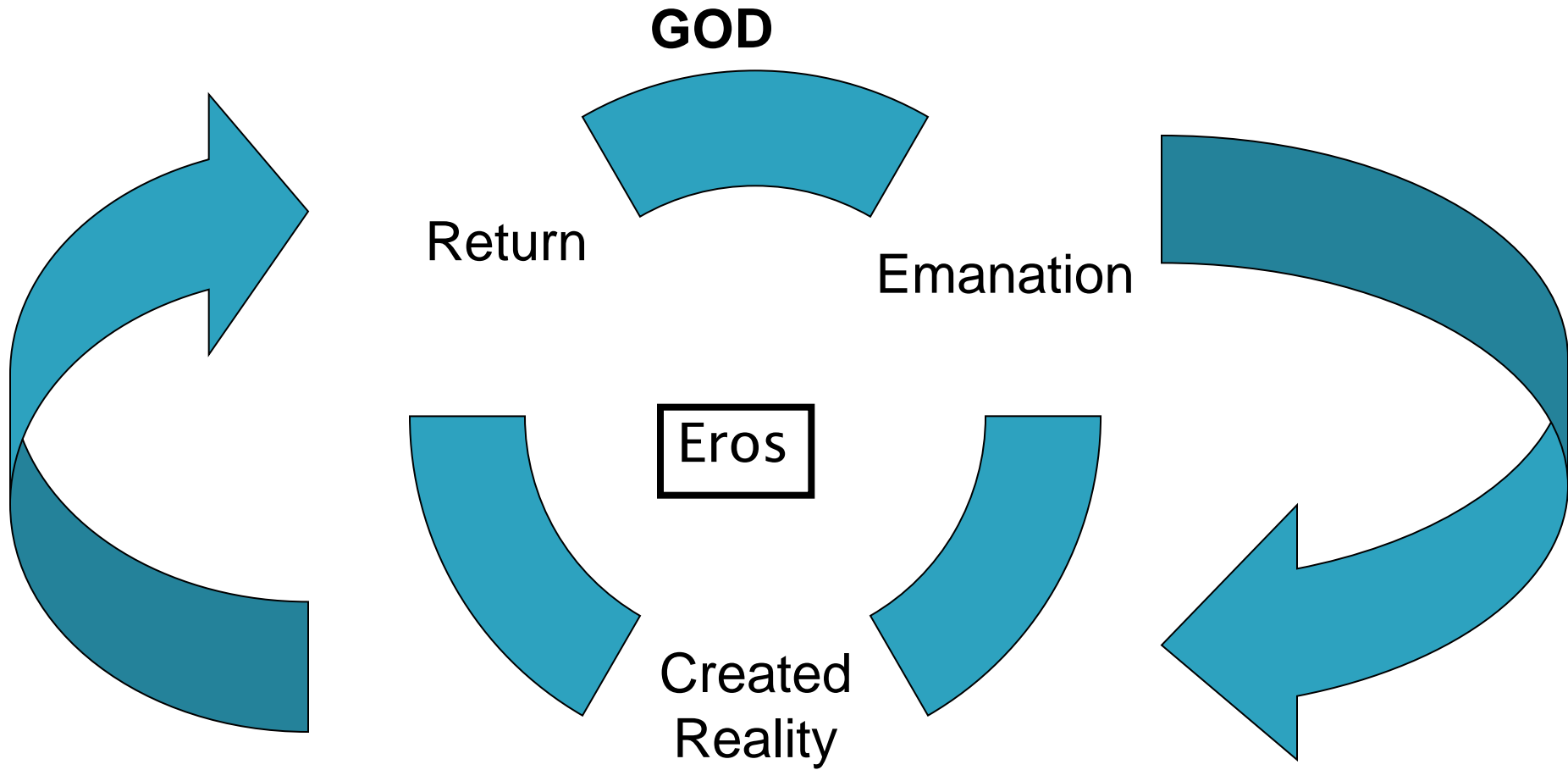
matter

body

mortality



Classical Metaphysics



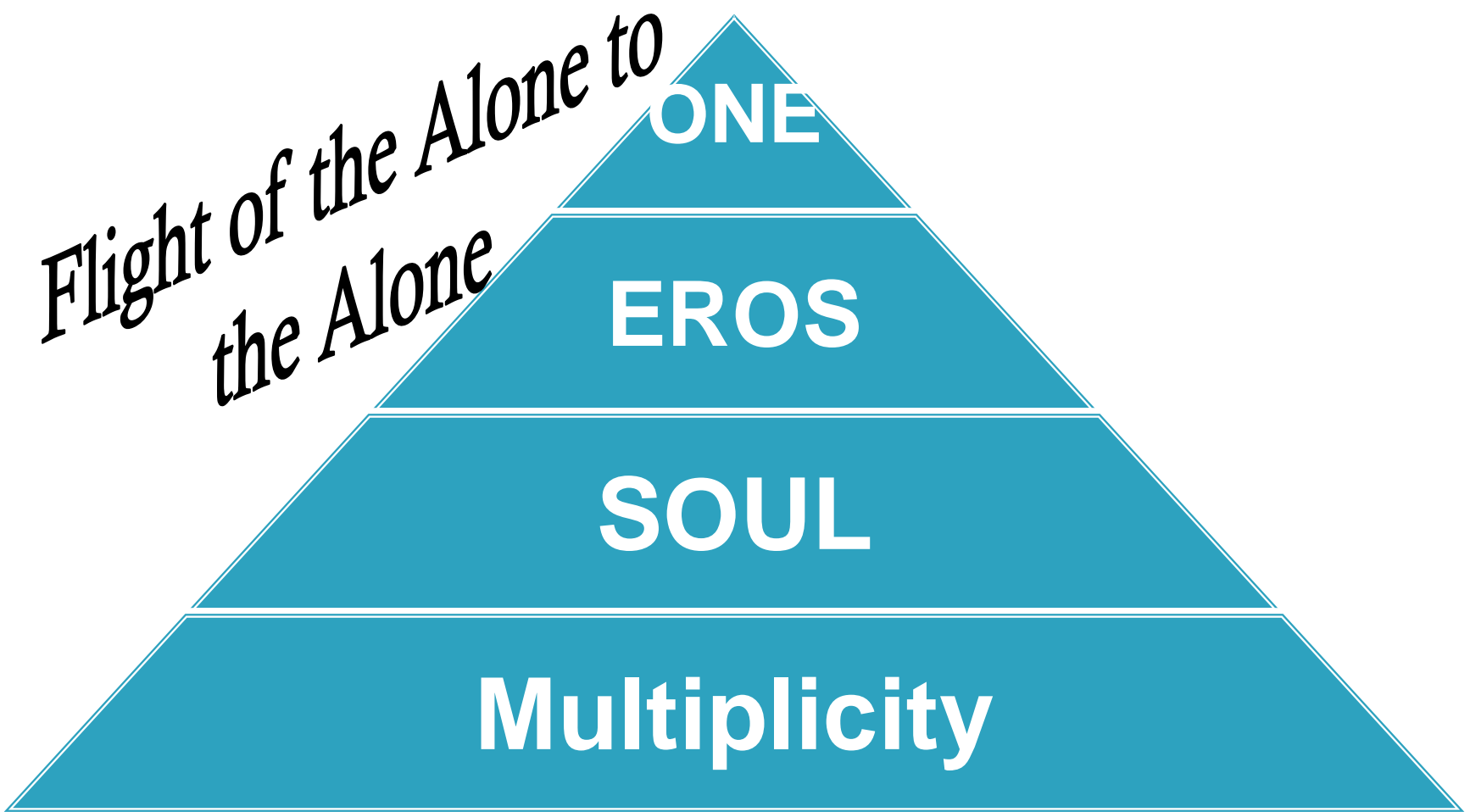
The goal of existence is to raise the lower soul or self to consciousness of its higher identity;

The transcendent self is to enjoy identity with pure intellect and through intellect union with the unknown One.

