



ONTOLOGY OF EVIL

*A UNI-THEOLOGY OF THE TRIUNE NATURE OF NOTHINGNESS ON GOD'S
SUPERHIGHWAY OF UNIFIED HUMAN EXPERIENCE*



Egyptian Iconography:(1) Pharaoh, the Son of God spearing Apap God of Evil in the form of a Serpent; (2) Horus the Cat bruising the head of Apap with a knife in an attempt to spiritually cut off the head of *Evil*; (3) the Horus God in his full divine regalia spearing Apap in spiritual battle to destroy *Evil*.

Ethiopian Orthodox Church Iconography: Saint George in two representations spearing *Evil* in the form of a Dragon.

"I have seen the face of evil, and lived!"

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Preface

I have spent the better part of 14 years researching and writing this extraordinary book that began as my master's thesis submitted to the Faculty the Department of Theology at Xavier University. My thesis was approved by Dr. Marie Giblin, Chairperson, and Thesis Advisor, Father Joseph Bracken (a world-renowned scholar of Process Theology) on February 21, 2007. My thesis was archived in book form Xavier University's Library (with a request later by the library to archive it in microfiche) with a manuscript copy placed in the offices of the Department of Theology. My thesis title was *What is Evil?: Implications for the Doctrine of God, the Human Person, and the Problem of Evil*. This current book entitled *Ontology of Evil* is largely based upon my original thesis work and of course has grown and evolved, however, without seriously modifying its chief aim and objective to explain *what is the nature of evil* as a special topic under the disciplinary rubric *the problem of evil*. In Xavier's graduate school of theology we were introduced to the serious study of the *theology of God* and the *theology of Man*. I came to the conclusion during these studies that no *theology of God or Man* was complete or could be understood without a serious study of the *theology of Evil*. I understood that no theology of man could be understood without a theology of God; and more significantly no theology of God or man could be understood without a valid theology of Evil. As I became to grope my way in the dark on this subject that was new to me and not a subject at all in graduate school I determined that this subject that could one day become a theological discipline could not be developed without first understanding the *nature of evil* with a serious exploration into its origins. In doing so I discovered that many theologians had begun the conversation starting most significantly with St. Augustine, then St. Thomas Aquinas, down to John Hick in his *Evil and the Love of God* and the process philosophers like the great Alfred North Whitehead in his *Process and Reality* (1929) and process theologians like the indomitable Charles Hartshorne's *Divine Relativity* (1948); *Creative Synthesis and Philosophic Method* (1970) and his many other manifold works and published articles. All of these scholars dealt in one way or another with the nature of Evil because they had to with their focus being on understanding and explaining the problem of Evil and answering the central question *how can bad things happen to good people* when there is a *All Good, All Knowing, and All Powerful God*. However, no modern theologian I would venture to say tried to seriously delve into the two primary questions *what is Evil?* And *whence is Evil?* before Karl Barth whose theological analysis can be found in his *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation* (III.3, 1950). Here Barth describes in great detail the *trinitarian nature of Evil* he calls genuine *Nothingness*, which in essence is *Evil, Death, and Sin*, a *No-thing* that is a *really real Something* that is opposed to the sovereign God and His *Good Creation*. And too we must consider the experiential and biblical insights of William Stringfellow with his *Free in Obedience* (1964) and *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land* (1973) showing how in various ways Evil operates on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* in and through various human institutions of power that he declares to be demonic principalities that like men have fallen from God's grace through disobedience and their idolatrous demand to be worshipped in and through human institutions of power even at the highest level of governance paying obeisance to various doctrines and ideas taught by demons. In *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land* for instance Stringfellow says this about America:

The nation is fallen. Americans exist in time, in the era biblically called the Fall. America is a demonic principality or a complex or constellation or a conglomeration of principalities and powers in which death furnishes the meaning, in which death is the reigning idol, enshrined

in multifarious forms and guises, enslaving human beings, exacting human sacrifices, capturing and captivating Presidents as well as intimidating and dehumanizing ordinary citizens. Though history vary, though particular facts be different, the same basic theological statement, by the virtue of the biblical word, can and must be made about every nation.¹

In his book *Free in Obedience* in Chapter III “Christ and the Powers of Death” Stringfellow states:

And in the encounter of Christ with these powers [i.e. Israel and Rome] there is exposed the relationship between Christ and all principalities and powers. The ecclesiastical and civil rulers who accuse, try, condemn, and execute Christ act not essentially for themselves as individuals, but as representatives—indeed, as servants—of the principalities. It is, of course, in the name of these powers that Christ is put on trial. He is accused of subverting and undermining the nation, of threatening the nation’s existence, survival and destiny. . . . In any case, the significant aspect of the trial is that it is not just an encounter between Christ and some men who were his enemies. The most decisive clash in all history is this one between Christ and the principalities and powers of this world, represented by and symbolized in Israel and Rome. The understanding of principalities and powers is lost nowadays in the churches, though, I observe, not so much so outside the churches. . . . It appears, in other words, to be widely believed in the churches in the United States that the history of redemption is encompassed merely in the saga of relationships between God and men. What there is of contemporary Protestant moral theology typically ignores any attempt to account for, identify, explicate, and relate the self to the principalities, although empirically the principalities seem to have an aggressive, in fact possessive, ascendancy in American life. Because the biblical references to principalities and angelic powers are so prominent, and because the powers themselves enjoy such dominance in everyday life, their meaning and significance cannot be left unexamined. What are the principalities and powers? What is their significance in the creation and the in the fall? What is their relationship to human sin? How are these powers related to the presence and power of death in history? What is the meaning of the confrontation between Christ and the principalities. Does a Christian have any freedom from their dominion? There can be no serious, realistic, biblical comprehension of the witness of the Church in the world unless such questions as these are raised and pondered. . . . There is nothing particularly mysterious, superstitious, or imaginary about principalities What the Bible calls “principalities and powers” are called in contemporary language “ideologies,” “institutions,” and “images.” A principality, whatever its particular form and variety, is a living reality, distinguishable from human and other organic life. It is not made or instituted by men, but, as with men and all creation, made by God for his own pleasure. . . . All men, all angels, and all things in creation have origination, integrity, and wholeness of life in the worship of God. Just as men differ in their capacities in one sense or another, just as there are varieties in human life, so also there are varieties of principalities which can be distinguished one from another, though they all retain certain common characteristics.²

Besides these Barth and Stringfellow few others (whose arguments and claims we will examine in this work) have sought to delve seriously into the question *what is Evil?* And *whence is Evil?*; even though each biblical scholar gave expression as to the nature and origin of Evil on the God’s

¹ William Stringfellow. *An Ethic for Christians & Other Aliens in a Strange Land*. (Waco, Texas: Word Book Publishers, 1973), pp. 154-155.

² William Stringfellow. *Free in Obedience* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1964), pp. 49-53.

Superhighway using different terms and in different ways yet point to some dark power that is *really real*! And yet not even these two scholars have sought to answer these questions as we will do in this work using the *Egyptian Original* that reveals the black man's core belief and understanding of God, Man, and the nature of Evil and how IT operates on the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* and on God's *Superhighway of Human Unified Experience*. Further research in these areas (over the years) has allowed this author to go more in depth to explain *what is the nature of evil* using African theological, philosophical, and cosmological doctrine (first introduced as a question by the great African scholar St. Augustine) to raise and answer questions concerning the classic *problem of evil*. This problem is often looked at in this work from the bridge of African cosmology and symbolism based on the theological and cosmological doctrine found in the *Egyptian Original* and the near universal African spiritual understanding that *there are more rational actors in God's Good Creation other than mere human beings*.³ We will come to see that on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* that both good and evil whose acolytes and devotees are permitted to travel (for the moment) on the same highway of experience and are necessarily engaged in a spiritual struggle to influence patterns of behavior (good or evil) that will (one or the other) dominate how life is lived on this Earth. The nature of Evil and more importantly how it came to be and in this work how it operates on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* has been in some aspect the set of classic problems occupying the thoughts and minds of great scholars like St. Augustine of Hippo (a North African, 345 C.E. to 430 C.E.) with his *privation theory of evil* down to Edgar Sheffield Brightman (1884-1953), a philosophy of the Boston Personalist School of Thought and under whom Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. studied for his doctorate at the Boston School of Theology. According to John Hicks in his book *Evil and the God of Love* St. Augustine sought his solution to the classic problem of evil in a *privation theory of evil* coupled with his notion of *human free will*. We will discuss both concepts more fully later in this work. According to Hicks St. Augustine was more interested in *whence is evil* than *what is evil* (although you cannot ask one of these questions without asking the other) in order to absolve

³ In this work I will (too many times to count) refer to God's created material and spiritual order as *God's Good Creation*. Here I envision this observation and statement to mean that within God's created order there is nothing He made that is *inherently Evil*. All God has made is good with is consistent with the biblical witness in Genesis Chapter's 1 and 2. The difference between my aesthetic view of creation and that of St. Augustine (for instance) is that he believed that whatever evil exists in the world comes **from within** God's good created order (posited as the "absence of the good") and I advance the notion in this work to say that Evil enters and invades God's good created order **from without** at the frontier borders of darkness and somehow enters in and operates (as does good) on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. In this way the question of *the problem of evil* begins to be answered in the main, that is, *what is evil, and whence it is?* Nevertheless, St. Augustine's aesthetics is worth noting as outlined by John Hick in his book *Evil and the God of Love* (2010) as follows:

What I am calling Augustine's aesthetic theme is his affirmation of faith that, seen in its totality from the ultimate standpoint of the Creator, the universe is wholly good; for even the evil within it is made to contribute to the complex perfection of the whole. As Harnack says, 'Augustine never tires of realizing the beauty (pulchrum) and fitness (aptum) of creation, of regarding the universe as an ordered work of art, in which the graduations are as admirable as the contrasts. The individual and evil are lost to view in the notion of beauty. . . . Even hell, the damnation of sinners, is, as an act in the ordination of evils (ordinationum aliorum), an indispensable part of the work of art. This is a fourth theme in Augustine's treatment of the problem of evil, in addition to his arguments concerning evil's privation character and its origins in misused free will, and his use of the principle of plenitude to account for the world's inclusion of lower as well as higher forms of being. (Hick, p. 82).

God in his theodicy from being accused of being the creator of evil. Hick writes:

In all these writings several distinct, though often overlapping, themes are developed, and I believe that justice can best be done to Augustine's many-sided treatment of the problem of evil by considering it from the following four angles : (i) Augustine first asks, What is evil? meaning, What is it metaphysically? i.e. not, Which empirical objects and events are to be accounted evil? but, Is evil an ultimate constituent of reality; and if not, what is its true nature and status? In his discussions under this head Augustine is reacting to Manichaean dualism, and his answer — that evil is not an entity in its own right but rather a privation of good — derives directly from Neo-Platonism. (2) Augustine next asks, Whence comes evil? His response to this question is the so-called 'free-will defense', which explains, for him, both the moral evil of sin and, derivatively, human suffering in its many forms — physical pain, fear and anxiety, etc.⁴

John Hick then comments on Brightman's notion of *surd evil* where he shows that Brightman is not so much interested in *whence is evil?* [IT's origins] ; but *what is evil?* , that is, *what is the nature of evil?* And agreeing with traditional Christian theology based on his notion of "*theistic finitism*" where God limits His Power and complete sovereignty over the affairs of men in favor of the exercise of their free will departs from this doctrinal view in that God's power and sovereignty is actually limited *by something in the universe not created by God and not a result of* [God's] *voluntary self-limitation, which God finds as either obstacle or instrument to his will*" And even more remarkable Brightman claimed that "*this 'obstacle' lies within God's own nature.*" In this work we will explore this later notion and claim that this "obstacle" Brightman is talking about is Karl Barth's *Nothingness*, the Trinitarian head of Evil, Sin and Death, which *is a necessary and unavoidable by-product of God's Creative Power and actuation of it in the Universe*. Hick writes:

The problem of evil in its most acute form,' says Brightman is the question whether there is *surd evil* and, if so, what its relation to value is.' By '*surd evil*' he means objects, events or experiences that are intrinsically and irredeemably evil and incapable of being turned to good. For example, the phenomenon of imbecility: 'Let us grant that imbecility may encourage psychiatry and arouse pity; yet, if it be an incurable condition, there remains in it a *surd evil* embodied in the intrinsic worthlessness of the imbecile's existence and the suffering which his existence imposes on others.' Although it might well be questioned, on the basis of Christian eschatology, whether this is a true example of *surd evil* in Brightman's sense — or even, if one adopts a doctrine of ultimate universal salvation, whether there can be any such thing as *surd evil* — the contrary is assumed without further argument in Brightman's discussion. Brightman's distinctive solution to the problem of evil, or rather his distinctive manner of avoiding a Christian tradition in understanding God as 'an eternal, conscious spirit, whose will is unfailingly good'. But it departs from this tradition by adding that '*there is something in the universe not created by God and not a result of voluntary divine self-limitation, which God finds as either obstacle or instrument to his will.*' In Brightman's doctrine this '*obstacle*' lies within God's own nature.⁵

While Dr. King subscribed to Brightman's overall philosophical stance known as *Boston Personalism* where the "human self is the dominant metaphysical reality" and that "God is a self-limited being whose good will though perfect is constrained by God's own nature" to allow for human free will and finally that "God's purposes intend good for the world, yet pain and suffering occur. He did not argue for God having unlimited power over evil and suffering, but rather maintained that through the processes of the world and history evil will be overcome. In effect, God uses the tragedies of the creation as instruments that enable the world to reach its final goal" of achieving overcoming

⁴ John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*. (United Kingdom, England: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2010), pp. 37-38

⁵ Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 31.

evil with good. Dr. King would subscribe to the notion that in history evil will one day be overcome as the famous song the Movement sang “We Shall Overcome Someday” affirmed often enough as Dr. King would himself often proclaim that “The arch of history is long but it bends toward justice.” Yet Dr. King could not come to accept the notion of *surd evil* that there are “objects, events or experiences that are intrinsically and irredeemably evil and incapable of being turned to good” which one is likely to conclude if it is true that there is something in God’s *Good Creation* or like Barth *standing outside of God’s Good Creation* at its frontiers threatening its cosmic order and essential goodness that God neither created directly nor can absolutely control. Dr. King could not subscribe to the notion of *surd evil* in that he believed that (in respect to human persons at least) there is no one and nothing inside God’s *Good Creation* that is *irredeemably evil and incapable of being turned to good*.⁶ In fact the philosophy of the Movement he led in large part was predicated on God’s love being so powerful that if consistently and persistently applied in the struggle for justice and freedom within society could even redeem the enemies of freedom and justice. This struggle for Dr. King was not against flesh and blood but against the unseen dark powers and principalities of evil in high places that influenced the creation and maintenance of evil social institutions like segregation. This view came directly out of his theology partially acquired through his studies in systematic theology and philosophy at Boston University and sharpened in the actual struggle with that institutional evil in the streets and communities of America (especially in the South). Writer Herbert Richardson is the first scholar to recognize Dr. King as more than a great civil rights leader and preacher but also one who had an informed theology that governed how he viewed his role and God’s role in the freedom struggle for Black people in America. In his article “*Martin Luther King—Unsung Theologian*” Richardson states:

King’s perception of the human problem today as rooted in a certain structure of social evil led him to emphasize again and again that his struggle was directed against the forces, or structure, of evil itself rather than against the person or group who is doing the evil. Christian faith sees neither particular men nor particular groups as evil, but sees them trapped within a structure of ideological separation which makes ritual conflict inevitable. In order to overcome this kind of evil, faith does not attack the men who do evil, but the structure of evil which makes men act violently.⁶

Dr. King developed a profound theology of love grounded in a philosophy of personalism where God Himself is a profoundly personal God, who is establishing His Kingdom in the hearts of men by building a new society grounded in love that Dr. King and others would dub the *Beloved Community*. In a moment of reflection Dr. King once stated:

The agonizing moments through which I have passed during the last few years have also drawn me closer to God. More than ever before I am convinced of the reality of a personal God. True, I have always believed in the personality of God. But in the past the idea of a personal God was little more than a metaphysical category that I found theologically and philosophically satisfying. Now it is a living reality that has been validated in the experience of everyday life. God has been profoundly real to me in recent years.⁷

Grounded in this personal [or personalist] view of God Dr. King lamented that the Movement had taken on an institutional structure that covered over the original motivation of Christian love that

⁶ Noel Leo Erskine. *King Among the Theologians*. (Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1994), p. 2.

⁷ Erskine. *King Among the Theologians*, p. 14.

was the impetus at the start of the Movement and its spiritual foundation. He stated:

From the beginning a basic philosophy guided the movement. This guiding principle has been referred to variously as nonviolent resistance, noncooperation, and passive resistance. But in the first days of the protest none of these expressions was mentioned; the phrase most often heard was "Christian love." It was the Sermon on the Mount, rather than a doctrine of passive resistance, that initially inspired the Negroes of Montgomery to dignified social action. It was Jesus of Nazareth that stirred the Negroes to protest with the creative weapon of love.⁸ [p.5]

Dr. King's view of God as a personal God and his notion that love of God was and should be the operational and inspirations motivation that guided the freedom Movement did not make him adopt a pie in the sky understanding that black freedom would come without struggle with human persons that upheld human structures of evil that intended to deny *forever* freedom to black men who bore the image of the God of love within themselves as other men, thus have God given freedom to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. For Dr. King the greatest institutional evil of his time was segregation and therefore these structures had to be overcome and torn down before black men could enjoy their God-given right to freedom. Segregation in the United States for him was the institutional face of evil. Dr. King stated:

In our own nation another unjust and evil system, known as segregation, for nearly one hundred years inflicted the Negro with a sense of inferiority, deprived him of his personhood, and denied him his birthright of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Segregation has been the Negro's burden and America's shame. . . . Today we know with certainty that segregation is dead. . . . When in future generation men look back upon these turbulent, tension packed days through which we are passing, they will see God working through history for the salvation of man. They will know that God was working through those men who had the vision to perceive that no nation could survive half slave and half free. God is able to conquer the evils of history.⁹

Looking back, we see the forces of segregation gradually dying on the seashore. The problem is far from solved and gigantic mountains of opposition lie ahead, but at least we have left Egypt, and with patient yet firm determination we shall reach the promised land. Evil in the form of injustice and exploitation shall not survive forever. A Red Sea passage in history ultimately brings the forces of goodness to victory, and the closing of the same waters mark the doom and the destruction of the forces of evil. All this reminds us that evil carries the seed of its own destruction. In the long run right defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.¹⁰

With this last statement Dr. King was coming closer to a more metaphysical understanding of Evil and that IT(explained below) comes in many forms with segregation and institutional racism just being one of many forms Evil takes. Dr. King intuitively understood that behind the institutional structures of racism and segregation lay dark powers and principalities operating on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* to wreck disaster among men and havoc within their societal institutions and prevent the coming of God's Kingdom on Earth in the formation of the *Beloved Community*. Dr. King understood experientially that Evil was *really real* and stated:

⁸ Erskine. *King Among the Theologians*, p. 5.

⁹ Erskine, p. 135.

¹⁰ Erskine, p. 145.

Is anything more obvious than the presence of evil in the universe? Its nagging, prehensible tentacles project into every level of existence. We may debate the origin of evil, but only a victim of superficial optimism would debate its reality. Evil is stark, grim, and colossally real. Affirming the reality of evil in unmistakable terms, the Bible symbolically pictures the conniving work of a serpent which injects discord into the harmonious symphony of life in a garden Crystal-clear is the biblical perception of evil. Nor was Jesus unmindful of the reality of evil. Although he never offered a theological explanation of the origin of evil, he never attempted to explain it away. In the parable of the tares, Jesus says that tares are tares, not illusions or errors of the mortal mind. Real weeds disrupt the orderly growth of stately wheat. Whether sown by Satan or by man's misuse of his own freedom, the tares are always poisonous and deadly. Concerning the choking weeds, Jesus says in substance, "I do not attempt to explain their origin, but they are the work of an enemy." He recognized that the force of evil was as real as the force of good. Within the wide arena of everyday life we see evil in all of its ugly dimensions. We see it expressed in tragic lust and inordinate selfishness. We see it in high places where men are willing to sacrifice truth on the altars of their self-interest. . . . In a sense, the history of man is the story of the struggle between good and evil. . . . a conflict between God and Satan.¹¹

From this Nu African and African bridge and horizon of understanding of Evil we will begin the examination of this classic problem that is summed in the question often asked by the popular mind *why does bad things happen to good people?* [see the work of Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, 1981 for some answers]. More technically the classic question is *how can evil exist in the world* (especially at the levels we are now experiencing it) *when there is an all-powerful, all-loving, all-knowing God* (that from our human logic and moral standards) *should be able and willing to prevent such evil or bad things from happening*. This current book seeks to go beyond these classic questions and moral claims and accusations against God to suggest that unless we as human persons come to understand *the nature of evil* and how *IT* enters onto the *Superhighway of God* to effect His *Good Creation*; and in what ways *IT* influences the human mind and culture *to do and even celebrate acts of evil* we can never answer any of the classic questions humans have been asking for ages now. This book also claims that we cannot fully answer these classic questions on the Problem of Evil merely having a sound Doctrine of God and Doctrine of the HumanPerson. We must also develop a *Theology of Evil* as a corollary study.