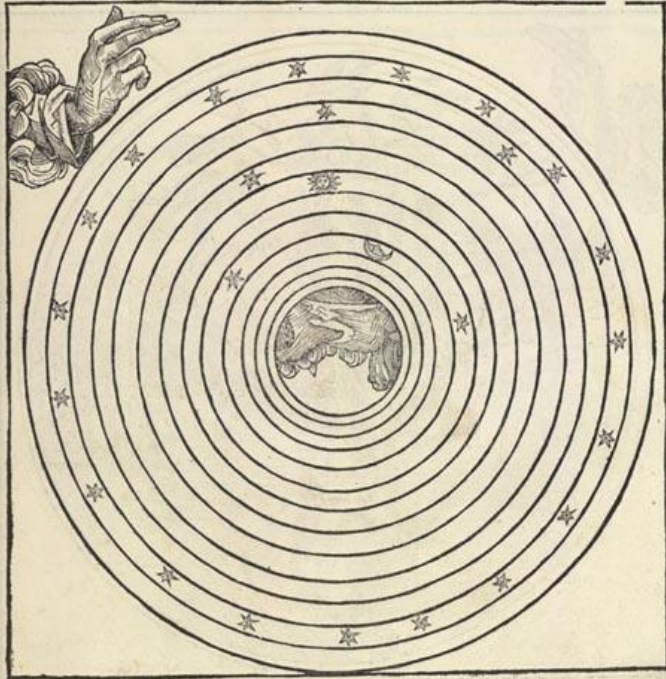
Journey to Contemplation

- ▶ Ascension
- ▶ Introversion
- ▶ Self-Knowledge
 - ▶ Eros

(influenced Christian Spirituality)



Quarto die dixit deus. Fiat luminaria in firmamento celi: et dividant diem et noctem. Et sunt in signa et tempora: et dies et anni: et luceat in firmamento celi: et illuminet terram. Et factum est ita. Scitatis quod duo luminaria magna: luminare matutinum: et pfectum diei: et luminare matutinum: et pfectum noctis: et stellae: et dividunt rem lucis et tenebras. Moyses primo ceterum meminit quod posuit deus in firmamento ut luceret in celo: et terra illa miraretur solis videlicet lunam et stellae: quibus ipse superior mundi praesentat: vni terra omnia visibilia quae in ea sunt in ceteris: planities: altitudines. Et cum de natura firmamenti diceret: restabat ut de operibus siderum: de quibus officio diceret: declaratis in quibus usum fundata: et cui muneri delegata a deo fuerunt. Et dicitur enim corporum due in unum sum manifeste operationes motus et illuminationis: motus duplex statuitur. Alter mundi totum quod celi et ether. et 4. horis: per totum spatium uniuersi pfecto ambitu circūvolvitur. Alter siderum: prius multiplex et varius. Inter quos pncipalissimus motus solis: quod spacio. xij. mensium sodiaca signa omnia circuit. Ille die facit: vnde et diurnus dies: hic autem annus. Reliqui siderum motus variis temporibus intervallis paguntur. Recte igitur et dicitur nos omni admouit Moyses cum dicitur posita sidera in firmamento in dies annos et tempora. Indicauit pterea expresse reliqua operatione siderum. Quae est illuminatio: cum dicitur statuta illa ut luceret in celo: et terra illuminaretur. In hoc igitur ministeria et luce et solis et stellae sunt corpora distributa. Sol enim quod oritur in die: licet sit vnus: vni solis esse appellatur Cicero vult videri: quod obscuratis sideribus solus appareat. Tamen verum et pfecte plenitudine lumine: et calore potissimum: et fulgore clarissimo illufecit omnia. Quis enim stelle innumerabiles micare ac radare vult deant: tam quod non sunt plena ac solida lumina: nec caloris pferunt quibus: nec tenebras multitudine sua vincunt. Duo igitur pncipalia inueniuntur. quae diuersam et vna sibi habent potestates calor et humor: quae mirabiliter deo ad sustentanda et gignenda omnia excoGITANT. Altissime hic praeterea essent quae siones: et quae sibi singule iustitiam vult lumine exposcerent: quo pacto haec sidera sunt in firmamento: an vni ptes eius nobilitates: an vni aialia in suis ptes: in aqua ptes. unum in terris: congressum hic ite locus cum dicitur siones sibi exposceret diuinitati per astras: et pnotecidi futuros cunctis: sciam hinc pfirmans quod Moyses sidera et signa posita a deo dixerit: Quae reddidit hic etiam de natura siderum: de motu: de pncipatu: de luce maculis: de quibus omni siderali scientia. Et quibus sunt pulchra et digna cogitatio. Audicimus fortassis Isidorianum illud sed nunc non erat hic locus.

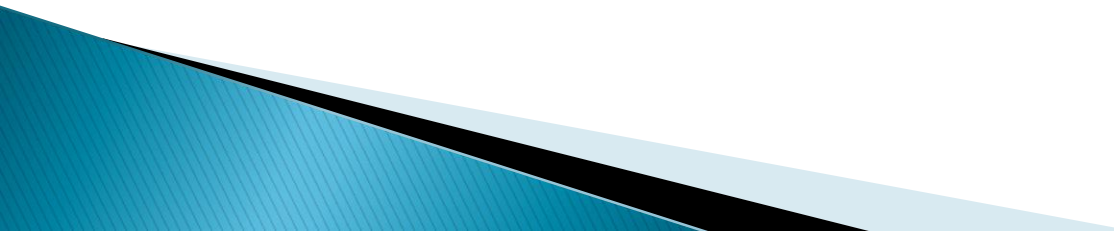


Middle Ages

platonian concept of order whereby cosmos seen as:

- perfect
- immutable
- hierarchical
- geocentric
- anthropocentric

The Centrality of the HUMAN PERSON

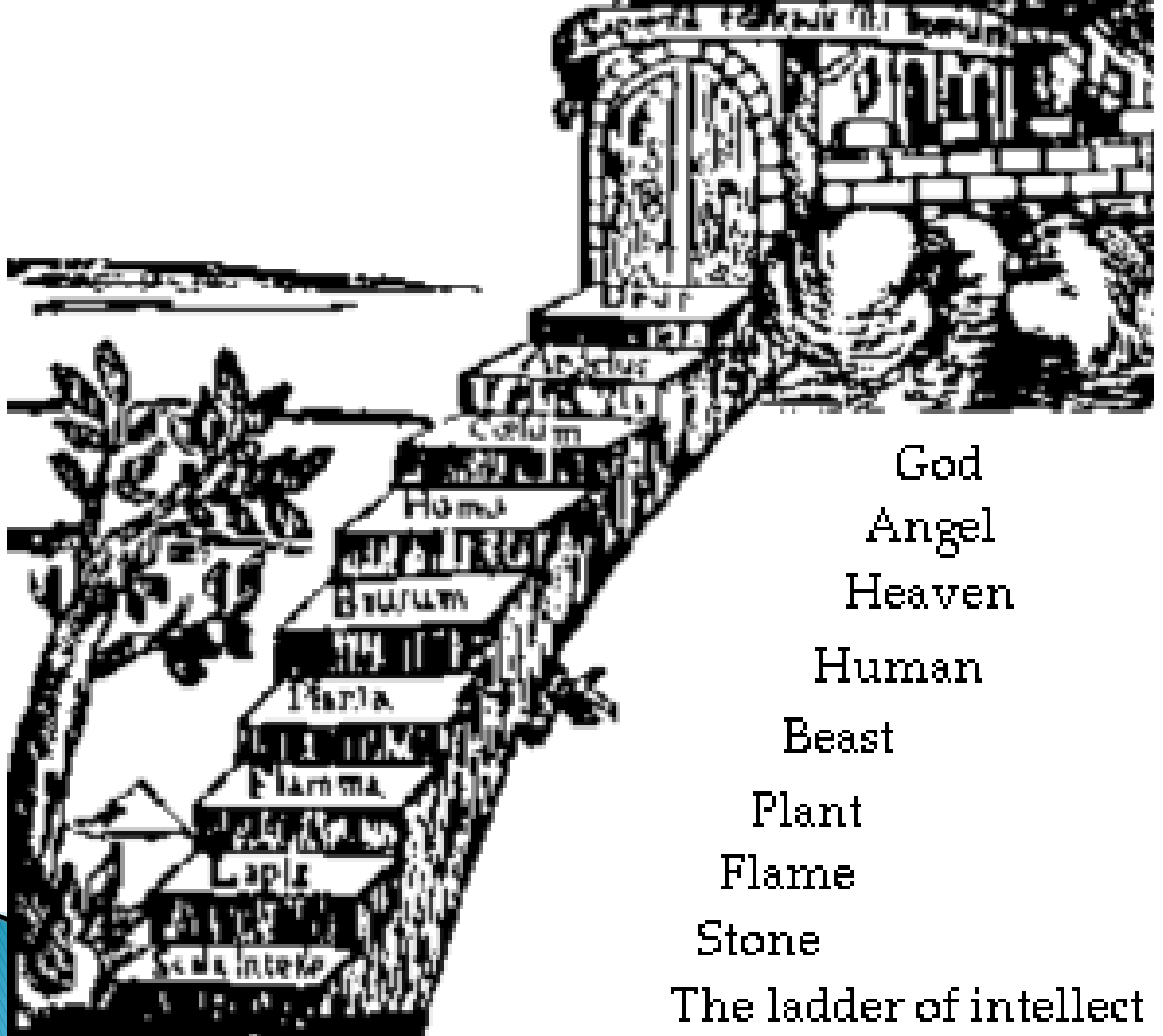
- ▶ Human nature from beginning created perfect (body and soul) – became subject to death due to sin, perseverance in good was destroyed
 - ▶ Soul is ‘nobler’ or ‘higher’ than the body
- 

Macrocosm – Microcosm

- ▶ In contemplating the world, human contemplated him or herself.

Human is at once spiritual and material, a unity of nature and a multiplicity of individuals





God

Angel

Heaven

Human

Beast

Plant

Flame

Stone

The ladder of intellect

Gothic Architecture

New transcendent
relation to nature

Lifting up from earth
to heaven.