This book claims that the level of evil in society is so great that we can no longer dismiss evil or heinous unimaginable acts of evil as acts by misguided mentally disturbed persons who just need psychological evaluations, remedies, re-education, and interventions; but we must take more serious the implicit claim (unspoken rational) by those actors that *the Devil made me do it*. Whether we want to or not (to explain the horrid acts) we will need to entertain the prospect (in the back of many minds) *that some supranatural (non-human) irrational/rational agency of darkness is influencing these horrific human acts of evil* in our society and communities; and that psychology (although it functions to comfort us with the notion that these acts are purely the acts of disturb minds) has in the end no real answers; nor will any amount of legislation to curb or prevent these acts of evil through mental health remedies or gun laws be able to stop *IT*. Psychologically we want to be assured that the answer to the problems of evil are purely human and thus within our power to solve and overcome. We are

¹¹ Dr. Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love* (Cleveland, Ohio: Collins Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 71-72.

frustrated however to find that we have not and likely will not be able to do so with any current understanding and power we now have. The Egyptians faced evil and resolved to say that evil could never be destroyed but with a King or Pharaoh divinely appointed by God was enabled to bring evil into *ma'at* balance with good. That had to be enough. Christianity literally has claimed that evil can be *overcome by doing good* and that God's *final solution* is to *eternally arrest* the acolytes and devotees of evil, including Satan, the Devil, the false prophet, and death itself casting *all of them* into the Lake of Fire and then throwing all of *IT* into *outer darkness beyond the frontiers* of God's *Good Creation* with the notion that if Evil (which is some unseen negative supra-natural entity, force or power as we hold to in this work) has no agents to act upon or influence to acts of evil then Evil itself will be *arrested*. However, Christianity in large part, makes no claim that Evil or the *IT* itself will be or can be destroyed and the whole scheme of this theology begs the question of Evil's origins and the disturbing thought that as long as there are angels, other rational beings, human agents (even those made into new creatures by God's *soul-making* redemptive process) Evil or the *IT* can always make a comeback; somehow always there to frustrate God's redemptive *soul-making* plan of salvation for His *Good Creation* as *IT* once did *in the beginning* influencing Satan to tempt the first humans to acts of evil and so frustrate God's soul-making plans for the first humans in the Garden of God. Although in this work we will claim that Satan, himself is not *Evil incarnate* or *the IT* based on biblical teaching in Ezekiel 28:11-19 [NIV] where Satan is described as an angel made by God "a model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" and who was placed in Eden, the Garden of God as Adam's protector; and that he [Satan] was "blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you." Isaiah 14:12-17 begins with a lament as to "How you [Satan] have fallen from heaven." Then this text describes Satan as the "morning star" and the "Son of the Dawn" who had fallen from grace because he desired to make himself "like the Most High" and sought to have himself "enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the upmost heights of the sacred mountain. . . above the tops of the clouds." Thus we find Satan in the Garden of God tempting mankind to the same pride that caused his own downfall. Satan therefore was not originally evil and certainly not Evil Incarnate because although the origin of Evil is not revealed in the Bible the presence of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* suggests that Evil was somehow potentiality even in the Garden of God and that *IT* lies outside any created rational being. Satan became Evil's chief acolyte and devotee and thus as Evil's chief surrogate can be ascribed with Evil's power and Evil's name *the IT*.

Here where we should explain where we got the use of the word IT in this work. The reader familiar with the 1986 horror novel by Stephen King called *IT* and the movies that have been based on *IT* will undoubtedly assume that my calling Evil in this work *the IT* came from this source but that assumption would be wrong. The ancient Ethiopian Orthodox *Andemta Commentaries* (written from the 5th Century down to the 19th Century) on the Book of Genesis narrates how Satan influenced Eve to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and remarkably describes Satan or the Serpent as *IT* at least *twenty times* in explanations of Genesis Chapter 3 for just three verses [Gen. 3:4-6]. The *Andemta Commentary* (AC) as translated from the Ge'ez and Amharic texts into English by Ethiopian scholar Mersha Alehegne in his *The Ethiopian Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (2011) shows this in the *Andəm* [አንድም] = **A** ; Hatäta [ሐተታ] = **H** ; and *Tarik* [ታሪክ] = **T** *explanations* of portions in Genesis, Chapter 3 beginning with Satan speaking to Eve:

4. *And the serpent said unto the woman, "it is not that you will die; "The devil said to Eve, "It is not, because you shall not die the death of deaths; 5. For GOD knows that the day you eat*

thereof then your eyes shall be opened; for He knows that the day you eat it, your eyes will be opened; and you shall be as GOD; for he knows that you will become God; knowing good an evil." It is because He knows that you shall know good from evil [after you eat from it] but not that you will die the death of deaths." H [*Hatäta*] **IT**¹² started his evil preaching as *Zeus* and *Artemis* who are born from Adam and Eve and are worshiped. T. if one enquires as to where he found and told her [Eve] of these, Satan was waiting for a moment [and] searching for a reason to seduce Adam in the seven years they were in the garden. [One day] **IT** [the serpent] met the animals, beasts and birds along the way when they went to Adam to be named. If one enquires that they cannot stay for seven years without getting names, they used to come to court favour [from him]. One day, **IT** met them on their way back from courting favour [from Adam]. When **IT** approached the pig, **IT** frightened him and did not allow him to come near. Standing far off, **IT** asked them, saying, "*where have you been children of the earth?*" They told him saying, "we went to our lord, *king of all* to court favor." **IT** asked them saying, "what did he tell you?" They replied, "he told us nothing." **IT** [the serpent] replied, "he must have told something, what did he tell you." They replied, "when we told him, 'slaughter some of us and eat, and milk us and drink,' he told us, 'GOD did not forbid me anything except one plant [in the garden]; He gave me all saying govern, eat and drink all; and He forbade me this [one plant] not because he stinted me, It was for me not to die in the flesh.'" Whence, **IT** [the serpent] thought and said, "how he is on the verge of failing?" and felt sure to let him fail saying, "is it difficult to put one down who stood as the edge of a mountain?" If enquired as to how he seduced them, the serpent was created handsome and aromatic and lived in the backyard of the garden to be Adam's source of delight and joy. **IT** [Satan] hides itself in it and seduced them. If it is said that the only creatures in the garden were Adam and Eve, the beautiful and odorous serpent was created *as big as a camel*. If enquired as to how this was so he met here when **IT** [the serpent] came [to Adam] to court favor and for a mission. The Serpent then asked, saying; "where are you going?" And Eve replied, "I am going to Adam, my master, the king of all." **IT** [serpent], "it is well, so let us go together." Eve replied, "it was good. But I am beautiful and odorous whole you are ugly and odorless; how that can happen?" The serpent replied, "where is the beauty then?" **IT** flattered her saying, "your beauty will cause my ugliness to be likable; and your odor will change and cause praise of my bad smell." When they went together, the serpent said to Eve, "the ascent of paradise is inconvenient, let us be aware ascending it." She replied, "what shall we do?" **IT** said, "Let me carry you on my back first then you will carry me on your back later." And **IT** [serpent] carried her on its back. When they reached the middle of ascent, **IT** said "I am exhausted. Let you bear me as I did unto you." And Eve carried the serpent on her back. *Then he intermingled himself with her as butter does on a hot stone* [my italics emphasizing some kind of metaphysical or psychic influence over Eve's being or mind] When **IT** [serpent] arrived at the place where Adam was, **IT** said, "*Peace be to you O Adam, the king of the earth and of heaven; good morning.*" And Adam replied, "go out, you serpent! I am the king of the earth but not the heaven." A. [*Andem, አንድም*] as he was acquainted with prayers from angels, Adam

¹² Throughout this *Andemta Commentary* (AC) paragraph giving various explanations of Chapter 3 of Genesis I have capitalized and bolded the word **IT** to highlight to the rational application of that word and its use throughout my word demonstrating its original use in ancient Ethiopian biblical commentary and that my use of the word in this form has nothing to do with Stephen King's novel *IT*. The brackets explaining the **IT** in the translation either as [the serpent] or [Satan] either belongs to the translator Mersha Alehegne as he understands its meaning or actually part of the *Ge'ez* or *Amharic* text. The use of the word by the Ethiopian commentators and my use in this work is biblically determined and theologically relevant to the larger question about the role of Satan in the Fall of Man and in my work employed to help explain the nature of Evil in relationship to God's *Good Creation*.

kept quiet. **A.** as when the serpent went to Eve, **IT** found her sitting idle stretching out her feet and with her hands rested upon her thigh. **IT** said, *Peace to you O Eve, queen of the heaven and of the earth.*" Since women like flattery, she felt happy when she heard of what **IT** said to her. Feeling that she accepted him, he asked her saying, "what did He [GOD] tell you?" And she replied, "except one plant, He told us to eat all. He did forbid us that not because He stinted us. It was for us to die the death of deaths." And he said, "it is not that you will die the death of deaths. *But because He knew that when you eat from the tree, your eyes will be opened and you will become like GOD,* when you eat from this your eyes will be enlightened and you become GOD. *And you will know the evil from the good.*" **6.** *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise;* So when Eve said the tree was good for food, was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree beautiful to contemplate; *she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband both did eat.* She took its fruit and ate. She also gave it to Adam and they ate together. **H.** if enquired as to how they ate **IT**, [the serpent] tricked Eve to believe that [GOD] created her to be subjected to Adam and that she can have superiority over him if she eats the fruit first and then gives to Adam. [*Andemta Commentary on Genesis 3:4-6*].¹³

This *Andemta Commentary* does not of course call Evil *the IT* as we have chosen to do in this work in order to describe an irrational negative principality and *really real dark* power opposed to God's *Good Creation* and a being that is possibly *co-eval* (although not co-equal) with God. God did not create **IT** but here we claim that **IT** came into being as the negative and dare we say an unavoidable by-product of God's awesome unlimited creative power exercised in the universe. Yet it is remarkable that these ancient Ethiopian commentators by some amazing intuitive understanding were just one step away from such a conclusion by describing Satan or the Serpent in the *Garden of God* as **IT** the chief acolyte and devotee of Evil. That step would have led them to know that Satan or the Serpent is a fallen angel (once perfect or beautiful in form and wisdom serving as the guardian of infant mankind in the *Garden of God* in Eden) and so Satan, the Devil or the Serpent *is not* Evil incarnate but merely the chief spiritual surrogate of Evil aptly described as *the IT*.

The *Ontology of Evil* does not propose that it has *definitive answers* to any of these disturbing thoughts or to the classic questions on how evil operates in our society, or where it comes from (cosmological origins, etc.) or what its aims are (if one can accept that there is a supranational irrational/rational mind behind it). What this book dares to do (in the face of any ridicule or laughter) is reintroduce and examine the classic questions, propose new questions; and even more daring make some radical suggestions about the nature of evil that explains aspects of the *problem of evil* even though the post-post-modern mind has long ago dismissed and relegated such questions to the dark ages; as they remain astonished that nothing they or their governments have done has been able to eradicate horrific, unimaginable, and unconscionable acts that currently plague society on a daily basis. One problem is that we have all but dismissed the duality of good and evil. The ancient Egyptians knew this duality to be *really real* and so did not dismiss **IT** but attempted through its cosmology of *Maa-t* = to *balance good and evil* in society since they understood that evil [*the IT*] cannot be destroyed or eliminated by humans as postmodern society presumes it can, because "after all, evil has its origins in the human person" and no supra-natural power is behind it; so the social science tools of education,

¹³ Mersha Alehegne. *The Ethiopian Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Critical Edition and Translation*. (Harrasowitz Verlag – Wiesbaden, 2011), pp. 413-414.

psychology, and government legislative power and *enforcement is all that we need to do the job*. Yet somehow in the back of our minds (even if we don't want to admit it) we feel that there is *something out there; some sinister irrational homicidal power of evil that is seeking human destruction primarily by influencing our minds and our own hands* to do it. Even though nearly all humans share this anxiety (likely deep in our primordial consciousness where we can hide and deny the truth of IT) we still resist bringing the questions we dread asking and answering; and so when theodicy seeks to ask these questions we tend to deny the legitimacy of such a study both from a theological and philosophical perspective. In John Hick's classic work *Evil and the God of Love* (1966, 2010) offers an apology for theodicy as a legitimate academic study and in addition unmasks (perhaps without fully knowing it) the reason for our deep anxiety and dread of dealing with questions regarding the origins of Evil; noting that Evil or the IT (as it is sometime referred to here) is *really real* being an irrational dark negative power of some kind that should not be in God's *Good Creation*; having a devastating effect on human life; all the more terrifying because of IT's apparent random selective uncontrollable nature to *show up anywhere, at any time!* John Hick's states the following:

The dogma of the impermissibility and undesirability of theodicy is sometimes supported by the following reasoning: Sin, which is basic to all other forms of evil, is essentially irrational and indeed contra-rational. As such it is absolutely devoid of intelligible grounds or motives. It is an incomprehensible lapse from reason, as from adherence to the good, and cannot be rationalized or therefore theodicyed in anyway. A proposed understanding of it can only be a misunderstanding of it, treating the essentially irrational as though it were something else. I shall have occasion to refer to this argument again in another context. But so far as the propriety of our subject is concerned, the argument from the irrationality of sin is of no effect. For even if we grant all that it claims, it is still proper, and indeed necessary, to ask how such deplorable irrationality could occur in a universe created out of nothing by infinite goodness and power. Even if we cannot hope to understand the motive or rationale of evil, we must still ask why God permits it; and any answer to this question will be moving in the realm of theodicy.¹⁴

¹⁴ John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*. (London, England: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), pp. 8-9.

About the Author

Dr. Mari-Jata has earned a number of academic degrees at both the doctoral and masters level, including a Doctor of Education (from Union Institute and University, Cincinnati, conferred 2012), Doctor of Ministry (from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Chicago, conferred 2007), Master of Divinity (Cincinnati Christian University/Bible College & Seminary, conferred May, 2001), Master of Arts in History (1985) and Master of Arts in Theology (2007) both conferred by Xavier University. Dr. Mari-Jata has taught classes for over 16 years in religion, history, philosophy, ethics, and critical thinking at a number of colleges (e.g. Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio, Union Institute and University (UI&U) and retired from classroom teaching in 2013. He is currently pursuing a career as a professional hospital chaplain, having completed four units of Clinical Pastoral Education at Christ Hospital, Cincinnati (2014). He practiced chaplaincy on clinical floors for nearly five years at this same HCO. He was also a graduate assistant in its Pastoral Services Department while working on his Doctor of Education at UI&U; completing his doctoral thesis on the subject of *Clinical Pastoral Education and the Phenomenology of Suffering*. Dr. Mari-Jata plans to complete his professional CPE certification through Canadian CASC/ACSS. He was baptized into the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedo* Church [EOTC] in 2013; taught theological methods online and designed some online classes in biblical commentary for one of its colleges, i.e. *St. Mary's Ethiopian Theological College* (Houston, Texas). One of Dr. Mari-Jata's interests is the establishment of professional chaplaincy in the EOTC; which lost its society-wide chaplaincy focus and functionality after 1974. He wants to do this by founding an *NOTC* (Nu African Orthodox Tewahedo Christian Community) *association of professional chaplaincy and counseling* organization based in Sierra Leone, West Africa that builds on the church's current focus of *soul-care* that is now operates only within EOTC parish. *Dr. Mari-Jata* has dual citizenship in Sierra Leone (conferred on him by the President of Sierra Leone, December 4, 2022 in Sierra Leone). Dr. Mari-Jata had his DNA tested through African Ancestry in 2021 with the result that his Matri-clan DNA (through his maternal line) shows that he is related to the **Fulani of Guinea-Bissau**, the **Mende and Temne of Sierra Leone**, and the **Kru of Liberia**. Dr. Mari-Jata has been married to Wanda, his wife of 41 years. Wanda has been an immense help to Dr. Mari-Jata in his career as a compassionate and loving Christian woman, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, who is graduate of Xavier University in Professional Communication (BA conferred in 2000), and before that a business woman and Managing Cosmetologist, who owned for a number of years two cosmetology businesses. With much thanks to her Wanda read through and copy-edited the entire manuscript. In addition (and to my surprise) found the work thought provoking and challenging. It is hoped by this author that other readers will experience this work the same way.

DSM, Freetown, Sierra Leone, December 6, 2022

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "On Evil"
Sermon: "Death of Evil on the Seashore"

Is anything more obvious than the presence of evil in the universe? Its nagging, prehensible tentacles project into every level of existence. We may debate the origin of evil, but only a victim of superficial optimism would debate its reality. Evil is stark, grim, and colossally real. Affirming the reality of evil in unmistakable terms, the Bible symbolically pictures the conniving work of a serpent which injects discord into the harmonious symphony of life in a garden Crystal-clear is the biblical perception of evil. Nor was Jesus unmindful of the reality of evil. Although he never offered a theological explanation of the origin of evil, he never attempted to explain it away. In the parable of the tares, Jesus says that tares are tares, not illusions or errors of the mortal mind. Real weeds disrupt the orderly growth of stately wheat. Whether sown by Satan or by man's misuse of his own freedom, the tares are always poisonous and deadly. Concerning the choking weeds, Jesus says in substance, "I do not attempt to explain their origin, but they are the work of an enemy." He recognized that the force of evil was as real as the force of good. Within the wide arena of everyday life we see evil in all of its ugly dimensions. We see it expressed in tragic lust and inordinate selfishness. We see it in high places where men are willing to sacrifice truth on the altars of their self-interest. . . . In a sense, the history of man is the story of the struggle between good and evil. . . . a conflict between God and Satan.¹⁵

**GOD, ALMIGHTY & DIVINE HOPE CONTRA
THE TRIUNE POWER OF NOTHINGNESS: DEATH, EVIL, AND SIN**

Hell is naked before him, and destruction has no covering He has set a bound to darkness, and he searches out every limit; a stone is darkness, and the shadow of death. (Septuagint, [LXX] Job 26:6; 28:3, Brenton Translation).

Hell and destruction are manifest to the Lord; how shall not also be the hearts of men? (Septuagint [LXX], Proverbs 15:11, Translated by Brenton).

SOME AFRICAN PROVERBS ON EVIL& DEATH

"If Evil lasts for a long time it will become a tradition." - Igbo Proverb

"Evil enters like a needle and spreads like an oak tree." - Ethiopian Proverb

"Owuo atwedeɛ, baakofoɔmforo"– Akan (*Twɔ*) Proverb [Ghana]

"Death's ladder; It is not climbed by one person" (Translation)

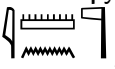
Meaning: This **Akan** (*Twɔ*) proverb expresses the inevitability of death for everyone. The implication is for everyone to be humble and live life so as to be considered worthy in the afterlife. It also signifies the notion of "Jacob's Ladder" that is, the dimensional "Gateway" between heaven and earth upon which the angels of God ascend and descend; African-American understanding is bound up in our song "We are climbing Jacob's Ladder . . . Soldiers of the Cross", where we are climbing "round by round" from Earth to Heaven, from this life of mixed joy and sorrow to eternal joy!

¹⁵ Dr. Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love* (Cleveland, Ohio: Collins Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 71-72.



left half of this photo was taken in Mother's bedroom two weeks following her death. The author took the picture at night with a 35mm camera. There is no known photographic explanation as to what produced the light image. We leave it to you to interpret for yourself.