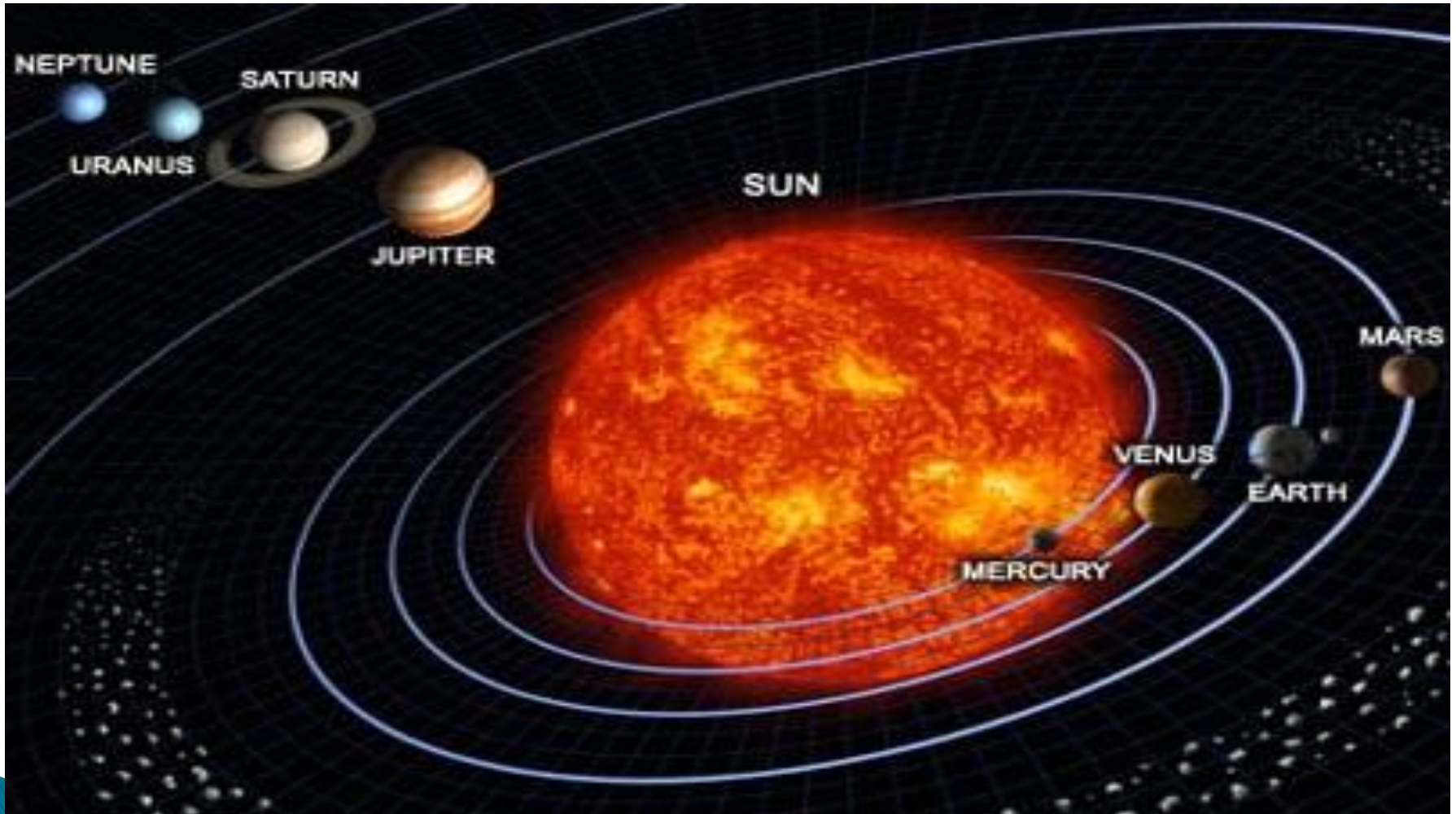
Lex orandi,
Lex credendi
Lex vivendi



The Rise of Science

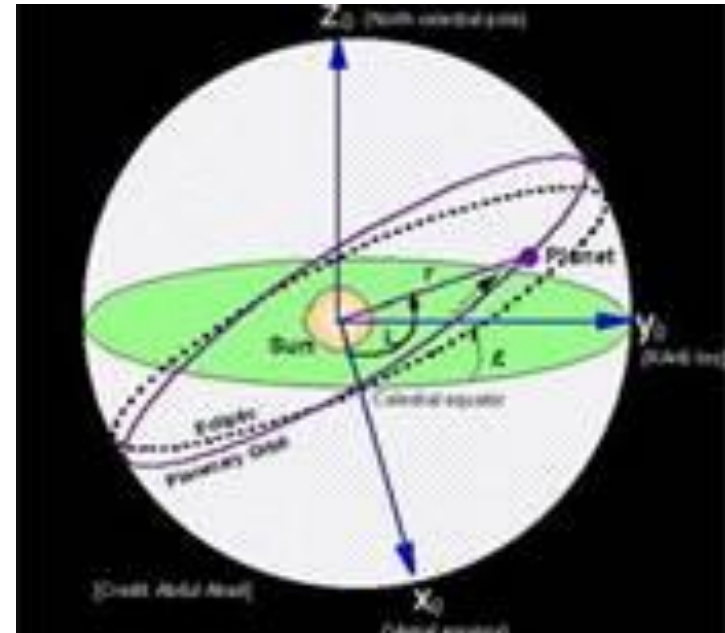
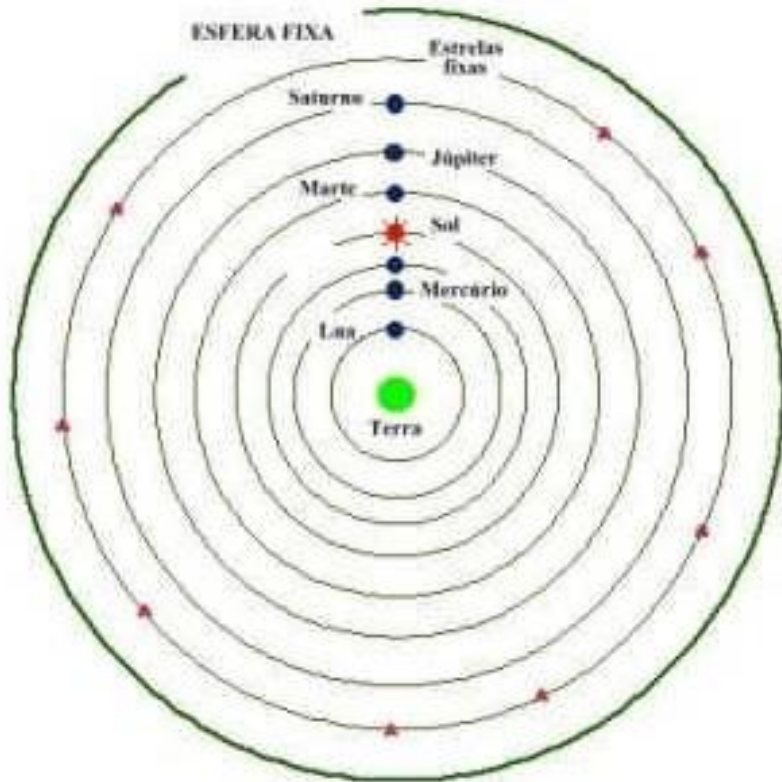
- ▶ **Heliocentrism**
 - ▶ Efficient Causality
 - ▶ Contingency
 - ▶ Experience
- 

Heliocentrism



Heliocentrism

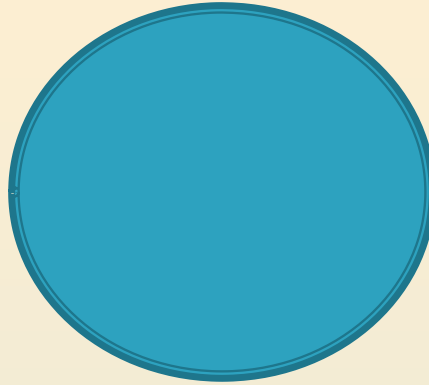
Geocentrism



The Decentered Human

From Center to

Decentered



*The Human Person
in the Cosmos*

“The Bible tells us how to go to heaven, not how the heavens go.”

Descartes' Dualism

World of Ideas (Mental world)

Cogito ergo sum

World of Matter (physical world)

Reformation

- ▶ Radical subjectivity
- ▶ Invention of printing press
- ▶ Prevalence of sin and death
- ▶ Other – worldliness

Newton's World

- ▶ Law
- ▶ Order
- ▶ World as machine
- ▶ God of Gaps

GOD

WORLD

“Keep the Rule and the Rule will keep you.”