A-MEN II

Above a scanned copy of a 35 mm photograph of an angel of God called in this work *A-Men II*, the Hidden One, , (a class of Angel-Men = A-Men an appellation the church usually ends their prayers with, not understanding why they do it and that it is an Egyptian hieroglyphic word) who is hovering by the death bed of a very good woman who had recently passed away

THE OMEGA CHRIST HOLDS THE KEYS OF DEATH AND HELL

John, to the seven Churches that are in Asia . . . May grace and peace be with you from God . . . who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven spirits who are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and washed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests to his God and Father; to him be glory and the dominion unto the ages. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, including those who pierced him. All the tribes of the earth will mourn over him. I shall be so! Amen! "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." . . . I turned around to see the voice that had spoken to me. Having done so, I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the seven lampstands was

*someone like a son of man, clothed with a robe reaching down to his feet, and with a golden sash around his chest. His head and his hair were as white as white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like fine brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace. His voice was like the voice of many waters. He had seven stars in his right hand and out of his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining at its brightest. When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He laid his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive unto the ages of ages! I have the keys of death and of hades. Therefore, write the things which you have seen, the things which are now, and the things which will happen in the future. . . . " (Revelation 1:4-19, EOB) To the angel of the Church in Laodicea write: **The Amen**[ὁ ἀμήν in the Greek], the Faithful and True Witness, the origin of God's creation says these things To the one who overcomes, I will grant to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father on his throne. Whoever has an ear should listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Churches." (Revelation 3:14, 21-22, EOB).*

BOOK ONE

TRIUNE NATURE OF EVIL AND THE "IT"

Be warned my son . . . Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body . . .
. here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole
duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing whether it is
good or evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:12-14, NIV)

CHAPTER ONE

TRIUNE ENTITY OF NOTHINGNESS, DEATH, AND SIN WITHIN TIME & ETERNITY

The aim and purpose of this book is to examine the nature and being of the triune entity of Nothingness, a.k.a. the "IT", which is that negative dark principality and power that is *coeval* (i.e. existing alongside) with but not *co-eternal*¹⁶ or *co-equal* with God; *but* nevertheless is able (at least for the moment) to oppose God and God's *Good Creation* within IT's triune nature of *Death*, *Evil*, and *Sin*. The *irrational* and *homicidal aim* of this dark coeval power is the complete destruction of the human person, who is made in the image of God within the cosmic universe of time and eternity and if it were possible the overthrow of the very throne and sovereignty of God over God's *Good Creation*. Unless and until the "IT" is explained from a *Uni-theological* perspective and a *Uni-theology of Evil* is formulated, then the ontological nature of this irrational, homicidal, and negative being that is spewing out venom and destruction on God's cosmic universe (i.e. material, moral, and spiritual universe) will never be understood, nor will an adequate doctrine of God and doctrine of the human person be possible.

Western theology has dismissed *Evil* as a rational and embodied reality and relegated acts so described as irrational psychotic episodes of the human mind, *and* therefore must logically hold that God is responsible for both natural and ontological evil in the created order since all material and existential being has its origin with God. This "psychological" view of *evil* (even if its adherents and acolytes dare call it that) denies the human claim that "*the Devil made me do it*" because humankind from this perspective is held responsible for cooperating with evil or promoting evil within themselves and others since no power of ultimate good or evil outside the human person can be admitted. Yet such a view cannot fully explain the deep pathological and irrational level of evil within the human person. We claim here that *Evil is an Entity* and as such does not have its origins from within the human person or the Devil. We claim here that the human person and the Devil are mere acolytes and devotees of *Evil* (i.e. the "IT") but nevertheless (having within themselves the God-given grace of *Free Will*) are guilty of allowing Evil to enter God's *Good Creation* in return for concrete *demonic experiences* motivated by *MONEY, POWER & SEX*.

¹⁶ *Evil* cannot be co-eternal with God because if God is All-Good then at some point in eternity only good existed. This of course leaves the question "Where did Evil come from or originate?" If *Evil* is coeval with God (i.e. existing alongside God) within eternity and existed before temporal or human existence then the best can be said to answer the above question is that *Evil* appeared alongside God (sometime with the process of creation) as a *necessary by-product* of God's *All-Goodness* and thus represents a challenge to God's nature as *All-Good*. This had to happen at some time before or during the "Creation of the Heavens and the Earth" meaning prior to any angelic being or human being. This supposition excludes Lucifer as the *original source of Evil* even though he certainly is the chief acolyte and devotee of Evil according to Biblical references describing his nature as a created being.

Both the being known as Satan and the human person were created as good within God's good creation until they chose by their own free will to become acolytes and devotees of Evil.¹⁷ *Evil* as an embodied power of darkness existed prior to the creation of either Satan (once an arch-angel of God, known in the sacred apocrypha literature as **Satan-El**, along with **Micha-El**, **Gabri-El**, **Rapha-El**, et al, where **El** means "belonging to God" or "of God") or mankind. The view that denies that *Evil* has ontological being (or embodiment along with the view that Satan does not exist and that he has no real power to bring about evil in nature or mankind will undermine the development of a genuine *doctrine of God* and *doctrine of the Human Person*. This view of *Evil* will lead (as it often does in the popular mind) to the belief that "there is no God" and that "evil acts by human persons are merely a result of their psychotic and/or pathological states of mind." Psychologist and Psychiatrist then become *the new secular and scientific priesthood* of this psychological understanding of *Evil*, that is, the "behavioral definition of evil" meaning any "behavior that deliberately deprives innocent people of their humanity, from small scale assaults on a person's dignity to outright murder."¹⁸ Yet even science dares to ask "Is the universe hostile to human interests?" and as T. H. Huxley (1893) supposes in his *Evolution and Ethics* is there some kind of unseen objective force or being in nature or nature itself "with a kind of consciousness and will which still place it in some social relation to our own – namely a hostile one."¹⁹ Mankind (despite the assurances of scientific positivism) still cannot shake the feeling (something deep in the human primordial mind) that there is *something out there*, that is, some *diabolical and/or homicidal force or entity* in the universe that is hostile to humanity, a dark power that seeks to undermine the material, spiritual and moral foundations that humanity relies on for its very existence. Are the moral foundations that uphold a just and fair society under God under attack by such an Evil power or force? Some believe so even if they do not use the word "Evil" but nevertheless believe that a nation without moral foundations cannot last very long. The *Republican Platform 2012* recognizes such a moral framework and its authors suggest the founders of this Euro-American nation tried to govern it from within this moral framework. This document states:

Reaffirm that our rights come from God, are protected by government, and that the only just government is one that truly governs with the consent of the governed. The principles written in the Constitution are secured by the character of the American people. President George Washington said in his first inaugural address: "The propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained." (*Republican Platform 2012*, p. ii).

What if they don't? Then a moral vacuum for *Evil* that we have called the **IT** will *necessarily* and by its very nature fill the void within human society with unimaginable carnage of the body politic and its citizens. Actually, this carnage has already begun where Satan (i.e. the Devil) = the Egyptian *Set* (i.e., , and/or  the **red Devil** with a *forked tail* that can "spear" the flesh and the

¹⁷ For biblical references to the creation of Satan as good and *Fall of Satan* see Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Revelation 12:7-17. For the creation of Man as good and *Fall of Man* see Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7; 2:15-25 and 3:1-24.

¹⁸ Joseph F. Kelly, *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition: From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics*. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002), p.201.

¹⁹ William B. Drees, ed. *Is Nature Ever Evil?: Religion, Science and Value*, (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 9, 12.

soul of the human person = Satan, the *god of Evil*) is the chief acolyte and devotee of *Evil* (i.e. the IT) “*roams about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Peter 5:8); and even more significant for our technological society dominated by the Internet the Devil = Satan = Set is described in Ephesians 2:2 as the “*prince of the power of the air* (i.e. Prince of the Air-waves), *the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience* (i.e. τεκνονσκοτος the *teknonskotos* = those *Children of Darkness* who are *dependent upon, slaves of, enamored with* and *possessed by* the brilliance of modern *technology* as a source of power to spread their *lewdness* and *raunchy PC culture of disrespect and incivility* which is tearing at the very moral foundation of God’s *Good Creation*). The Egyptian scribes and doctors of religion would have described these modern *Children of Darkness* disciples and followers of the *tesheru* (𓂏𓂐𓂑𓂒) the “*red ones*” the wicked gods (i.e. dark principalities and powers, fallen angels = demons, etc.) that are associates of Set in advancing Evil in human society with the aim of overthrowing God’s *Good Creation*. The arrogance of this group that seek the *grand-domestication* of *all* material wealth and *all* knowledge through the power given to them by the *Prince of the Air(waves)* is evident in almost every aspect of society from the Whitehouse to the Vatican. If it were possible they would even challenge God on His throne. As the Scriptures describe these acolytes and devotees of Evil they seek power through deception by appealing to “*the Rule of Law*” in society and a “*Heart of Mercy*” and “*unconditional love*” within the Church with the primary aim of placing the *Word of Man* over the *Word of God*). God’s word states: “*Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. They say, “How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?”*” (Psalms 72:9-11, NIV). Elizabeth Clare Prophet (2000) in her book *Fallen Angels and the Origins of Evil* makes a fantastic claim that one aspect of the dark powers, that is, fallen angels has actually taken on human embodiment in order to advance *Evil* within human society and has been doing so for at least a *half a million years*. She tries to demonstrate through the use of various ancient documents (primarily the *Book of Enoch* that has been preserved by the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tawehedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church and includes it as part of its canon of 81 books) that men in the 4th Century were not just interested in the theological debates and arguments (first indulged in by St. Augustine) on the *nature of evil* but rather sought to unveil and warn mankind that *fallen angels = demons were and are living among us in order to advance Evil* against God’s *Good Creation*. Prophet (2000) states the following:

With the incredibly fast pace of modern life, most of us don’t take a lot of time to think about angels. But it was not always so. Back in the fourth century, for instance, when the warring Visigoths stormed the Roman Empire, . . . people were thinking about angels. And it was more than quaint musings about how many angels could fit on the head of a pin. No, they were asking questions that had serious and far-reaching ramifications. The hottest debate revolved around a single crucial issue: Were angels ever transformed into flesh-and-blood beings in order to perform earthly deeds? . . . If angels ever did become fleshly beings that looked like ordinary men, what would they be like? How would you pick one out from among your neighbors? Would he be extra good, a sweet cherub of a person? Or extra evil, one of those fiendish fallen angels? Regarding the latter, what began as a casual curiosity of the cloth has taken on the cloak of a Sherlock Holmes detective story, a probe into ancient cosmological history through fragmentary documents that piece together the missing links of much more than a mere theological dissertation on the nature and origin of evil. . . . Based on convincing evidence from a number of sources, our thesis confirms the Book of Enoch—that there are indeed fallen angels, that they have embodied on earth and corrupted the souls of her people,

and that they will be judged by the Elect One in the day of the coming of his elect servants. Our thesis must also by force of logic put forth the corollary that these fallen ones . . . have continued to embody on earth without interruption for at least half a million years. Therefore, I am prepared to prove and document that they are with us today in positions of power in church and state as prime movers in matters of war and finance, sitting in the banking houses and on policy-making councils that determine the actual fate of mankind by population control and genetic engineering, the control of energy and commodities, education and the media, and by ideological and psycho-political strategies of divide and conquer on all fronts. The untold story of men and angels is a crack in the door of the full and final expose of the Manipulators and the manipulated, the Oppressors and the oppressed.²⁰

Nevertheless, I caution myself in blaming the demise of moral society on the *Children of Darkness* alone, whether they are men or fallen angels = demons (invisible or embodied as human persons as Elizabeth Clare Prophet (2000) claims. The *Children of Light* (ΤΕΚΝΟΝ ΦΩΣ) are as much to blame and as guilty for allowing their own *self-interest* and *sentimentality* (for acolytes and devotees of Evil) keep them from aggressively defending justice and righteousness which after all are the moral foundation of any nation of people. To do so would make them (in their eyes) appear “unloving” and “unfair” because they dare to “judge” the actions of the *Children of Darkness* as *Evil* when it is plainly before their eyes and a present danger to everything a civilized society should hold dear. The Children of Darkness (*Setian* men, Fallen Angels = Demons, other dark principalities and powers, etc.) offer men in return for their obedience and worship demonic experiences as their temporary paycheck for helping them overturn the foundations of the moral order established and ordained within God’s *Good Creation*. Here among men *good vs. evil*, Christological experience vs. demonic experience is most evident. During the 4th Century (with the exception of St. Augustine) men were not thought to be the source for the origin of Evil but Fallen Angels were thought to be so. There was actually *two falls from God’s grace* (both because of disobedience to His Word). The first was the *Fall of Holy Angels* who were then instrumental in causing the *Fall of Man*. This discovery was not made known to modern men until the discovery of the ancient *Book of Enoch* preserved almost in its entirety by the EOTC [Ethiopian Orthodox *Tawehedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church] as noted above and confirmed by Elizabeth Clare Prophet (2000) who states:

And then there was the Book of Enoch. Once cherished by Jews and Christians alike, this book later fell into disfavor with powerful theologians—precisely because of its controversial statements on the nature and deeds of the fallen angels. Its theme so infuriated the later Church Fathers that one, Filastrius, actually condemned it as heresy. Nor did the rabbis deign to give credence to the book’s teaching about angels. Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai in the second century A.D. pronounced a curse upon those who believed it. So the book was denounced, banned, cursed, on doubt burned and shredded—and last but not least, lost (and conveniently forgotten) for a thousand years. But with an uncanny persistence, the Book of Enoch found its way back into circulation two centuries ago. In 1773, rumors of a surviving copy of the book drew Scottish explorer James Bruce to distant Ethiopia. True to hearsay, the Book of Enoch had been preserved by the Ethiopic church, which put it right alongside the other books of the Bible. Bruce secured not one, but three Ethiopic copies of the precious book and brought them back to Europe and Britain. When in 1821 Dr. Richard Laurence, a Hebrew

²⁰ Elizabeth Clare Prophet. *Fallen Angels and the Origins of Evil*. (Corwin Springs, Montana: Summit University Press, 2000), pp. 3-5.

professor at Oxford, produced the first English translation of the work, the modern world gained its first glimpse of the forbidden mysteries of Enoch.²¹

Not only did the modern world gain its first glimpse of the forbidden mysteries of Enoch but also the ancient view held in common that the so-called Fall of Man tied to the Augustinian concept of *original sin* had its origin not with man (whom God had declared as *very good*) but with fallen angels who lead men to sin = disobedience to God by offering them the temporary joys of *demonic experience*. And what likely bothered the ancient Church Fathers is that the Book of Enoch promises that *redemption* for humanity will come when the Fallen Angels = the Watchers = Demons = formerly the *Sons of Heaven* and their human acolytes and devotees led by their Chief Leader *Samyaza* are *arrested* and cast into eternal fire forever then mankind will return to his original state of righteousness and holiness. *No mention is made that redemption must come through the blood of Jesus Christ* and is very likely the reason this book was proclaimed heresy by a Church Father named Filastrius. The Book of Enoch of course would not mention Christ and redemption through Him because it was written well before the time of Jesus Christ but what would bother the Church Fathers is that the Book of Enoch offers *an alternative plan of salvation*. For the Church Fathers they would have to uphold the New Testament teaching that “salvation can come by no other name than that of Jesus Christ.” On the other hand Rabbi ben-Jochai likely called the work *cursed* because the old Jewish tradition that “the sons of God” identified as fallen angels who changed form to have sex with the “Daughters of Men” had become by then an embarrassing myth for Rabbinic Judaism, especially with Christians using the Hebrew Bible Genesis 6:1-4 as their proof text. *However*, the EOTC kept this tradition alive and saw in it no threat to its New Testament doctrine of redemption through Jesus Christ *alone*. This is the reason the Book of Enoch was preserved in this ancient African Christian nation and is even today part of its canon of *received* books. The Book of Enoch states clearly not only that the fallen angels did so but that God’s original plan of redemption for humanity and to restore it to holiness and righteousness was simply to *arrest the agents of Evil* (whether fallen angels or men enticed by demonic experience) and cast all of them into the eternal fires of Hell. This will support the theological notion in this work that Evil cannot be destroyed (even by God or God does for whatever reason chooses not too) but it can be *overcome* and *cast into outer darkness* by arresting all of its angelic and human agents. What this means is that Evil does not have its source in either angels or men but is some dark principality and/or power as yet unknown which we cannot yet describe or delineate with certainty in its spiritual nature, hence the question “What is Evil?” The Book of Enoch states:

[CHAPTER 7] It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamored of them, saying to each other, Come let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children. Then their leader Samyaza said to them; I fear that you may perhaps be indisposed to the performance of this enterprise; And that I alone shall suffer for so grievous a crime. But they answered him and said; We all swear; And bind ourselves by mutual execrations, that we will not change our intention, but execute our projected undertaking. Then they swore all together, and all bound themselves by mutual execrations. Their whole number was two hundred, who descended upon Ardis, which is the top of mount Armon . . . Then they took wives, each choosing for himself; whom they began

²¹ Prophet, pp. 8-9.

to approach, and with whom they cohabited; . . . And the women conceiving brought forth giants, Whose stature was each three hundred cubits. . . .These devoured all *which* the labour of men *produced*; until it became impossible to feed them; When they turned themselves against men, in order to devour them; . . . Then the earth reproved the unrighteous. . . .

[CHAPTER 8] Impiety increased; fornication multiplied; and they transgressed and corrupted all their ways . . . And men, being destroyed, cried out; their voice reached to heaven.

[CHAPTER 9] Then Michael and Gabriel, Raphael, Suryal, and Uriel, looked down from heaven, and saw the quantity of blood which was shed on earth, and all the iniquity which was done upon it, and said one to another, *It is* the voice of their cries; The earth deprived of *her children* has cried even to the gate of heaven. And now to you, O ye holy ones of heaven, the souls of men complain, saying, Obtain Justice for us with the Most High. . . .

[CHAPTER 10] Then the Most High, the Great and Holy One spoke, And sent Arsayalalyur to the son of Lamech [i.e. Noah] Saying, Say to him in my name, Conceal thyself. Then explain to him the consummation which is about to take place; for all the earth shall perish; the waters of a deluge shall come over the whole earth, and all things which are in it shall be destroyed. And now teach him how he may escape, and how his seed may remain in all the earth. Again the Lord said to Raphael, Bind Azazyel hand and foot; case him into darkness; and opening the desert which is in Dudael, cast him in there. Throw upon him hurled and pointed stones, covering him with darkness; There shall he remain forever; cover his face, that he may not see the light. And in the great day of judgment let him be cast into the fire. Restore the earth, which the angels have corrupted; and announce life to it, that I may revive it. All the sons of men shall not perish in consequence of every secret, by which the Watchers have destroyed, and *which* they have taught, their offspring. All the earth had been corrupted by the effects of the teaching of Azazyel. To him therefore ascribed the whole crime. To Gabriel also the Lord said, Go to the biters, to the reprobates, to the children of fornication; and destroy the children of fornication, the offspring of the Watchers, from among men; . . .

. To Michael likewise the Lord said, Go and announce *his crimes* to Samyaza, and to the others who are with him, who have been associated with women, that they might be polluted with all their impurity. . . . bind them for seventy generation underneath the earth, even to the day of judgment, and consummation, until the judgment, *the effect of* which will last forever, be completed. Then shall they be taken away into the lowest depths of the fire in torments; and in confinement shall they be shut up forever. Immediately after this shall be, together with them, burn and perish; they shall be bound until the consummation of many generations. Destroy all the souls addicted to dalliance [i.e. lust], and the offspring of the Watchers, for they have tyrannized over mankind. Let every oppressor perish from the face of the earth; Let every evil work be destroyed; The plan of righteousness and the rectitude appear, and its produce become a blessing. Righteousness and rectitude shall be forever planted with delight. And then shall all the saints give thanks, and live until they have begotten a thousand *children*, while the whole period of their youth, and their Sabbaths shall be completed in peace. In those days all the earth shall be cultivated in righteousness; . . . Purify the earth from all oppression, from all injustice, from all crime, from all impiety, and from all the pollution which is committed upon it. Exterminate them from the earth. Then all the children of men be righteous, and all nations shall pay me divine honours, and bless me; and all shall adore me. The earth shall be cleaned from all corruption, from every crime, from all punishment, and from all suffering; neither will I again send a deluge upon it from generation to generation forever. In those days I will open the treasures of blessing which are in heaven, that I may cause them to descend upon earth, and upon all the works and labour of man.

Peace and equity shall associate with the sons of men all the days of the world, in every generation of it.²²

This alternative vision of salvation and redemption presented in the *Book of Enoch* would be anathema to the Church Fathers along with the idea that man is not the source of Evil but fallen angels are the source of Evil that influenced men by their teaching to desire the pleasures of demonic experience. The Book of Enoch and this vision did not survive in any Christian church but the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tawehedo* Church [EOTC] who preserved both the text and the tradition within their biblical canon of eighty-one books, and therefore preserved the key to understanding how Evil entered onto the Superhighway of God. This Enochian vision undercuts the Augustinian doctrine of the *original sin* and the *Fall of Man*. Fallen angels are the source by which Evil entered onto the Superhighway of God. What is important beyond this is to know (according to the thesis of Elizabeth Clare Prophet) that this vision salvation and redemption has not fully come to pass as of yet. We, however, cannot fast forward to this new dispensation of bliss without understanding that *while God has condemned the Watchers* to eternal damnation and that He has bound them [put limits on their evil enterprise] that [in the meantime] they the *Fallen Angels* are *still among us* working havoc with human civil society and community with the same ancient aim of *Evil* to overthrow God's *Good Creation*. They are doing this by corrupting and enticing men to desire the temporary pleasures of *demonic experience* and thereby become *Children of Darkness*, advancing Evil's program through *self-interest, lust, and societal sentimentality* [primary characteristic of PC culture], which allows, permits, and even celebrates and promotes a society that has become *lewd, rude, and crude*, exponentially advancing teaching by high powers in entertainment, media, and government that open lewdness, incivility, open sexual immorality *sanctioned by law and sanctified by the church*. These behaviors of men stand over against all moral constraints and all that God in His Word has deemed holy and righteous behavior for men. Under this schema the *Fallen Angels among us* have succeeded in putting the *Word of Man* over the *Word of God* and we [in these days] are living in a society where "*every man does that which is right in their own eyes*" [Judges 17:6], since the *Fallen Angels* have succeeded (with the help of their *Setian* human acolytes and devotees) to *disestablish all religious, moral, societal, and political authority* designed and ordained by God to maintain and advance goodness, mercy, holiness, righteousness, and justice in His *Good Creation*, as affirmed in Romans, Chapter 13:

Let every human being be in subjection to the higher authorities because there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God. Therefore, whoever opposes the authority opposes the ordinance of God, and rebels will receive judgment upon themselves. Certainly, rulers are not a terror to good deeds, but to the evil [deeds]! Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will have praise [from the authority], because it is for you a minister of God for good. But if you do what is evil, then be afraid, because it does not bear the sword in vain; it is a servant of God for wrath, and avenger to anyone who does evil. Therefore, you need to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for the sake of conscience. [Romans 13:1-5, EOB]

This biblical doctrine or principle for societal governance has long ago been overturned by the *disestablishment of all authority* in this post-postmodern society and replaced by claims of *absolute freedom of men to question and even overthrow all authority that seeks to limit what they deem to*

²² Elizabeth Clare Prophet. *Fallen Angels and the Origins of Evil*, pp. 104-112.

be right in their own eyes. Elizabeth Clare Prophet believes that these things have occurred because *Fallen Angels* have embodied themselves within every sector of society and have promoted these sentimentalities that advance the *word of man* over the *Word of God*. The *Children of Darkness* plays on this *sentimentality* and self-interest (including a not so subtle appeal to the *Rule of Law* as long as the “Rule of Law” is in their favor and) to their advantage in their program to corrupt the body politic for their own self-centered ends. Today that blubbery sentimentality is evident in a culture dominated by a national *PC culture of sentimentality* (that allows every form of immorality to exist and even defends it judicially and in the media as right and good for a “Progressive” society. The business culture has bought into the same cultural matrix based on its bottom line “self-interest” to make sure it is on *the right-side of history* and all factions have colluded to break the jaw of anyone who disagrees from “shaming” to threatening costly civil action to even jail. Perhaps using a play on the words of Jesus that “*the children of this world are wiser than the children of light in [dealing with] their own kind*” (Luke 16:8, EOB), Reinhold Niebuhr warned democratic societies about this long ago. In his book *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944) Niebuhr states:

Our democratic civilization has been built, not by children of darkness but by foolish children of light. It has been under attack by the children of darkness, by the moral cynics, who declare that a strong nation need acknowledge no law beyond its strength. It has come close to complete disaster under this attack, not because it accepted the same creed as the cynics; but because it underestimated the power of self-interest, both individual and collective, in modern society. The children of light have not been as wise . . . as the children of darkness. The children of darkness are evil because they know no law beyond the self. They are wise, though evil, because they understand the power of self-interest. The children of light are virtuous because they have some conception of a higher law than their own will. They are usually foolish because they do not know the power of self-will. They underestimate the peril of anarchy in both the national and the international community. Modern democratic civilization is, in short, sentimental rather than cynical. It has an easy solution for the problem of anarchy and chaos on both the national and international level of community, because of its fatuous and superficial view of man, It does not know that the same man who is ostensibly devoted to the “common good” may have desires and ambitions, hopes and fears, which set him at variance with his neighbor. It must be understood that the children of light are foolish not merely because they underestimate the power of self-interest among the children of darkness. They underestimate this power among themselves. The democratic world came so close to disaster not merely because it never believed that Nazism possessed the demonic fury which it avowed. Civilization refused to recognize the power of class interest in its own communities. It also spoke glibly of an international conscience; but the children of darkness meanwhile skillfully set nation against nation. They were thereby enabled to despoil one nation after another, without every civilized nation coming to the defense of each. Moral cynicism has a provisional advantage over moral sentimentality. Its advantage lay not merely in its own lack of moral scruple but also in its shrewd assessment of the power of self-interest, individual and national, among the children of light, despite their moral protestations. While our modern children of light, the secularized idealists, were particularly foolish and blind, the more “Christian” children of light have been almost equally guilty of this error. Modern liberal Protestantism was probably even more sentimental in its appraisal of the moral realities in our political life than secular idealism, and Catholicism could see nothing but cynical rebellion

in the modern secular revolt against Catholic universalism and a Catholic “Christian” civilization.²³

The *Children of Light* whether secular or religious (Niebuhr might have added) not only have a fatuous and superficial view of the human person and human institutions (both built on their own *self-interest* and *sentimentality*) but also they have a *fatuous and superficial view of Evil* (grounded in their *fears* of *non-being* threatened by the Children of Darkness because of *public shaming* and *legal proscription* using the Internet for one and the courts for the other) that is leading them toward the destruction of the moral fabric of the society that gives material, civic, and even spiritual life to all of its citizens. What Niebuhr said above is being played out on both the national and international scene today where a relative small minority among the *Children of Darkness* advocating “Marriage Equality” are with shrewdness (and now with great arrogance of the winner gloating over the spoils) taking full advantage of the *self-interest* and *PC driven sentimentality* of the *Children of Light*. The totality of the dark principalities and powers, described in the New Testament can be aptly named the “IT” where the acronym “I.T.” stands for “**Intelligent Thing**.” However, in this work we propose that there is *one sinister overriding dark power* called the “IT” or “**Intelligent Thing**” that either controls and/or influences all other being willing to cooperate or be deceived into cooperating with the IT (whether they be visible or invisible beings) under “IT’s” diabolical and demonic control or influence. This “IT” has somehow entered God’s *good creation* and has begun to unravel the fabric of its moral, spiritual and material foundations, using the power of *demonic experiences* and “IT’s” control (being *Ruler of the Airwaves*) over a stream of anti-God, anti-Man notions (e.g. homosexuality, same sex marriage, gender reassignment, etc.) that offends God’s holiness and all that is and has been held holy and sacred. The ultimate goal is the total destruction of the *Christological image of God* in mankind within the cosmic universe, even if that means the total destruction of the material and spiritual base on which the “IT” itself must live and have its negative being.

The human person and all other being (visible and invisible) that fall under “IT’s” control are partly responsible for creating the “IT.” We give the “IT” personal and institutional form in our life by craving various forms of *demonic experiences*, including the desire for *MONEY*, *POWER*, and *SEX*. However, after we have done so, we find that what we have created is the “IT” of our **ALTER EGO** that is now in control and has taken possession of us, whether in the form of the human person, social, cultural, economic, political institutions, or even at the level of the nation. The “IT” in all of these cases takes on a life of “IT’s” own and thereafter seeks to control, humiliate, and finally destroy “IT’s” host. We often use the word IT in an impersonal fashion, with statements like “IT did that” or “I don’t know what happened to IT” or “I don’t know what I am going to do about IT” or “I don’t want IT to hurt me” or when our situations in life are out of control and we say “I can no longer handle IT.” We say these things without considering the possibility that we might be speaking about or even invoking “IT” into some reality of our lives or some aspect of IT’s being within our lives which then has overcome our being made in the image of God (through for example *alcoholism*, *sexual additions*, *drugs*, *lust for money* and/or *power*, etc.). The “IT” works its diabolical intrusion into the psychic universe of the human person by mimicking our individual and corporate personalities. The interfacing of IT’s *ontic being* with our individual and corporate personalities is what disarms the human person and institutions (a condition the New Testament describes as being possessed by

²³ Reinhold Niebuhr. *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1944), pp. 10-12.

demons) where the human person and institutions are no longer in control of who and what they are. By this dark *ontogenesis* (i.e. *demonic possession*) and the enticements and pleasures of *demonic experiences* as our temporary reward, the human person and institutions are carried away to commit all kinds of anti-God, and anti-Human evils. This mind-meld of our spiritual being is complete when we agree with “IT” to give up our own will (which should on the contrary crave *Christological experience*) *in exchange* for various *demonic experiences*. The “IT” knows that while *demonic experiences* are temporary rewards, our final reward for offending God’s holiness and helping to destroy the moral fabric of God’s good creation is to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire of Hell, which (despite the denials of devotees and acolytes of secularism) is not someday in a future judgment before the Great White Throne of God but is rather **immediate** (i.e. “after death, the judgement” Hebrews 9:27) so that when many of us close our eyes for the last time in this world and open them immediately in hell Jesus’ words will ring true and potent as ever within the context of this notion:

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul. If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels (**Mark 8:36-37, NIV**).

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched (**Mark 9:42-48, NIV**).

People, who are influenced (*with promises of never-ending demonic experiences*) by the IT *re-create* (give birth to) *Evil* within God’s *Good Creation* serve the “flesh” (i.e. flesh needs). The “flesh” is the dark *alter ego of the human person* made to be *very good* by God (once enticed by Evil promises of various demonic pleasures) are paid off *temporarily* with all kinds of demonic rewards, including fame and fortune. But the IT *extracts* a heavy and terrible price. When the human person or human institutions become **ONE** or **INTERFACED** with the IT this *dark spiritual entity* takes control of the individual and/or corporate personality and begins to eat away at the psychic-spiritual being and life of that human person or human institution on whatever level of existence it is found (e.g. from street gangster to President). The human person and/or human institutions then become the *devotee and acolyte* of the IT, even as Lucifer, the *Son of the Dawn* did before being cast out of heaven wreaking havoc on humanity with his demons in the service of the IT. Once this kind of demonic influence happens to the human person and/or human institutions, we begin to commit homicidal and destructive acts against humanity (homicide, fratricide, genocide, slavery, war, etc.), and against the material universe itself (ecological destruction motivated by greed), and even against oneself (physical and psychological suicide, mutilations of the body, *for example*, being moved to purposely blind oneself because such a person believes they should have been “born that way” (i.e. that God made a “mistake”) and are in fact happier being blind now that they are *part of a community* of the blind, etc.). The Egyptian theologians and doctors of religion described this notion of psychic-suicide with the

hieroglyphic , **meti**, literally, **a human person crushing their own head with an axe**, that is, an *irrational human person* that acts against their own interest and that of the society and so are set

apart in the service of *Evil*, even when they know it would likely lead to their own destruction, the destruction of love one's and other innocent people. The human person is now under the control of its own *alter ego* (i.e. the "flesh") in the service of the "IT". Despite what psychologists say and what we believe they are not crazy but possessed by an *irrational* dark power (*ironically*) with a *rational* aim the complete and utter destruction of God's Good Creation. *This dark power* (that we here call Evil or the IT) *is irrational because it being a negative power must in fact live on that which it seeks to destroy* (i.e. God's living *Good Creation*). Given that this presupposition is true the human person and/or the human institution (where the institution acquires both a *legal* and *social persona* or *personality* = a *corporate soul* that can defend and promote its *alter ego*) is now effectively *possessed* in the classic sense described in the New Testament; a condition that will eventually lead to its own destruction and likely others, who are in IT(s) *ontic pathway of self-destruction*. The "IT" acting through the *alter ego* of the human person and human institutions establishes itself as an extension of our individual and corporate persona or personality. Sometimes we permit this because we mistakenly think we can handle the "IT" (a grand mistake), and/or we are enticed and overwhelmed (until we are destroyed) by the ever increasing desire for the *demonic experiences* the IT offers in return for our cooperation advancing *Evil* within the human person, institutions, society, and whole body politic (i.e. all elements of God's *Good Creation*). We propose that this is what is behind such irrational and homicidal actions human persons and human institutions (whether private or public) take when it is clearly not in their long-term interests to do so, e.g. drugs, robbery, murder, rape, making civil laws that uphold immoral behavior against God's holiness and human image designed for all of mankind (i.e. so-called "Marriage Equality", government promoted distribution of marijuana, etc.), *justifying* and even *glorifying* (rather than *vilifying*) the irrational actions of high public figures who suddenly do something stupid resulting in loss careers (which they have long worked for) in exchange for the short-term pleasures (demonic experiences) of *more and more MONEY, POWER, and SEX*.

CHAPTER TWO

THE WORLD-WIDE WEB OF EVIL

We propose that the **IT** has created and is creating a **World-wide Web of Evil** that veils the truth about **IT's** demonic aim to enlist humanity into making a joke out of God's *good creation* and moral order, turning God's world into a **circus, carnival** and **playground** for which humanity are already and will in the future pay a terrible price as IT challenges God's law in the universe designed to reward righteousness and punish *Evil*. For this purpose, Satan, the chief acolyte and devotee of the **IT** acts as the **Ruler of the Kingdom of the Air(waves)** to promote **the doctrines of demons** and all kinds of immorality that offends the holiness of God. The New Testament sacred scriptures points out in Paul's *Letter to the Ephesians* how, during his time, people were under the control of the Satan, the Chief acolyte and devotee of the **IT**. Paul states:

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and the **ruler of the kingdom of the air**, the *spirit* who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following [IT(s)] desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath (**Ephesians 2:1-3, NIV**).

The notion of Satan as the **Ruler [archon] of the Air [waves]** suggests that the human person breathes in unconsciously the polluted air of society, that is, breathing in naturally and unconsciously the secular ideas and anti-God/anti-Man notions, and immoral ideas leading to death of the one, who unconsciously breathes in its poison. These would be the immoral doctrines of demons taught over the air waves (various media outlets of evil thoughts/deeds/suggestions), which are designed to make what is dark appear light, and/or acceptable, and at the least harmless and non-threatening, the so-called *New Normal* for behavior once thought sinful but now celebrated for its "in your face" boldness.

For example, something like the movement to make the idea of *fornication, adultery, homosexuality, Gay marriage* (with children), *transgender, bi-sexuality, pan-sexuality* acceptable via TV sitcoms, etc., supported by a "politically correct" [PC] culture that dares anyone to speak against any of these acts that violate God's holiness and natural order for human behavior. *PC* acts as a "*Gag Order from Hell*" that (in its propaganda and cultural war on Christianity) will dub anyone a "hypocrite, *bigot*," or "*homophobic*" (i.e. so-called "fear of homosexuality" or "fear of homosexuals") if one speaks out against acolytes and devotees of the **IT** that advances these kinds of *demonic experiences* in society as right and good and at the least "*none of your business*" as long as it does not violate the law. Some of these behaviors have enlisted pseudo-genetic science that (for example) proposes that homosexuals "*are born that way*", and so if God made them that way why should they be condemned as lost and going to Hell. These human behaviors (by a very vocal minority of devotees and acolytes of the **IT**) seek and have won for the most part civil sanction by the state (*as a civil right*), and despite their oft claim of "Separation of Church and State" happily seek to have their unholy behavior sanctified by the church if possible (as an acceptable moral choice, where the church, if not God, is at least silent on the matter (succumbing to the "*Gag Order of Satan*") in order to appear "accepting" and "loving" but more likely recognizing the *Damocles Sword* hanging over its head of losing its statutory claim as non-profit charitable institutions). If the churches had to pay taxes on its property many of them (already financially strapped) would have to close their doors. The acolytes and devotees of Evil knows this very well and does not hesitate in reminding the church not only of

its claims “to love” but more pointedly of its tenuous claims to tax exemption should it lose its mind and begin vocally to defend God’s holiness against biblically unholy human behavior. Those churches who are silent have already *received the Mark of the Beast in their hand* (seeking to be practical and politically correct) but some churches and its clergy have even become acolytes and devotees (public advocates) of biblically unholy human behaviors and so have *received the Mark of the Beast on their forehead* (i.e. they actually believe they are right despite the biblical evidence which they *pervert into support of perversion*, calling light darkness, and darkness light). The clergy (and the high public officials whom they advise in founding a new Civil Religion against the truth of God’s Word) who support these unholy human behaviors will have to stand before God’s throne in judgment because they know or should know the truth of God’s holiness and God’s demand for human holiness from wrong, lewd and immoral behavior from the very created natural order itself even if one never ever has read or heard the Gospel (i.e. God special revelation to human persons). Paul states:

For in the Gospel God’s righteousness is revealed from faith to faith. As it is written, “the righteous shall live by faith.” However, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness, and unrighteousness of those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what is known of God is revealed in them, for God revealed it to them. Indeed, since the creation of the world, his invisible things are clearly seen. They are perceived through created things, even his everlasting power and divinity. This is so that they may be without excuse, because knowing God, they do not glorify him as God or give [him] thanks. Instead they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless heart was darkened. Thinking themselves to be wise, they became fools! They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, of birds, of four-footed animals, and creeping things. Therefore, God also gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves. Having exchanged the truth of God for a lie, they exalted and offered divine service to the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, God gave them up to vile passions: their women changed the natural function into what is against nature, and the men did likewise. They abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their lust toward one another, men doing what is inappropriate with men, and receiving in themselves the due penalty of their error. Even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a worthless mind, to do those things which are not fitting. They have become filled with all [kinds of] unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, and malice. . . . Knowing the ordinance of God (that those who practice such things are worthy of death), *they not only do these [very] things but also approve of those who practice them.* (Romans 1:17-31, EOB).²⁴

Nevertheless these biblical admonishments many clergy (who should know better) *are approving of these unholy human* practices and giving moral support to high Judicial, Congressional and Executive government officials to enact laws to sanction these immoral human behaviors and at the same time condemn those who object or stand for religious freedom of conscious by means of legal sanction and public shaming in the media. Thus high officials of both *Church and State* have allowed their Christian and moral consciences to be darkened by elevating the *word of Man* over the *Word of God*. These clergy and high public officials have become friends of this world (some) who know the Word of God states: “*Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility with*

²⁴ *The Eastern /Greek Orthodox Bible (EOB) : New Testament* (Based on the Septuagint and the Patriarchal Text). Ed. By Laurent Cleenewerck, Revised Edition 2013.