A Mechanistic World

Our “God view” came to resemble our worldview. In this century, even much of our practical theology has also become mechanical and atomistic. Walk into many churches and you will hear God described as a being who behaves almost as predictably as Newton's universe. Say you believe in God and you will be saved. Sin against God and you will be condemned. Say you are sorry and you will be forgiven. Obey the law and you will be blessed.

Barbara Taylor Brown

Church

Science

geocentric

heliocentric

anthropocentric

eccentric human

Creator God

God of gaps

religious world

Secular world

The New Scientific World View

*A mistake about creation
is a mistake about God*

T. Aquinas

***EVOLUTION:
COSMOLOGICAL AND
BIOLOGICAL***

What is Evolution?

The word *evolution*, to unfold or open out, derives from the Latin *evolvere*, which applied to the “unrolling of a book.”

Convergence

Divergence

Emergence

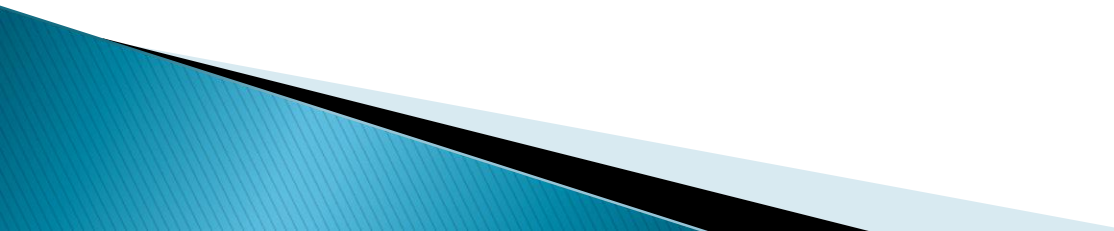
ex. $H_2 + O = H_2O$

Evolution is a movement toward more complexified life forms which, at critical points in the evolutionary process, qualitative differences emerge.

Evolution is not merely an explanation of physical life but a whole new *weltanschauung* that affects every aspect of created life.

It is only through a deep feeling for the human's past and the history of the cosmos that one can begin to envision the new humanity for the future.

The foundation of things is not so much a ground of being sustaining its existence from beneath, as it is a power of attraction toward *what lies up ahead.*



Evolution: An *Unfinished* Process

Novelty

Creativity

Future



Evolution as Process

Attraction

Convergence

Union

Complexity

Emergence

“Evolution is a general condition to which all theories, systems and hypotheses must submit and which they must satisfy if they are to be thinkable and true.”

Teilhard de Chardin



Static world

- ▶ Fixed, immobile
- ▶ Top down/closed
- ▶ Fixed purpose
- ▶ Earth →
heaven above

Evolution

- dynamic/reln
- open system
- novelty
- Earth
→ heaven/Future

A Shift in Consciousness

Axial Period

- autonomy
- self-transcendence
- freedom
- individual person

800 – 200 BC

Second Axial

relatedness
immanence
ecological
global community

1900 – 2012 AD

Postmodernity

- ▶ World Wars
 - ▶ Death of God
 - ▶ End of metanarratives
 - ▶ New social imaginaries
 - ▶ Post theism
- 

***Is Evolution the new
metanarrative?***

Can Christian Life be in Evolution?

Christians live in two worlds:

medieval – static, fixed, hierarchical

postmodern/evolutionary world – global,
technological, interconnected

“God is always God for a World, and if the conception of the World has changed so radically in our times, there is little wonder that the ancient notions of God do not appear convincing.

To believe that one might retain a traditional idea of God while changing the underlying cosmology implies giving up the traditional notion of God and substituting an abstraction for it, a *Deus otiosus*.

One cannot go on simply repeating “God creator of the world,” if the word “world” has changed its meaning since that phrase was first uttered—and the word “creator,” as well.”

Raimon Panikkar

Reflection

What are some of the most significant changes for you over the last twenty years as a human person?

Has your life evolved or devolved in view of:
Faith?
Religious life?
Church?