God? Whoever wants to be friend of the world becomes an enemy of God! “(James 4:4, EOB). All of these have already come to pass (fully) since the Supreme Court made “Marriage Equality” a “civil right” under the 14th Amendment in 2014-15 here in the United States. Much of Western Europe has gone the same route. The devotees and acolytes of *Evil* are now seeking to spread this immoral infection to the African Continent and Asian nations either by so-called moral suasion or economic threat: Yet one more reason to deny these developing countries financial aid vital to their emerging economies if they do not incorporate policies favorable to the LGBT communities within their constitutions and civil codes under the rubric of “human rights.” Developing countries who refuse will find that they “cannot buy nor sell” unless they receive (and *gladly*) the *Mark of the Beast*. Those human person within each country so infected who dare to speak out against the *Gag Order from Hell* advanced by the IT or speak out against the behavior of the devotees and acolytes of the IT will find themselves both verbally “shamed” by traditional media outlets (which have become more than news outlets but actual *advocates for* positions and behaviors that violate God’s holiness) and by social media (once called “public opinion”) and more than that will enlist the civil and criminal law to either financially punish you or even throw you in jail. The prophetic message in Revelation is fast coming to past (especially in the United States):

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth He deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs he was granted to perform in front of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast. . . . It was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast so that it should speak and cause as many as would not *express adoration* to the image of the beast to be killed. *He causes all people, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to be given marks on their right hands or on their foreheads. Hence no one would be able to buy or sell, unless he had that mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.* (Revelation 13:11-17, EOB)

This passage of Revelation signifies that those who *receive the mark of the beast on their right hands* do not necessarily believe the message of the beast but the real threat posed is a matter of practicality in survival or acquiescence is “good for business” as opposed to those who *receive the mark of the beast on their forehead* that are devotees and acolytes and *truly believe* in the message of deceit. Something like this is playing out in the American business community who want to avoid the stigma of being dubbed “homophobic” and take a practical approach to dealing with the current cultural wars. Some *have received the mark of the beast in their heads* and are publicly advocating and seeking to financially punish persons and public officials that don’t comply with the demands of the IT and violate the *Gag Order from Hell*. Satan’s *Gag Order from Hell* has advanced successfully to the highest levels of the American judicial system. The United States Constitution has *subordinated* what were once *inalienable* First Amendment rights (i.e. *freedom of religion* and *freedom of speech*) supposedly those rights (freedoms) that the government *cannot take away* from American citizens because they are God-given human rights that the government did not give but yet has the constitutional duty to incorporate and protect in favor of so-called civil rights judicially *contrived* under the *Fourteenth Amendment*. Using this *catch-all amendment* “Marriage Equality” has been so “legally” contrived and elevated to a civil right. Under this same kind of legal contrivance and judicial convention abortion has become a mere matter of *personal choice*. In respect to both of these contrivances using the 14th Amendment the Supreme Court had empowered itself above state electorates that made it clear that they believed that marriage is between a man and a woman. The Supreme Court nevertheless

the will of the people within these states has run roughshod over the democratic will of the people and without any caution as to unintended future consequences gave little to no regard whatever to balancing these so-called “new civil rights” against the *primary freedoms* that the U. S. Constitution guarantees to *safeguard*. The *Gag Order from Hell* and *three minute rule* of immediate doom and destruction (i.e. comply or be shamed, sued, jailed, or even shot down in cold blood by officials of the *JUST-US* system, etc.) has gone out throughout the world by the *Ruler of the Air(waves)* proclaiming loudly from the Whitehouse to the Vatican: “*Do not speak out against my children of darkness, or else*” and with that threat proclaiming proudly “Love Wins!” and “We have won!” With these threats looming over the heads of all “*homophobes*” (those supposedly who “fear” Gays) the *iron fist in the velvet glove* (of Church and State) appeals to the general public conscience about the need for *love, empathy, mercy, social equality* and if not those the necessity for *fairness* and recognizing the Constitutional and “civil rights” of homosexual (gay/lesbian), pan-sexual, transsexual persons, etc. Leading the charge for those claiming on behalf of their “Father the Devil” that “Love Wins!” and “We have won!” are the *BLOGGERS* (the *new priests of PC culture, Internet media know-it-all’s, self-proclaimed “experts” in every field of endeavor and legends in their own mind*). These Internet priests of the *New Secularism* and *Civil Religion* worship MONEY, POWER & SEX. Using *hyperbolic media spins* (on *what really happened*, and *what was really said*), *ridicule* and *sarcasm* they decry the claims of “foul” (or “foul claims” as they would spin it) by those who seek to uphold the traditional moral foundations of society. These Internet “spin doctors” describe such complaints as “ranting” and implore these “sore losers” to quit “whining and complaining.” Of course they themselves are “rational,” “logical,” and “calm” in making their own claims and ideas that have “totally” and *ad nauseam* “gone viral!”

Satan is a good lawyer who uses law well, litigating on behalf of his children of darkness, he appeals to the *Rule of Law* after he and his acolytes and devotees have *overturned all of the laws of the land they don’t like and put in place those laws they do like*. Satan and his acolytes and devotees always come as an angel of light and not as a demon (or demons) in order to deceive both the human person and human institutions, who are trapped by their own notions of ideals of fairness, love, and of social equality. These demonic societal and legal movements are designed to create a *Civil Religion* within the American body politic lead by the *new priests of political correctness* (PC) and Progressive *grand-domestication* (by “moral” suasion or legal threat) of any human person (American citizen) that dare leave the protection of the sanctuary of God to defend *Freedom of Religion* within the *public square*. From this horizon of thought the United States may fairly be compared to Babylon in Revelation:

After these things, I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. He cried with a powerful voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons, haunt for every unclean spirit, and a shelter for ever unclean and detestable bird! Truly, all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality; the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich from the abundance of her luxury.” Revelation 18: 1-3, EOB).

Nothing even as benign as children’s programming is safe from sexual innuendo and/or lewd representations that have become a part of this *Babylonian lewd and raunchy culture of disrespect* and *incivility*. Examples are not limited to adult shows but now “children’s” shows (because of their

appeal to adults having adult content i.e. cartooned lewd “jokes”) are being rapidly *retrofitted* for adult audiences on prime time TV or for use in commercials like *square butt* “Sponge Bob” produced to sell hamburger products by means of the lewd and raunchy images of dancing “square butt” girls, which “butts” are then measured by the “Burger King” to emphasis the size of the burgers (all in the name of making a fast food buck), These kinds of shows and commercials appeal to the adult mind (who can mentally and emotionally defend themselves against the “image” reality as image messages) but the innocent nature and mind of children (lacking adult maturity and exposure) are highly vulnerable emotionally and are likely to come away from such programming damaged and damaging other students in schools and other places as they sing commercial inspired ditty’s like “*a butt is a just butt.*” Yet, hardly anyone thinks anything of this (and if they do) they do nothing. There is very little outrage for this kind of psychological lewd and raunchy (demonic) assault on the minds and spirits of our children by those in service of the IT (i.e. the producers, writers, and actors, who create this irresponsible trash all in the name of Civil Religious Trinity of *Money, Power & Sex*). We let these *surrogates for the image of the beast* fill our children’s heads with lewd garbage and then are surprised when they act out in destructive patterns of behavior. Tragically and ironically, after we allow these things to filter through to our children’s mind, we somehow expect them to be good citizens, and well-rounded persons. And if we are Christians, we somehow think that they will be saved from hell *anyway*. However, that is not the presumption behind Jesus’ statement and a clear warning to the producers of lewd and filthy imagery that confuse and corrupt young minds:

But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large **millstone** hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! (**Matthew 18:6-7, NIV**).

The *World-Wide Web of Evil*, created by the devotees and acolytes of the IT keeps the truth from the human person as to each person’s duty owed to a holy God to foster and maintain inviolate the moral fabric of God’s *Good Creation* and how the moral foundations are so necessary for the good order of society and God’s *Good Creation*. God nevertheless will one day lift this veil of deceit promoted by the purveyors of trash and filth on the web that hangs as a shroud over the minds of the human person and the whole of God’s ordered universe. This is promised both in the Old Testament and the New Testament:

And he will destroy on this mountain *the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations*; He will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken (**Isaiah 25:7-8, NRSV**).

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, *to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended*. After that, he must be set free for a short time (**Revelation 20:1-3, NIV**).

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will

wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away" (**Revelation 21:3-4, NRSV**).

In this book we seek to answer one primary question: *What is the nature and purpose of evil in relationship to the doctrine of God and the human person in the context of God's good creation?* Evil is merely *one triune aspect* of **Nothingness** (Barth). In this book I refer to this negative entity as the **IT**. The **IT** opposes the very being of God, God's *Good Creation* and the very moral foundations of God's created material and moral order, spewing out *death, sin, and evil* (the *triune* aspects of the **IT**) by advancing *demonic experience* along the *Super-highway* of God's created order. This book is not about the problem of evil, *per se* because the problem of evil is a philosophical argument against the existence of God and this book is about describing the nature of Evil. However, you cannot discuss *the triune nature of evil* without understanding the *classical problem of evil*. We will examine the classical problem of evil in order to show how my propositions and proposals about the **IT** in its triune aspect of *Evil* are distinguished from the classical problem of evil *in and of itself*. The *problem of evil* has been defined in various ways by scholars in the fields of theology and philosophy of religion. Ironically one of the better summaries of the problem of evil comes from the pen of Julian Baggini, an Atheist apologist. Baggini (2003) writing about the arguments militant atheists and believers in the existence of God (i.e. religious believers and apologists) advance against one the other states that:

A good example of the clash of these two opposing viewpoints can be seen in one of the better arguments in the philosophy of religion, the so-called problem of evil. This is an argument against the existence of God as usually understood. The idea is simple. God is supposed to be all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving. Yet there is avoidable suffering in the world. When we say avoidable we do not just mean that it could be avoided if people acted differently. We also mean avoidable in the sense that a creator of the universe could have such suffering ever coming to be. For example, there seems to be no reason why God could not have created a universe where extreme pain and particularly nasty diseases were not possible. He could also have made human minds more robust so that the lack of empathy required to torture other people was not possible. The existence of avoidable suffering in the world seems to be an undeniable fact. This must mean one of the three things: God can't stop it, which means he is not all-powerful; he doesn't want to stop it, so he isn't all-loving; or he doesn't know about it, which means he isn't all-knowing. This is the so-called problem of evil, and it seems to present a strong case for saying that the traditional Judeo-Christian God can't exist.²⁵

I could reply directly to protagonist for problem of evil as summarized by Julian Baggini by advancing the *phenomenological argument for the existence of God* (i.e. *certainty of the existence of God* grounded in the *indirect apprehension of God* through the *life-world* and *lived-experience* of the human person, that is, *the Divine Presence of God* *prehended* via *spiritual and cosmological phenomenon* by the human person) not on the basis of *faith seeking understanding* but *feeling seeking meaning* in faith. This would be both a fruitful and exhausting advance against the usual arguments presented by the *problem of evil* but would only result in a *phenomenology of faith* (i.e. *the validity*

²⁵ Julian Baggini. *Atheism: A Very Short Introduction*. (London: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 102.

of faith in God by means of human lived-experience of the Divine Presence) rather than an ontology of evil (i.e. an examination of the triune nature of Evil).

The distinguishing marks that make my suppositions different from studies done on the problem of evil are the questions I am asking. They are contra-distinct from those questions that are generally asked by scholars working in those two fields of investigation. For example, one major presupposition that I hold is that *Evil* is not a part of God's good creation, *because it was not created by God. Evil* merely *showed-up* as a *by-product* of the creative process (i.e. something unwanted and unintended). Theology and the philosophy of evil wrestling with dualism believes that *Evil* is *necessarily* part of God's creation signifying that God's *Good Creation* is not good or *very good* as God proclaimed in Genesis 1:31. The Egyptian sacred scribes and doctors of theology struggled with dualism as well and came up with the idea of a *Trinitarian being* where Osiris-Ra is the *One and the Many* that includes the twingods Horus-Set; where *Set* is the *god of Evil* over against the *Horus-Christ*, the *Redeemer* that vanquishes the *evil god Set*. The problem is that the gods' *Horus-Set* share *one body* and are *inseparable*, i.e. suggesting that *dualism* and the *problem of evil* cannot be theologically resolved, until (as we will explain near the end of this work) by the **Cosmic-Christ**, who as the *Omega Point* will reconcile *all* Good and *all* Evil *within* Himself. How the Cosmic-Christ accomplishes this will forever remain an eternal mystery, where only God, the Father knows.



TWIN GOD'S OF GOOD AND EVIL (HORUS-SET)

IRRECONCILABLE CONTRADICTION OF BEING WITH TWO HEADS ON ONE BODY
REPRESENTING THE *PROBLEM OF EVIL* WITHIN THE *EARTH OF TIME*

The *problem of Evil* then is today right where the Egyptian scribes and doctors of religion left it long ago. My claim is that *Evil* is *out there* or *beyond here* (i.e. beyond the frontiers of Creation) but finds a way to *enter* into God's *Good Creation* through the agency of the human person, human institutions, and through nature. The primary pathway for *Evil* is the human person and human institutions. The human person (*in and through* various human institutions and communities) participates in the power of *Evil* at the frontiers of human experience where demonic experience overwhelms the human persons, communities, and human "living" institutions, and Evil becomes tradition and institutionalize (often spoken of as the so-called "new normal"). The human person (within their communities) and human institutions then allows their experience of *Evil* to become demonic (e.g. where patterns of unrighteous and immoral human behavior and institutional behavior become acceptable, normative and where human persons and living human institutions become advocates [devotees/acolytes] for unholy anti-God/anti-Man ideals, ideas, and demonic patterns of thought). Thereafter, the human person, their communities, and their societal institutions become infected, and so with judicial, political, economic, financial, and social power behind them they (guided by a philosophy of *will to power*) endeavor to spread their *demonic experiences* in the world over against every form of opposition (human or divine). This bid for empowerment of *Evil* within the

human person, human communities, and human institutions has an *exponential negative effect* on God's *Good Creation*. I believe this view of how *Evil* operates in the cosmic order is the best horizon of thought from which to defend God's righteousness (i.e. defending God from human accusations of being responsible for *Evil* in the created order). John states: "*God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all*" (1 John 1:5, NIV). God cannot be held responsible for *Evil* in the world because God did not make *Evil* originally part of God's *Good Creation* as witnessed in the Genesis creation story. Somehow *Evil* was just *out there* or *beyond here*. For some this will be an unsatisfactory explanation. But for now this presupposition and argument makes sense to me and serves as a basis for further analysis from this conceptual point of view. I think my accumulative arguments (as we go along) will make a better case for these presuppositions and suppositions. Various theodicies' (i.e. theological and philosophical proposals defending God's righteousness) generally do not approach *Evil* or the *problem of evil* from this perspective. It is assumed *Evil* is somehow *already* and *necessarily* apart of God's *Good Creation* from *the beginning*. Since God *created everything* and said that it was *very good* this could not have included *Evil*. It is nonsensical to believe that God would call *Evil* *very good* therefore *Evil* could not have been part of God's *Good Creation* from *the beginning*. Yet *Evil* somehow had to be *out there* or *beyond here* (from *the beginning*) perhaps originating in *outer darkness* beyond the dimensional frontiers of God's *Good Creation*.

It was the Swiss theologian, Karl Barth (1886-1968) who originated and began the development of this important theological and ontological perspective of *Evil*. Karl Barth wanted to defend the righteousness of God with the argument that *Evil* is not a part of God's *Good Creation*. God is, therefore, not responsible for what *Evil* does at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*. Barth nevertheless has a problem and he knows it. Barth's notion that God has consigned *Evil* to the dark frontiers of God's *Good Creation* while defending God's righteousness does not explain where *Evil* came from. This leaves God's sovereignty over the whole of the created order in question unless *Evil* is not and has never been a part of the created order of things. Even if it is claimed that *Evil* is somehow *co-eternal* though not *co-equal* with God the supposition still frames the question in terms of dualism (i.e. Two Gods instead of One God; One Good God, and One Evil God). The problem is deeper if one considers *Evil* an "Entity" in which case *Evil* would be some kind of "thing" leaving God who created *all* "things" open to charges of creating *Evil within the human created order*. St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1273) dealt with this issue long before Barth in his "privation" theory of the origins of *Evil* in his book *On Evil*. However, Aquinas failed to completely absolve God of responsibility for within God's *Good Creation* by penning it on the human person (whom God created "*very good*"). Aquinas implies that *Evil* is not an *Entity* but it is a *conceptual being* or *conceptual thing* originating *in and through* human intellectual agency. St. Aquinas states:

"Does evil exist?" and then evil, just like blindness, exists. Nonetheless, evil is not an entity, since being an entity signifies both the response to the question "Does it exist?" and the response to the question "What is it?" . . . Evil is indeed in things, although as a privation and not as an entity, and in concept as something understood, and so we can say that evil is a conceptual being and not a real being, since evil is something in the intellect and not an entity. And insofar as we call some things conceptual beings, the very beings that the intellect understands are good, since it is good to understand things.²⁶

²⁶ Thomas Aquinas. *On Evil*. Translation by Richard Regan. (Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 62.

St. Aquinas' privation theory of Evil was unsatisfactory for Barth because it leaves open the question of how a Sovereign *All-Knowing, All-Powerful, All-Good God* can call the human created order "*very good*" in whose mind *Evil* lies dormant or a potentiality from *the beginning*. As the writer of Ecclesiastes states: "*God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes*" (Ecclesiastes 8:29, NIV). To St. Aquinas *Evil* becomes an *ontological reality and acquires conceptual being* within the intellect of the human person that God originally created "*very good*" and "*upright*". He reasons that God did not make the human person immediately "*perfect*" and so the human person had choice and freewill to do *good and evil* from the very beginning of the creation. *Evil* therefore is not real (a material or spiritual *Entity*) because it originates within the human person. *Evil* (like blindness) is a condition of the human person. This human condition is regrettably an imperfection in God's *Good Creation*. Yet this begs the question of how "*Evil*" arises as a *conceptual being* or *conceptual thing*" within such a human person upsetting the purpose and aim of God's *Good Creation* before it hardly gets underway. This whole question becomes a very important concern of Barth's overall theology of the human person and his Christology where he seeks to explain *Evil* as the impetus for the purpose, aim and need for the Christ-event. Even though *Evil* is consigned to the frontiers of God's good creation and it is the human person that allows it to enter into it by sharing in the power of evil through demonic experience; yet this still begs the question as to what or who created *Evil*? It also does not answer the question why God (who is all-powerful and a completely loving God) permits *Evil* to exist even at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*. We will study Barth's theology as deeply as possible in this work to get a better grasp of his Christology grounded in the Sovereignty of God.

Barth's theology on evil brings up a host of other important questions about the nature of evil in relationship to the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the human person. What are some of these questions? The primary question here is "*what is evil?*" (i.e., *what is the nature of evil?*) This focus of my concern is the reason why this book is called *Ontology of Evil*. Other questions for my book follow this one: (1) *Is evil an entity that has autonomous being?* (2) *Is evil a created being?* (3) *Is evil a being that is co-eternal with God?* (4) *If evil is a created being who or what created evil?* (5) *Is God responsible for the existence of evil even if its existence is located outside God's Good Creation?* (6) *If evil has autonomous being (whether material or spiritual in nature) then it has mind, purpose and design.* (7) *What is the purpose and aim of evil?* (8) *If evil is not a part of God's good creation then how does evil enter into the created order of things to either control or negatively influence the human person, or human institutions, whose actions often lead to human suffering?* Other questions are equally as important: (1) *Can evil be overcome or defeated in the human person, their communities, and human institutions?* (2) *Is evil real or genuine?* (3) *Does evil innately reside in the heart of the human person, or is evil a super-natural being that exists outside the human person, in or outside God's Good Creation, that is, is Evil "out there" or "beyond here"?* (4) *Can the human person alone resist evil?* (5) *Can evil be overcome in the temporal order by doing good, as suggested in Romans 12:21?* (6) *If evil cannot be totally defeated within the temporal order is there a cosmic or divine initiated final solution to the problem of evil, if Evil is in fact a true ontological reality and not merely a conceptual "thing" created in the minds of the human person as St. Thomas Aquinas surmises?* A good many of these questions cannot be answered definitively to everyone's satisfaction and that is not the purpose of this book. However, some substantive answers and perhaps solutions to these questions will be suggested in this work. I want to give enough support for my suppositions so they can be fairly judged *true, valid, plausible* or *implausible*. Once the nature and purpose of *Evil* are understood then questions like the ones above can be partially or definitively answered. We can also

have a better understanding how *Evil* effects God's *Good Creation* which includes the human person within community and human persons within institutions. I have asserted that God's creation is good. This is principally a monotheistic notion of Western Christianity. It is opposed to the dualistic view that spirit is good and matter is evil. Rather *Evil* negatively influences all created being whether they be Angels, Spiritual Powers, or Men. God's *Good Creation* has somehow *become* flawed because of the presence of *Evil* in the world and within the material and spiritual cosmic order. The presence of *Evil* in the world is a peculiar problem for Western monotheism because it maintains there is but one God, who is not responsible for the evil in the world, or for the flaws that are quite obvious, especially in respect to undeserved human suffering. Nevertheless, the adherents of Western monotheism want to avoid dualism, which has deeper problems that challenge the views held about the absolute sovereignty of God. Defending God's absolute sovereignty is what (in great part) motivated Karl Barth to explore the *problem of Evil* and the inherent question of dualism that it poses. Dualism suggests that another being has equal power to God. Barth would certainly deny that but that denial (he understood) would not make the question go away. How *Evil* could be a reality in the universe created by an *ALL-GOOD, ALL-KNOWING* and *ALL-POWERFUL SOVEREIGN GOD* has to be addressed. Barth understood you not only needed to know the nature of Evil and how it operates in God's *Good Creation* one must also know where it originated from if God (who is sovereign and the *One and Only* true God) is to be absolved from "creating" Evil within a created order declared by God to be "*very good*."

In Western monotheism, God is good, so that everything God made is good. Adherents of this perspective back it up using the biblical text of Genesis. However, the writer of Genesis never infers that the created order was perfected, in the sense of it being complete. Neither does it infer that the creation was made absolutely perfect, that is, made without flaws. Nothing written in Genesis, chapter two, infers that creation itself was complete or finished. Rather, the work God had been doing was *finished*. "*By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work*" (Genesis 2:2, NIV). Yet Jesus clearly states: "*My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working*." (John 5:17, NIV). This statement signifies that God's *Good Creation* is still a work in progress and *is being transformed* into the *Christological image* of God and His Son. Paul makes the claim that the entire cosmic order *is being transformed* into a higher order of existence and the tribulation (i.e. trouble) in the world we see are merely its birth pains related to the *deification of the human person into the Christological image of God and His Son*. Paul states:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:18-23, NIV).

Who is doing this continued transformative work in creation and in mankind? Ultimately it is the Father God working through His Son, Jesus Christ. This Christological project involves the human person as God's *co-creator(s)* of a *New Heaven* and a *New Earth*. *Process Theology* gives us a sense of this vision of a Christological future grounded in the *co-creative* work of God, His Son, and the

Human Person. Father Joseph A. Bracken, S.J., recognized as one of the foremost process theologians of our time and my thesis advisor at Xavier University (Cincinnati, Ohio) states:

Because it is so hard . . . to adhere to a policy of nonviolence in dealing with others, it seems reasonable to suppose that the deeper reason for the Incarnation, the appearance in human history of the Divine Word as redeemer of the human race, was (and still is) to give a new focus and added strength to the collective power of good in the world At a critical juncture in the history of the human race, the, the Divine Word has to become incarnate so as to resist in his own person and through the power of his preaching and example the collective power of evil in human minds and hearts, which slowly but surely was undermining their natural desire for life in community with one another. . . . Given the increased possibilities for both good and evil which were thus made available to human beings, it seems logical to conclude that the Divine Word chose to become incarnate at a critical point in this same historical process. If the ideal of a unified human race, people living in peace and harmony with one another, was ever to be a reality, then at some point in human history a conscious focus in that direction had to be established. A way had to be found to mobilize the forces for good in this world, which were slowly giving way to the collective power of evil as manifest in various distorted forms of human community existent in the world at the time of Jesus. Even if what we say is true, this task was one that Jesus clearly could not have accomplished by himself. He had to enlist the aid of other people to preach the good news of salvation, that is, that God is a loving Father and that one can, accordingly, turn over the direction of one's life to such a Father in the confident expectation that others will do the same and that thereby the kingdom of God on earth will truly be established.²⁷

This *Christological Project* that Father Bracken envisions is predicated on the notion that the work God began in Genesis was *only the beginning* and not a *finished* work of perfection. This project to overcome *Evil* in the creation and in the human person required Divine intervention and a human response of obedience to work with God as *human co-creators* in finishing God's Good Creation. Process theology holds the human person fully responsible for the outcomes of good and evil (which are both *necessary possibilities* in God's *Good Creation* whether the human person likes it or not) and tends to absolve God of ultimate responsibility by putting forth the idea that God "*lures*" humans toward the good (which leads to life) and away from evil (which leads to death). God therefore presents the human person choices as creatures with free will as Moses once did for the Hebrews: "*This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live*" (Deuteronomy 30:19, NIV). However, process theology is not a biblical theology *per se* because it was born out of the philosophy of Whitehead and therefore formulates a theodicy to the problem of evil using philosophical categories of thought. Nevertheless Whitehead sees human persons being given the choice by God to actuate good and/or evil within a whole range of possible allurements and occasions where "All creatures are engaged in a "creative advance" toward novelty – a perpetual, incessant quest for intensity of experience and for aesthetic harmony and value."²⁸ Whitney, in his *Evil and the Process God* defends God from being the creator of *Evil* and puts it squarely within human occasions for choice with the lure of God directing humans toward personal and societal good (i.e. the best that is

²⁷ Joseph A. Bracken, S.J. *Christianity and Process Thought: Spirituality for a Changing World*. (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2006), pp. 46-48.

²⁸ Barry L. Whitney. *Evil and the Process God*. (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1985), p. 70.

in us). Process theology carries the idea that what we have in this moment of creation is the “best of all possible worlds” but the Good Creation of God uses these moments as occasions for advances toward a good and more order universe. God is actively using these moments and occasions to lure the human person, communities and human institutions in this positive direction. In this sense every occasion (*whether considered good or evil*) works for the overall advance of God’s *Good Creation*. *This is how God works and is still working within the created order* that is essentially good but has been affected by the presence of *Evil*. Whitney presents Hartshorne’s process theological argument (which he does not completely agree with) as holding that God only acts persuasively and so does not (by means of the imposition of natural laws that limit human absolute freedom of will) act coercively:

What process thinkers contribute to the theodicy question is an understanding of God which holds that he is *not* responsible for specific goods and evils, but only for there being real possibilities for goods and thus, unavoidable, for evils. All creatures have some degree of genuine autonomy (freedom in human beings) which God can influence only persuasively. I have argued in this book, however, that there is some question as to whether Hartshorne has adequately constructed this conception of divine persuasive power. Does God act solely persuasively or with some degree of coercive power? My contention is that in imposing the natural laws as the limits to creaturely freedom God does seem to act coercively.²⁹

In other words God does not merely *lure* (i.e. persuade) humans toward doing good but hedges human freedom about by immutable natural laws that bounds freedom within reasonable limits in order to assure that God’s *Good Creation* will *operate and advance* as God intended. Mankind *are not* therefore given permission *cart blanche* by God to do whatever the human person pleases no matter how humans object to being limited as he is wont to interpret any limitation (*human or divine*) on his freedom as *no freedom at all*. God is being as well and can act in God’s own wisdom and understanding which is of a higher order than that of the human person. While human’s can act within the bounds of their human nature God can *also* act (and has to right to do so even if it is contrary to the will of the human person) as moments of occasions in the created order *move toward or away* from God’s purpose for God’s *Good Creation*. The human person has always tried to conceptually limit God’s power over human desires and actions in the world. The *Tower of Babel* being an example where God used *coercive power* to override the collective desire of men to empower themselves when God desired that they spread out from where they were in order to “be fruitful, multiply and subdue the earth.” Men simply do not like it when God acts to circumscribe their free will which they believe is absolute and imagine is without limit. Mankind (according to some) not only has free will. They are in fact free spirits with a “will to power” limited only by themselves and each other. According to Friedrich Nietzsche the “Will to Power” is the “reevaluation of all values” a nihilism that rejects all customary beliefs of morality and religion, a “perfect nihilism” that requires “new values.” In his book *The Will to Power* (1888) Nietzsche states: “For one should make no mistake about the meaning of the title that this gospel of the future wants to bear.”³⁰ This *new gospel of the future* challenges all tradition, custom, all authority (even divine authority) upon which human values have been built, formulated and sustained. Nietzsche states in *The Anti-Christ* (1895):

²⁹ Whitney, p. 171.

³⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche. *The Will to Power*. (1888), Preface.

What is good?--Whatever augments the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man. What is evil?--Whatever springs from weakness. What is happiness?--The feeling that power increases--that resistance is overcome. Not contentment, but more power; not peace at any price, but war; not virtue, but Efficiency . . . The weak and the botched shall perish: first principle of our charity. And one should help them to it. What is more harmful than any vice?--Practical sympathy for the botched and the weak--Christianity...³¹

Nietzsche *new gospel of the future* according to his claims in *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) shall be carried forth by a new breed of *philosophers of life* that are *free spirits*. They shall not be bound by any authority whether it is motivated by the love of nature or the love of humanity. Among other things they will hold that good in society is not the only thing that advances humanity but *Evil* itself can advance humanity. In this work Nietzsche states:

We think that harshness, violence, slavery, danger in the streets and in the heart, concealment, Stoicism, the art of experiment . . . and devilry of every sort; that everything evil, terrible, tyrannical, predatory, and snakelike in humanity serves just as well as its opposite to enhance the species "humanity"³².

With such views about absolute freedom and the will to power the only thing that such a philosopher styled as a free spirit can say is that "*God is Dead*" because there *cannot be* any authority or power to *usurp the will to power* of the human person *otherwise there is no true human freedom*. Nietzsche makes this declaration in *The Gay Science* (1882). In his aphorism 108 *New Battles* Nietzsche states:

After Buddha was dead, they still showed his shadow in a cave for centuries --- a tremendous, gruesome shadow. God is dead; but given the way people are, there may still for millennia be caves in which they show his shadow, --- And we --- we must still defeat his shadow as well!³³

Although Nietzsche assures us "*God is dead*" he still sees the need for his new breed of free spirit philosophers to vanquish the very *shadow of God*. Further in his book (aphorism 125, *The madman*) he has this character say:

I'm looking for God! I'm looking for God! . . . Where is God? he cried: "I'll tell you. *We have killed him* --- you and I. We are all murderers . . . Do we still hear nothing of the noise of the grave-diggers who are burying God? Do we smell nothing of the divine decomposition? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. . . . What then these churches now if not the tombs and sepulchers of God?"³⁴

³¹Friedrich Nietzsche. *The Anti-Christ*. (1895), p. 3, Sec. 2.

³² Friedrich Nietzsche. *Beyond Good and Evil*. (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 41.

³³ Nietzsche. *The Gay Science*. (Cambridge University Press, 2001), Book Three, Aphorism 108, p. 109.

³⁴ Nietzsche. *The Gay Science*, Book Three, Aphorism 125, pp. 119-120.

Nevertheless Nietzsche's claims and assertions *God is far from dead* in the minds of Christian believers. For them God is still actively at work within God's *Good Creation* bringing about a new and transformed created order. The Genesis narrative shows God at work within God's *Good Creation in the beginning* and Jesus asserts that God is still at work on this *Christological Project*. Genesis 2:2 leaves open the possibility that the creation is still in process of growing, according to the vision God had for it, at the moment God *rested*. The creation was as complete as it needed to be in order to advance toward its ultimate design and development, according to the plan of God. Whatever God envisions *already is*. In this sense alone can we say "*God rested*." However, nothing in the Hebrew word נָח "nuakh" [i.e. "rested him"]. The clue to what this means is in the Ethiopic *Ge'ez* word የሰኘ [i.e. "rest," "be extended," "long."] carrying the idea that God was still doing something, for example, like most artist after their creation sits back over an extended or long period of time surveying and pondering their work and hopefully pronounce it "good" or "very good." The point is that God did not go to sleep here allowing humans and demons to run rampant unchecked and their will unopposed throughout God's *Good Creation*. God did not leave His creation to work on its own. God is not like the clockmaker as in the *Clockmaker Theory* that says God indeed "created the universe, but is not actively involved in its operation, just as a clockmaker makes a clock that then operates independently of him." On the contrary "God is actively involved in running the universe and shaping [its] history."

The creation was not *perfect* at this juncture but was as complete as it needed to be, a prototype if you will, a model of something from which God intended to bring to perfection, that is, complete in form. His masterpiece. Based on this scheme God would use occasions within creation to *both lure and coerce* creation toward its final form (i.e. from the prototype). The author of Genesis in chapter one writes that God reviewed the work God had done on the creation and observed "all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31a, NIV). This text does not infer that God's *Good Creation* was *perfect*. The creation was very good, but not necessarily the best that God could make it. *In the beginning* God's *Good Creation* was *the best of all possible worlds* but far from complete. God's *Good Creation* was very good in the sense that it was ready to serve the purpose for which God made it. In other words God's *Good Creation* was *in perfect working order* according to God's design and purpose. There is no warrant (according to process theology) for adherents of monotheism to presuppose that God could not have made a *good but incomplete creation* that needed to be *lured* toward the ideal perfection of a *new heaven* and a *new earth* (i.e. a new order where the old order has passed away), a *new Je-Ru-Salem* (i.e. the *Gate of God's Peace*). God indeed could have made a better heaven and a better earth, or even a perfect version of the same order of things. If God is who monotheism says God is, then *all things are possible with God* (Mark 10:27).

The earth, as we know it now may only be a prototype of what the earth, and by inference, the human person, is to become. Since God's *Good Creation* is neither complete nor perfected, then there is no textual warrant to say that God's *Good Creation* was made apart from the effects of *Evil* somewhere (*out there* or *beyond here*) on the *outer frontier* of that creative process. To God the effects of *Evil* on God's *Good Creation in the beginning* would merely be an occasion God would *sublate* within the creative process to advance God's ultimate aim and purpose. We surmise that *Evil* was somehow prior to the creative process *in the beginning* ready to strike and swallow up God's *Good Creation* as it came into existence. Genesis 1:2 suggests that God brought the creation into the light out of a *dark void* – "*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters*" (NIV). We cannot fully explore this now but later in this

work we will describe this *dark void* in terms of Barth's "*Nothingness*" a *No-thing* that is a *necessary part of* but *opposed to* God's creative process. The Egyptians surmised that the dark void (perhaps referred to in Genesis) was some kind of celestial *dark watery mass* which they later *personified* as a

god. According to the Egyptians the Creator-God *Amen-Ra* (i.e.  the *Hidden God*) existed from eternity as an *inert being* within this *dark celestial watery mass*. To them the dark celestial void was not opposed to God's creative process but in fact essential to it. Without necessarily personifying this dark celestial watery mass as a *god* (as the Egyptian later did) we can say the Egyptians believed at the least that it was both *coeval* and *coeternal* with God and even perhaps a by-product of God's being. The Ancient Egyptians called this *dark void* the *Nu*

( , or  ) the *dark celestial waters* (i.e. the seemingly inert deified primeval water from whence everything came) *out of which God* (who from eternity existed within it) *arose*. Perhaps out of these same *dark celestial waters* God could have created the earth. This *dark void* in Genesis could be a Hebrew metaphor for *Evil*. Moses the writer of Genesis presupposed *something dark out there* involved in the divine creative process and perhaps even opposed to it since the Spirit of God hovered above these dark celestial water in a coercive manner to bring creation into actuality and into the light. This kind of divine struggle to bring light out of darkness is evident in the Gospel of John as well which uses Genesis as a *mark* for *in the beginning* as darkness = *Evil* tries to prevent the advent of God's Christological Project of redemption and transformation where darkness is astonished that *light can come out of darkness*. The writer of the Gospel of John in chapter one personifies darkness and perhaps points to the reality of a dark force that opposes God's creation. This dark force cannot be described using human language since it like God is not a material entity but an opposing spiritual force. John, the writer of this gospel, infers that this *darkness* has *mind*, *rational thought* and *purpose*. Darkness appears to be *astonished* that it does not have the power to stop God from bringing the creation into being. Darkness also cannot *understand* how God is able to bring the human person out into the light of God's redeeming power by means of Jesus Christ (i.e. the creative Word, agency, and power, through whom all things were made) despite the *awesome homicidal power of Darkness*. This dark spiritual force in Gospel of John opposes God's redemptive process in Jesus Christ like it opposed God's creative process *in the beginning*. Darkness for the writer of John may be the dark powers and principalities (both on earth and in the heavens) as Apostle Paul understood them. If understood this way then the darkness the writer speaks about is more than a personification of *Evil*. Darkness would represent the actual and concrete human persons, institutions, and unseen dark spiritual forces that are opposed to the awesome light of God's and power and His Word that embodies the rational, cosmic and spiritual principle of life, all goodness, and truth that will ultimately bring God's *Good Creation* to its ultimate and intended perfection. John's text reads:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it (John 1:1-5, NIV).

One of the claims of process theology is that the created order is in process of becoming. Relative to the age and complexity of the entire universe the created human order is not finished yet and may be thought of as a child in its current cultural, social, intellectual, and certainly in its spiritual

growth. *Evil* serves as a major retardant to the creation's growth toward completion or maturity. In an essay, the Russian scholar, Svetozar Stojanovic suggests, using the Titanic as a metaphor for ultimate disaster, that humankind in its technological infancy is playing what Stojanovic calls "auto-apocalyptic roulette." Stojanovic goes on to say in this paper that:

Humanity is in a race with auto-apocalyptic time. . . . in which humanity is sailing. Moreover, it has the monumental "ability" to delude itself and more or less passively await its "fate." Its entire existence must be divided into the period before and the period after its "empowerment" to self-destruct.³⁵

Nietzsche does not on the other hand think of Evil a retardant to the advancement of humanity and/or the human person but rather has and can have the same influential properties for growth and development as does all good that he believes is being shoved down the throats of free spirits seeking to exercise their will to power. We have already quoted Nietzsche on this from his work *Beyond Good and Evil*(1886) but it is worth repeating:

We think that harshness, violence, slavery, danger in the streets and in the heart, concealment, Stoicism, the art of experiment . . . and devilry of every sort; that everything evil, terrible, tyrannical, predatory, and snakelike in humanity serves just as well as its opposite to enhance the species "humanity"³⁶

Although the way Nietzsche said this may seem repugnant to our ears he nevertheless may have hit upon a valuable truth about how *God uses all things* (i.e. *good and evil*) *to work together for those who love God and God's Good Creation*. Maybe God purposely made the creation as complete as it could be despite the presence of *Evil* which we think could be *coeval* or *co-existence* as a *necessary* by-product of the divine creative process in bringing about God's *Good Creation*. *Evil* (both *irrational* and *homicidal*) is anti-God/anti-Man and is aimed at the total destruction of God's *Good Creation* (especially the human person and society). But this is far from saying that God created Evil or permits Evil to run rough shod over God's Good Creation. The irrational human acts influenced by *Evil* are because *Evil itself is irrational being* grounded in fear and hatred. God therefore cannot be the author of irrationality grounded in hatred and fear because God is not the author of *fear* but the author of *love, power, and sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7) in addition to the fact that the Lord God is an upright being and in God there is no wickedness (Psalm 92:15). God is a *rational being* and is the creator of *all* rational being not irrational being.

The Qur'an affirms the supposition that God is the Creator of *all rational being* when it says: "*We created man from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape*" (Sura *Al-Hijr* 15:26). This reference to man created out of "*sounding clay*" (i.e. *Salsal* in Arabic صلصال) refers to the composite nature of man as a rational being. Man is "*Earth-man*" with the "*power of rational speech*." This power of speech marks man as *a special order of spiritual being clothed in flesh* (i.e. clay/dust/earth with rational mind). This marks man as *a composite spiritual being* as well. God is the Creator of this special order of spiritual composite being who is made in the image of God. God breathed into this Earth-man made of *sounding clay* the "*breath of life*" (i.e. the *power of rational thought*) and he became a "*living being*" (Genesis 2:7). God who is rational being and creates all rational being can

³⁵ Svetozar Stojanovic, "Twofold Alienation, Autoapocalypse, and Religion Today," (Stojanovic@sac.org.yu), p.1.

³⁶ Nietzsche. *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 41.

hardly be the author of irrational being and irrationality. The IT on the other hand *is irrational being* described as *negative being/a void/emptiness/darkness* (i.e. absence of life, love, compassion) but nevertheless has mind and the will to carry forth aims and purpose. The IT is *irrational mind* and the aims IT has are irrational because its own *negative being and existence* depends upon the positive rational life force within God's *Good Creation*. Since the IT must live off of (i.e. *cannibalize, subsume, devour*) living being/things with the natural order to sustain its own negative being and existence it does not make rational sense that the IT would seek the destruction of living being/things within God's Good Creation because that would mean IT's own non-being and destruction. The nature of the IT or *Evil* must be of a "higher" or "different" from the order of "*things*" or *living being* (material or spiritual) within God's *Good Creation* because every "*thing*" or being within God's created order desperately seeks to live (feel, experience life, etc.) and fears above all else *non-being/nothingness*, the destruction of being existence and/or personality, i.e. soul/mind. This appears to be true of demons (i.e. spiritual "things, fallen angels, the acolytes and devotees of *Evil*) also because they fear being *cast into outer darkness* where the only being is **NO-THING** (i.e. *nothingness*) and the only experience is the agony of *no feeling, no life, and non-being*. The Gospels support this supposition in the story of the healing of the two demoniacs in Matthew and one demoniac in Mark with the expulsion of the demons who had interfaced with the personalities of these men (i.e. possessed them) that would rather experience the life force even in pigs (animal living being) rather than be cast out into non-being (i.e. *nothingness*):

When Jesus arrived on the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, two men possessed by demons met him there, coming out of the tombs. They were extremely violent, so much that nobody could pass that way. Behold they cried out, saying, "What do we have to do with you, Jesus, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time? Now there was a herd of many pigs feeding at some distance from them. The demons begged him saying, "If you cast us out, allow us to go away into the herd of pigs. He said to them, "Go!" The demons came out and went into the herd of pigs: and behold, the whole herd of pigs rushed down the cliff into the sea and died in the water. (Matthew 8:28-30, EOB).

They arrived on the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gergesenes. As soon as Jesus came out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit met him out of the [nearby] tombs. This man lived in the tombs and no one was able to bind him any more, not even with chains. (He had often been chained hand and foot but had torn the chains apart and broken the foot-shackles in pieces). Indeed, nobody had the strength to control him. Night and day, he remained in the tombs and the mountains, howling and cutting himself with stones. When this man saw Jesus from afar, he ran and expressed adoration to him. He cried out with a loud voice, "What have I to do with you, Son of the Most High God? By God's Name, do not torment me!" (For Jesus had just said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!") Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He answered, "My name is Legion, for we are many!" He implored Jesus not to expel them from the earth." Now there was a great herd of pigs feeding on the mountainside. All the demons begged him, saying, "Send us into the pigs, so that we may enter into them." At once, Jesus gave them permission. The unclean spirits came out and entered into the pigs. The herd of about two thousand rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and they were drowned in the sea. (Mark 5:1-13, EOB).

It is evident that Jesus, the Son of God can oppose the acolytes and devotees of *Evil* with the power to torment them (if he chooses) and even cast them into *outer darkness* (i.e. "*expel them from*

the earth” as indicated in Mark, i.e. casting them into the Outer Darkness beyond God’s Good Creation, where they came from and fear to return). Through Christ God can overcome *all darkness* while and at the same time (same occasion of eschatological and cosmic Christological event) bring about good (an eternal life) within the created order *made new* (transformed into a *New Heaven* and *New Earth*) thereby. When this occurs the *Trinity of Death, Evil, and Sin* (along with their demonic and human acolytes and devotees) will be cast into the *Lake of Fire* (Revelation 20:14-15) and the whole (like a pig in a blanket) will be cast into *outer darkness* (i.e. τὸ σκότος τὸ ἑξώτερον; “*the extreme darkness*” , Matthew 8:12).

In ancient Egyptian cosmological and theological thought the *Lake of Fire* in the Twat (i.e. the *Hidden Land* that contains the temporary abodes of both Hell and Paradise) is called:



Sha-Asbiu. This is the spiritual dimension where the *Trinity of Darkness* and all acolytes and devotees of *Evil* will experience eternal torment. The term itself falls within a grammatical domain that explains ontological spiritual nature of this place. It is also called the *Lake*

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[The Smell]³⁸

I was extremely nauseous from the terrible, foul stench coming from these creatures. It was absolutely disgusting, foul and rotten. It was, by far, the most putrid smells I have every encountered. If you could take every rotten thing you can imagine, such as an open sewer, rotten meat, spoiled eggs, sour milk, dead rotting animal flesh, and sulfur, and magnify it a thousand times, you might come close. This is not an exaggeration. The odor was actually extremely toxic, and that alone should have killed me. . . . The air was filled with smoke, and a filthy deathly, decaying odor hung in the oxygen-depleted atmosphere.³⁹

[The “Living” Darkness]

I struggle to gather my thoughts. *I’m in hell! This is a real place, and I’m actually here!* I frantically tried to understand, but it was just so inconceivable. Not me, *I’m a good person*, I thought. The fear was so intense I couldn’t bear it, but again, I couldn’t die. I knew that most people on the surface of the earth did not believe or even know that there was a whole world going on down here. They wouldn’t believe it. But here it existed, and it was all too real. This place was so terrifying, so intense, and so hostile that it would be impossible for me to exaggerate the horror. . . . As I stood outside the cell, I actually felt the darkness. Exodus 10:21 speaks of “. . . darkness which may even be felt.” It was not like the darkness on the earth. . . . It was as though the darkness had its own power, a power that consumed me. The darkness was not simply the absence of light — it had a distinctive evil presence, a feeling of death, a penetrating evil.⁴⁰

[The Flaming Pit]

I looked off to my right and could faintly see flames from the afar off that dimly lit the skyline. I knew the flames were coming from a large pit, a gigantic raging inferno approximately one mile in diameter and about ten miles away. This was just one of the many things I simply knew. My senses were keener. The flames were instance, but the darkness seemed to swallow up the light. The skyline was barely visible. The darkness was somewhat like a black hole. . . . It was so dark that it seemed to hinder any light from traveling. The only visible area was that which the flames exposed. . . . I understood that I would never, ever get out. In Psalm 140:10 we read: “Let burning coals fall upon them; let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits, that *they rise not up again*”⁴¹ Momentary relief hit my soul as I realized I had been snatched from the grip of those hideous creatures. However, now I found myself next to an enormous pit with raging flames of fire leaping high into an open cavern. As I looked up into the dark, eerie, tomb-like atmosphere, it seemed to be like a mouth that had swallowed her dead. The flames of her ravenous appetite were never satisfied with the pitiful screams of untold multitudes. The heat was far beyond unbearable, and I desperately wanted to escape before I too would be thrown into that inferno. . . . I could see the outlines of people through

³⁸ Brackets are my caption.

³⁹ Bill Wiese. *23 Minutes in Hell*. (Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House, 2006), pp. 7, 11.

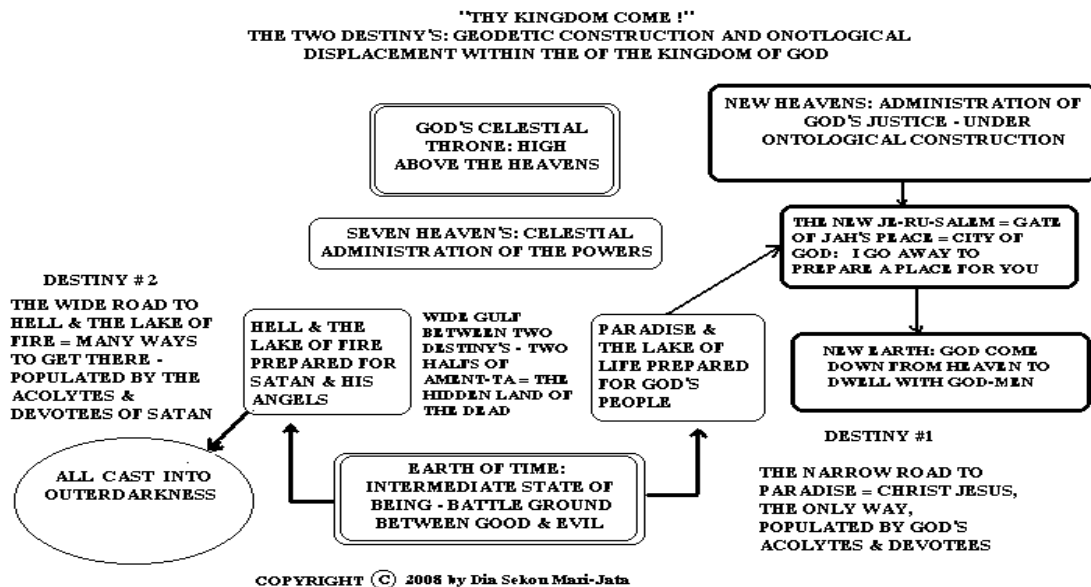
⁴⁰ Wiese, p. 9

⁴¹ Wiese, pp. 9-11.

the flames. The screams from the condemned souls were deafening and relentless. There was no safe place, no safe moment, no temporary relief of any kind.⁴²

In the beginning Evil opposed God's *Good Creation* and still today opposes its advance toward perfection as it relates to the Christological redemptive process of bringing about *a new heaven and a new earth* which will replace the *old order of things* and *make all things new*. *Evil* knows *IT* will have no place within the new divine order of things and as such will be *forever* banished to *outer-darkness* well beyond the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* where it will no longer be able influence or corrupt the human person (possess them) or human society because they will have become *new creatures in Christ*. It makes sense that if God's *Good Creation* "*in the beginning*" was completed as a *cosmological infant* it would go through a process of growth and maturity struggling to overcome *Evil* with good to become the *new creation in Christ* that only God could envision. Man appears to have *two destinies* within God's *Good Creation* occasioned by the struggle between good and evil. The transformation of the human person toward becoming a deified Christological being is predicated on the outcome of this cosmic and spiritual struggle. What follows are two pictographs showing the relationship between good and evil within the Kingdom of God and the divine/human struggle to overcome *Evil* by advancing good:

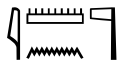
⁴² Wiese, pp. 21-22. A YouTube of the "Sounds from Hell" can be listened to @ (<https://youtu.be/8iPIXqjGMQ>) which may or may not support Wiese's experience near the Pit of Flames or the audio could at the least give the reader/listener of the audio some idea of the phenomenon he said he experienced in hearing the screams of lost souls. On the other hand the audio itself could lend to the skepticism about the spiritual geodetic reality of Hell because people generally dismiss spiritualities as really real and this audio itself has been dub a "fake" and the claim made that the audio clip of the screams of people in hell were taken from the 1972 movie *Baron Blood*. Wiese himself admits the difficulty of convincing people that *Hell is Real* and that he experienced this phenomenon in the center of the Earth. The fact is that skeptics don't believe anything unless they *feel, touch, and taste* it and even then they are likely to suggest another explanation than what they actually see and feel with their own eyes and minds. The proof they are demanding (as they chuckle) can be provided but the problem is that if you are really in Hell (*and Christ is not with you*) it's too late to affirm the really of the phenomenon because you are never going to leave that horrible place and return to Earth to tell about it. The bible talks about such skeptic when the rich man who refused food to a sick beggar named Lazarus that sat at his door (gate) daily asking for his help ended up in Hell. The rich man in speaking to "Abraham" with Lazarus in his bosom (i.e. Paradise) as Jesus tells the story: "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' [i.e. the great chasm in the *Twat* = the *Hidden Land* that separates *Paradise* and *Hell*, my insertion] "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'" "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'" "No, Father Abraham," he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'" [my Italics].



KEYS TO THE KINGDOM:



=Ament-Ta = literally "Hidden Land, Habitat of the Dead" in the West = Hell + Paradise



= Amen= literally "The Hidden God" who is in Heaven.



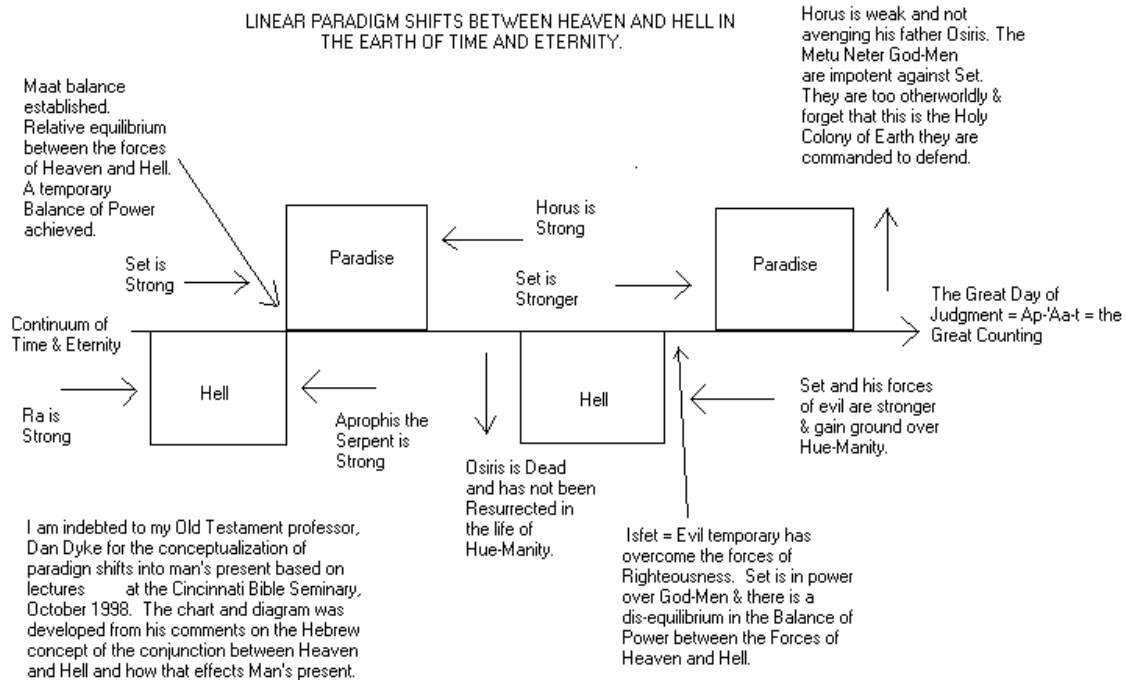
= "Amen-Nu" = **The Hidden Onestill lurking in the dark waters of the Nu, i.e.**

that portion of the black celestial waters where *Nothingness* still resides (*after* God arose out of it to say "Let there be light!"); Yet hidden from view or human consciousness as a definite and real threat of "No" against God's affirmative "Yes" and therefore against God's *Good Creation*. *One* who *dissembles* the heart (i.e. to conceal one's true motives, feelings, or beliefs, a deceiver of hearts). *One* who hides behind the name of the True God. *One* who transforms himself into and masquerades as an Angel of Light [2 Corinthians 11:13-15] but really is a homicidal maniac [John 8:44] who is willing to put an axe through their own head and anyone else's that follows Setian = Satanic ways. One who lives for the pleasures of demonic experience.



= Metch-t = **Wide Gulf in Ament-Ta between the Two Caverns:** See Luke 16:19-31,

"Lazarus in Paradise and the Rich man burning in Hell" for denying God's economic justice to the poor = working poor, homeless, the hungry, thirsty, dying and suffering ones. For being a follower of the Devil, the Hidden One = the dissembler, literally "hiding the heart" of compassion. What happens in the **Earth of Time**, that is, the battle between good and evil, and for God's justice on Earth in order to take it back from Satan and his Setian White men and Setian Black men by God's Ab-Men and Ausar-Men, with the help of God's A-men = Angels of God, Angel of the Lord is shown in the following pictograph:



The Bible recognizes that the human person (along with the rest of creation) is an incomplete human *Christological Project* of transformation and deification into a new creature (i.e. a new creation). The human person is merely a living prototype of what the human person is envisioned to be by God. That intended perfection, however, was halted by human disobedience to God and referred in the Genesis story as the *Fall of Man*. This circumstance leading to this fall is described in the Bible and theology as sin and formally called *Original Sin*. The Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedo*(ተዋሕዶ) Church holds the view that *even without the Fall of Man that the Christological event of Christ's coming still would be necessary* to bring the infantile created order from being "very good" to being "perfect." The *Fall of Man* made this plan of God's economy just more urgent. First Paulos Yohannes (who later became *His Holiness Patriarch Paulos* around 1991-92) in his doctoral dissertation for Princeton Theological Seminary entitled *Filsata: The Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and Mariological Tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church* (1988) presents (more or less) the traditional orthodox view of the Fall of Man from the thought horizon of Ethiopian orthodox Mariology:

The incarnation of God the Son is primarily for the salvation, i.e., the restoration of the world to its direct and unimpeded relation with God. As God made it, the world was very good (Genesis 1:31); however, into this world came evil. Thus, God, the Creator, ever-concerned and active for the world's salvation, desired to rescue His good creation from the clutches of evil, and to restore it to the destiny for which it had originally been created.⁴³

His Holiness Patriarch Paulos Yohannes is very clear that God's economy of salvation is primarily for the restoration of God's Good Creation and to bring it back "to its direct and unimpeded relation with God" because "into this world came evil" and so it appears from this perspective had

⁴³ Paulos Yohannes. *Filsata: The Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and Mariological Tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church*. A dissertation. (Princeton Theological Seminary, 1988), p. 288.

not evil come into the world there would be no need for God to bring about the Christological event that is the virgin birth of Jesus because there would have been no *Fall of Man*. But other Ethiopian theologians and clergymen like *Qesis* Dr. Mebratu Kiros Gebru challenge this traditional theological view in order to show that *Mariology* (grounded in various Ge'ez and Amharic texts, including Anaphoras and Orthodox church traditions) has deeper implications for the *Christological event* than those related to the *Fall of Man*. While the newer understanding does not deny that the incarnation of Jesus Christ was necessary because of the *Fall of Man* from God's grace it nevertheless is not the *primary* and *sufficient reason* or *cause*. Mariology cannot be understood apart from the full implications of the Christological event and when properly understood will show that *God would have sent Christ into the world by means of the Virgin Birth of St. Mary anyway* (not just because mankind had fallen from God's grace) in order to advance God's creation from being "very good" toward the perfection God had planned for the creation *in the beginning*. The *Fall of Man* was the *immediate cause* that precipitated God's divine plan of salvation but it was not the *sufficient first cause*. On the other hand *Qesis* Dr. Mebratu Kiros Gebru in his doctoral dissertation for the University of St. Michael's College entitled *Liturgical Cosmology: The Theological and Sacramental Dimensions of Creation in the Ethiopian Liturgy* (2012) makes the following claims and assertions:

The all-encompassing nature of the human person led to the transmission of corruption from the person to the rest of creation. The material and spiritual realities (body and soul) in the person relate the person to the material and spiritual dimensions of creation. Hence the human person stands at the midway point of creation, and "unites the spiritual and material worlds." Since the person recapitulates within him/herself the whole of creation, the human is a microcosm. As a microcosm and as the "king of creation," the human person was given a task by God to unite created matter and bring it into full communion with God. The person failed to accomplish this task, and thus the death and corruption that entangled the person also affected the entire creation. In the Ethiopian tradition, even though it is not explicitly stated that *the Logos would have been incarnate despite the Fall of the first humans*, some of the EOTC's literature implicitly reveal such a belief. For example, the expression in the Ethiopic *Masāhafa Qalemāntos መጽሐፈ ቀሌምንጦስ* [*Book of Clement*]: "O Peter if I did not plan to be incarnated from the Virgin, I would not have created Adam or the heavens" signifies that the incarnation of the *Logos* was not a response to the Fall but the original divine plan to bring creation to its fulfillment. Moreover *Tü'ammāra Maryam ተአምረ ማርያም* [*Miracle of Mary*], a book used in the EOTC for liturgical purposes, asserts that "St. Mary had been in the thought of God prior to the creation of the world." This reference as well clearly shows that the incarnation of the *Logos* from the Blessed Virgin was originally foreseen by God before the Fall. The incarnation revealed the goal of creation, which is the consummation of the entire cosmic order in Christ, and made the transformation of creation possible. As the world was created through Christ, also the fallen creation was renewed through him. . . . Even though God's good plan for creation had been affected by the fall of humanity, the Christ event offered the possibility of redemption and transfiguration. Orthodoxy views the whole life of Christ as the medium of salvation. . . the *Logos* became part of his creation and recapitulated the entire creation in his body. Christ sanctified the entire cosmos through his baptism, whereas his redemptive crucifixion on the Cross liberated creation [sic] from the pangs of sin. As death had held human beings and the entire cosmos under its control, Christ died to "renew the corrupted creation," and his resurrection defeated death and corruption. *Thus we were saved by the whole life of Christ, not by a particular event in his life. While*

*the whole of creation has been redeemed, its ultimate transfiguration has yet to come. [My emphasis].*⁴⁴

Qesis Dr. Mabratu argues that “Ethiopian eschatological thought (which believes that because the Earth was *creation ex nihilo* [created from nothing] it must eventually be returned to nothing, i.e. completely consumed by fire) needs to be consistent with what the EOTC teaches regarding the salvation of the world.”⁴⁵ *Qesis* Dr. Mabratu goes on to argue:

The entire material creation has been redeemed by the Christ event, and the redemption achieved through Christ will be complete in the final transfiguration of creation after the end times. The liberation of creation from its groaning should be envisioned as being fully realized by its transformation into the new heaven and earth, and not by its return into non-being. As our bodies will be risen in the resurrection, being transformed to the body of Christ’s glory, the entire cosmos as well will be transfigured. In other words, the creation that was affected by . . . human sin, will also participate in the transfiguration of the person. The scriptural references to the passing away of the world need to be positively understood as the end of death and corruption that have put creation in travail, but not as the demise of the world that God loved so much and redeemed through Christ. “Heaven and earth will pass away” as Christ said (Mt. 24:35) – “but in the sense that they will pass into a more glorious state.”⁴⁶

It seems from these arguments and suppositions that the grand purpose of God’s economy of salvation through the *Mariological Christ Event* seeks to change not only the human condition relative to the *Fall of Man* but to transform and lure God’s *Good Creation* toward its final destiny of perfection from *very good* to *all good*. The human person as an important part of God’s *Good Creation* is in process of *becoming* and *transforming*. Jesus said that one day the children of God (by means of the power of God grace *in Christ*) would become like the angels in heaven in their spiritual and material being (Matthew 22:29-32). Our present mortal state of being will be (according to the biblical promises) clothed in a future state of immortality. This will happen “*in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet*” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52, NIV) where *mortality will clothe itself in immortality and Death itself will be swallowed up in victory* (1 Corinthians 15:54). But all of this is going on *right now* as we speak. This Christological transformation is in process signifying the ontological “*already but not yet*” phenomena advanced by realized eschatology. In the new state of ontological being death will no longer have any power over the human person, because of the incarnation of the *Word becoming flesh* and *power of the resurrection over death* accomplished in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:51-57). Once the power of death is overcome by means of the Christ Event (i.e. the *One and Only*, the *Cosmic Christ*, the Ever-Coming Savior), then *Evil*, which is already consigned eternally to the frontiers of God’s good creation (in outer darkness) will no longer have the means to threaten the created order of God with blight and human suffering.

⁴⁴ Mebratu Kiros Gebru. *Liturgical Cosmology: The Theological and Sacramental Dimensions of Creation in the Ethiopian Liturgy*. A Dissertation. (Canada: University of St. Michael’s College, 2012), 253-254.

⁴⁵ Mebratu, p. 256.

⁴⁶ Mebratu, p. 256.

It is Jesus Christ, the “*Resurrection and the Life*”, the “*Living Water*,” who holds the keys of death and hell (Revelation 1:18, NIV). Jesus the *Resurrected Christ*, therefore, is the key to arresting the power of *Evil* over God’s *Good Creation*. The Bible states that the human person, because of the limitations of their current state of being, cannot contemplate what the human person will finally look like, or be like. However, whatever the human person finally becomes (those found *in Christ*) will be like Christ (1 John 3:2). These are astonishing biblical assertions that suggest God did not make the human person either complete or perfect; but rather that God is in process of doing so. Paul said that human persons are mere “infants in Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:1). Other Scripture texts suggest new states of being human. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, *he is a new creation*; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV). Paul suggests that a new state of being (in process) warrants an attitude of infancy (innocence) in respect to *Evil*; but coming of age (becoming adult i.e. mature) in respect to rational thought and becoming holy, that is, *separate from the old world order or that* (ways of being and doing things) that is *Evil* in and of itself. Paul said, “*Brothers, do not be children in thoughts, ye be infants when it comes to evil. Be mature in your thoughts*” (1 Corinthians 14:20, EOB). Evil, from this perspective can be seen as illogical and irrational behavior, in view of the fact that God’s good creation is under God’s *sovereign will, judgment* (tempered by mercy), and God’s *wrath* if nothing else will arrest the power of *Evil* within God’s *Good Creation*.

However Paul understood from a rational perspective that while Christians are admonished that they are *in the world but not of the world*; yet it is not a practical proposition that we can be totally separate from this material world engulfed in *Evil* without our selves leaving this world. Paul puts emphasis on Christians staying away from sexually immoral people but states that if we tried to separate from all acolytes and devotees of *Evil* we would have to be actually physically dead because the world is so full of evil people of all kinds and persuasions. Paul states: *I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people -- not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world* (1 Corinthians 5:9-10, NIV). The very best then that Christians as new creatures in Christ can do is die daily (spiritually) to sin and evil within themselves until Christ (i.e. the Cosmic Christ) comes to finish the work of cosmic and human transformation into *all good being*. The possibility that people are living prototypes that will be new *creatures in Christ* suggests a whole new perspective on the doctrine of the human person. James Redfield in his *The Celestine Prophecy* has one of his female characters (searching for an ancient “Manuscript” that will advance human insight) states in response to another person who asks: “What kind of transformation is it supposed to be?”:

“The priest told me it’s a kind of renaissance in consciousness, occurring very slowly. It’s not religious in nature, but it is spiritual. We’re discovering something new about human life on this planet, about what our existence means, and according to the priest, this knowledge will alter human culture dramatically. . . . The priest told me the Manuscript is divided into segments, or chapters, each devoted to a particular insight into life. The Manuscript predicts that in this time period human beings will begin to grasp these insights sequentially, one insight then another, as we move from where we are now to a completely spiritual culture on Earth.”⁴⁷

However, because God did not complete this kind of transformative process at the moment of creation (where God *rested*) does not suggest God could not have done so. Apparently, the creation

⁴⁷ James Redfield. *The Celestine Prophecy: An Adventure*. (New York: Warner Books, 1993), p. 4

of the heavens and the earth and all that are in them is *in process of becoming*, which process *in and of itself* is a mystery subsumed within the wisdom of God alone. African-American Baptist congregations, in worship often sing the song, “*We Will Understand It Better By And By*.” One of the verses describes the human condition in respect to darkness and evil. It states:

*Trials dark on every hand, And we cannot understand, All the ways that God would lead us
to that blessed Promised Land. But He guides us with His eye, And we'll follow till we die.
For we'll understand it better by and by.*⁴⁸

But some of this darkness we can understand now. We can understand the process of guiding the human person through the darkness of evil now, if everything that God has made is understood to be as complete as things can be, in their prototypical state of mortal being, in process of becoming, for a future state of immortal being. That is for now our state of being *is the best of all possible worlds*. Such a theological perspective does not oppose the monotheistic notion that God is all-powerful and all knowing. In fact this perspective affirms it. God simply chose (in God's own wisdom and timing) to transform a very good creation into an all good, perfected creation through the Christ Event. Therefore God's work is not failed project just because Evil found a way to enter God's Good Creation but it was meant in the beginning to be a continuing *Christological Project* resulting in a *Christ Event* that would and still is triumphing over the *Trinitarian Powers of Darkness* (i.e. *Death, Evil, and Sin*). *Evil*, defined as *a state of negative being*, is merely part of this creative transformative process. Maybe in God's wisdom, the reality and presence of *Evil* is being used as a means to facilitate the cosmological process of growth and development of God's *Good Creation* as Nietzsche signified *Beyond Good and Evil*. Perhaps, what we feel as the presence of *Evil* in the world is in fact the growing pains of cosmic youth. However, if the claim is that the world is in the twilight of its old age, then what we feel as *Evil* is the death of the old creation coming into being as a new one. One scripture suggests just this possibility. In Romans, Paul states:

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:19-23, NIV).

We could be at the dawn of a new heaven and a new earth, which is purposely designed by God the way it is, not in spite of the presence of *Evil*, but because of the presence of *Evil* at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*. The creation being subject (by God's permissive will) to the power of *Evil*, in the form of blight, suffering and sin, *is no accident*. Upon reading Redfield one is apt to say that the First Insight of the fictional “Manuscript” in his books say that *there are no coincidences* whether we understand them or not but Redfield is not quite saying that. Rather he suggests we are becoming *aware* and will become progressively *aware* that there are *meaningful coincidences* in our

⁴⁸ Charles A. Tindley, *We'll Understand It Better By And By*, arranged by Nolan Williams, Jr. in African American Heritage Hymnal (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2001), p. 418.

lives that have present and future significance related to our transformation into higher levels of humanity and being which will in turn positively advance human culture to its ultimate end. The first intuitive encounter with “coincidence” is a sense of “restlessness” that causes the human person to inquire into the meaning of any event or occasion that happens in their life. The question on every occasion is: “What is the meaning of what just happened to me?” “How is this phenomenological event (grand or small) connected to me now or to my future?” In Redfield’s book *The Celestine Prophecy: An Experiential Guide* (1995) it states:

Slowly, with little fanfare, a global transformation is taking place. As described in the ancient teachings of the Manuscript found in the Celestine ruins, the first sign that we are awakening to this deep inner call is a profound sense of restlessness. . . . The combination of inner searching (“There must be more to life”) and an occasional cosmic jostle (“Wow! What a strange coincidence. I wonder what that meant?”) is a powerful process. Mysterious and exciting, coincidences are purposeful in moving us forward in our destiny. They make us feel more alive, as if there is some greater plan at work.⁴⁹

Redfield (1997) further states in his book *The Celestine Vision: Living the New Spiritual Awareness*:

Coincidences can involve the timely arrival of some special information that we want but have no idea how to get, or the sudden realization that our experience with a past hobby or interest was actually a preparation for landing us a new opportunity or job. Regardless of the details of a particular coincidence, we sense that it is too unlikely to have been the result of luck or mere chance. When a coincidence grabs our attention, we are held, even if only for a moment, in awe of the occurrence. At some level, we sense that such events were destined in some way, that they were *supposed* to happen just when they did in order to shift our lives in a new, more inspiring direction.⁵⁰

Taking our cue from Redfield suppose the events influenced by the power of Evil are part of God’s permissive will to lure the human person to higher levels of the self? Then we have to have ask the question whether the event is good or evil why did it happen *not a minute before nor a minute after* if it were *mere coincidence*. A tragic event occurs where a young girl was walking in the snow and as she passed under a tree a limb covered with ice broke off and pierced right through her heart. The heavy ice-covered limb acting like a spear did not break off *a minute before or a minute after* to bring about this tragedy and loss. This tragedy and loss seemed so random and so without meaning which adds to the bewilderment, hurt, pain, suffering, and sometimes even terror that something diabolical is *out there* trying to destroy any beauty or innocence of human origin. If there are no coincidences then tragedies like this story must have some meaning in the greater *cosmic play of occasions and events* in the world. Evil is potent and terrifying precisely because *IT* seems so random and there seems to be no (so to speak) rhyme nor reason for its tragic consequences. When tragic and (to us) nonsensical things happen like this we have to give *IT* a name. We must make rational sense out of events that *IT* seems to bring about which defy rationality in order for us to fight off the fear that there is some kind of homicidal irrational dark power *out there* way beyond our control. We

⁴⁹ James Redfield and Carol Adrienne. *The Celestine Prophecy: An Experiential Guide*. (New York: Warner Books, 1995), pp. 1-2.

⁵⁰ James Redfield. *The Celestine Vision: Living the New Spiritual Awareness*. (New York: Warner Books, 1997), pp. 13-14.

really need to know that there are no coincidences whether good or evil and that all remains within the permissive will of God and is somehow for our good and for the transformation of God's *Good Creation* moving from *very good* to *all good*. God could be using events caused by *Evil* in human lives and in the cosmic universe to *lure* us toward a higher level of human person that will seek to develop *all good* human institutions. This could be the underlying spiritual impetus for the development of democratic institutions as it faces the challenges of human evils of war, racism, the rise of lewdness and immorality, the demise of civility, the devaluation of human life, and the disestablishment of *all* legitimate authority which threatens the body politic, moral and civil foundations of society ordained by God defeat *chaos* (i.e. disorder) and bring about *cosmos* (i.e. order) and so protect the *good life for all living being and God's Good Creation*.

Redfield's vision however satisfying to know (because it gives a possible reason for what happens to us and that these "coincidences" are not random but have purpose nevertheless for the good of the Earth and the human person) downplays *Evil* as a dark power external to the being of the human person for he has his character Charlene state: "*He said to remember that while most of society's recent ills can be traced to this restlessness and searching, this problem is temporary, and will come to an end.*"⁵¹ For Redfield there is no dark homicidal power seeking to influence the human person toward their own destruction and whose aim is to disrupt and destroy God's *Good Creation*. The living embodiment of the world is *in and of itself* being moved in this direction with so-called "coincidences" and occasions the driving impersonal power behind the positive transformation. There is no mention of a benevolent rational power in Redfield who of necessity, purpose and design is luring the world in this direction and there is no mention of some *Evil* power *out there* trying to prevent it. According to Redfield human transformation to a higher order of being and civilization has nothing to do with religion and/or some elaborate Christological scheme but has everything to do with human spirituality that inexorably and necessarily is moving toward this positive transformative end. From this horizon of thought the *problem of evil* is resolved and theological dualism becomes a ridiculous notion because it does not seem to fit within a paradigm where material albeit spiritual world lifts the human person to ever higher and higher levels and stages of human consciousness. Despite the satisfying vision that Redfield holds out *Evil* appears to be *a necessary part of the process of transformation* and only with that understanding can I agree with Redfield's priest of the Manuscript "*that once we reach this critical mass, (of understanding why things happen, my insertion) the entire culture will begin to take these coincidental experiences seriously. We will wonder, in mass, what mysterious process underlies human life on this planet.*"⁵²

The biblical text we cited above in Romans 8 suggests that the transformation of the old earth into a new earth be linked to the transformation of the human person. The inference that can be made from this link is that the earth and the human person are locked into a mutual dependency of being and transformation. The human person is not just on the earth. The human person is Earth-Man par excellence. Both destinies are inextricably linked together. We keep trying to get off this planet but even in Revelation *we are not going up to Heaven*. Rather *Heaven* (in the form of the New Jerusalem) *is coming down here* and God Himself *is coming down from Heaven* to reside with mankind *on Earth* (i.e. a deified and transformed *new Earth*). Revelation states clearly that humans are not

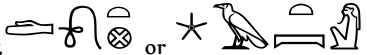
⁵¹ Redfield. *The Celestine Prophecy*, p. 6.

⁵² Redfield. *The Celestine Prophecy*, p. 8.

going anywhere other than a *temporary spiritual abode* or *celestial dimension* geodetically divided into *Paradise* and *Hell*.⁵³

Then I saw a great white throne, and the one seated on it. The earth and the sky fled away from his face: no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. Books were opened, and another book was opened: the book of life. The dead were judged according to what was written in the books, according to their works. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and hades gave up the dead who were in them. They were judged, each one according to his works. Then death and hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death. Anyone who was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with people! He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them! He will wipe away every tear from their eyes! Death will be no more neither will there be mourning, crying, or pain any more. For the first things have passed away." (Revelation 20:11-15 – 21:1-4, EOB).

So the human person (whether we like it or not) are inseparably part of the earth, both in their material and spiritual state of being. Scientific notions of space (e.g. *space-time displacement*, etc.) and the intergalactic space travel notions behind Star Treks suggest that the human person will one day be able to travel throughout the galaxy's with relative ease. However, these notions and perhaps possibilities at present we cannot live long enough to leave our own solar system and return because we are creatures subject to time/space let alone circumstance. The statement in Genesis that the human person was made from the dust of the earth, and became a living being by means of the breath of God (Genesis 1:7) has vast implications. Genesis one suggests that there is a symbiotic relationship between the living being of the human person, the earth, and the very essence of God's being, which the human person innately shares. Human persons are not just rational beings at the apex of the animal kingdom, but perhaps the lowest state of spiritual being below that of angels. Two biblical texts support the notion that the *human person is an order of spiritual being clothed in flesh*. The human person is neither pure material being, nor pure spirit, but a composite material and spiritual being, whose condition is uniquely subject to both the influences of good and evil. These texts state:

⁵³ In ancient Egyptian cosmology this geodetic location is called the *Tuat*,  or  the land of the dead, the Hidden Land, and Other World, located somewhere within the Earth of Time and Eternity. As noted above Bill Wiese describes his experience of this "Other World" in his book *23 Minutes in Hell* (2006) located in the center of the Earth: "I knew that most people up on the surface of the earth did not believe or even know that there was a whole world going on down here. They wouldn't believe it. But here it existed, and it was all too real. This place was so terrifying, so intense, and so hostile that it would be impossible for me to exaggerate the horror" (p. 9). Based on the ancient Egyptian geodetic description Wiese was not in the section of the *Tuat* experienced as Paradise but in the geodetic location humans experience as Hell. We note here that the word Taut has survived in the Amharic language of the Ethiopians as ቧት or

ጥጥት (twat) which means "morning" having lost its connection to the "morning star" (★) reflected in the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic given above for the same word.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Where I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand (Psalms 139:11-18, NIV).

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visited him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth (Psalms 8:3-9, KJV).

The biblical text Psalms 139 suggests that God envisioned what the human person would be before the moment of creation. The second text Psalms 8 suggests that the human person is a spiritual order of being just below angels, a *composite being* made of the "dust" and the very "breath of God" called *Earth-man*. This statement along with the statement of Jesus that *the human person will one day be like angels* suggests that God is not done with the deification process of the *Hu-Man* person (i.e. Dark-man) yet. However, the process has to be completed while acknowledging and dealing the reality of *Evil*. The mortal (flesh) condition of humans causes them to be uniquely subject to the power of Evil and therefore exposed to untold (and perhaps sometimes undeserved) suffering. Understanding human nature (who the human person is) will help us understand how *Evil* is able to work through this unique human condition in order to arrest and destroy the progress of God's *Good Creation* to its ultimate end. Apparently Evil was present at the initial birth of the human race of persons, and apparently will witness the complete transformation of the human person, that is, the Christiform being as an affirmation of God's power over Evil, where God Himself "*prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies*" who stand fuming at our deliverance and enjoyment of God's mercy and grace but can do nothing about it. At the portal of this final transformation the presence of *Evil* will likely be at its greatest power, in which demonic experience for that moment will reign supreme in the world. Evil will appear paramount and insurmountable, given the human limitations to deal with it. Both the limited human condition and unwarranted idolatry and hubris, which fail to recognize this human condition, will assist Evil in its ultimate aims to arrest the transformational progress of God's Good Creation toward its ultimate end. This is the story given in Revelation, where the human forces of evil attack Christ's heavenly army's. They are posed to attack the camp of God as a dangerous foreign occupier of the earthly domain in a final battle that is called Armageddon. However, they are burned up by God's fire from heaven when they march "across the breadth of the earth," and surround "the camp of God's people, the city he loves" (Revelation 20:9a, NIV). The attack appears to be motivated because the kings of the Earth (influenced by the Beast) can no longer abide the thousand year reign of Christ *over all heavenly and earthly principalities and powers* where Christ rules in righteousness with the iron rod of His Word.

Nevertheless, God is using the reality and presence of Evil (in this *Kairos moment*) to move God's *Good Creation* toward its intended divine end. This is the view that I uphold in this book. My view does not oppose the conclusion reached by Gottfried Wilhelm, Baron von Leibniz (1646-1716) in his theodicy that: "*In spite of evil, this world is the best one God could have created --- the best of all possible worlds.*"⁵⁴ Rather my view modifies Leibniz's theodicy by saying that the "best of all possible worlds" is *already but not yet* (i.e. Complete in the mind of God but not fully realized as a cosmic and ontological reality). When evil is arrested at the frontiers of God's good creation the "best of all possible worlds," will then become a full and perfected reality when God (truly *rests*) because God will finally "*be all and all*" (1 Corinthians 15:28b). Leibniz was a German aristocrat, diplomat, philosopher, and scientist. Leibniz coined the neologism "theodicy," combining "the Greek words for God, *theos*, and righteousness, *dike*, . . ." in order to frame a new area of theological thought to explain "how God and evil could coexist. . . because it challenged God's righteousness, ...".⁵⁵ My view is not as concerned about defending God's righteousness (which is the aim of theodicy grounded in the theology that God is an all-loving being) but rather to defend the sovereignty of God against the claim that God is not *All-powerful*, and so cannot defeat *Evil*. God can do so but for now is using the presence of *Evil* to advance the Christ Event and Christological Project for the good of the human person and the total creation from *very good* toward the perfection of *all good*. Evil uses the human condition of infant immaturity to affect its ultimate purpose of death for God's *Good Creation*. Despite these dangers for the human person and the cosmos, *Evil* itself may be a *necessary part* of the creation's growth where, in God's wisdom, "*all things [good and evil] work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose*" (Romans 8:28, KJV).

Teilhard de Chardin calls this whole process of completion the *Omega Point* of human existence where everything culminates and is sublated in a transpersonal *Cosmic Christ*; the *Alpha and Omega* of all there is and will be.⁵⁶ This spiritual sublation of all being into the *Cosmic Christ* at the *Omega Point* of human and cosmic existence promises to be the way *Evil* will be purged out of God's good creation, as all beings are put through a sieve where only the good is left. It will be the final solution to the problem of evil. This is the Christological hope that my thesis points to, in discussing evil, as a *sui generis* being, opposed to, but ultimately under the sovereignty and will of God. Even more radical than de Chardin's theology are the biblical records, which suggest that the death knell for evil lies in the nature, person and purpose of Jesus Christ. Christ in Revelation 1:8 is recorded as saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty" (NIV). This is the all-encompassing, ever coming One, who is the beginning and end of all things spiritual and material, seen and unseen. The purpose of this Christ, or de Chardin's *Cosmic Christ* is revealed in the biblical record. Christ's purpose in coming into the world was to save it through a process of spiritual sublation of all being and even non-being (negative spiritual reality) in God the Creator. This includes the entire spiritual and material order of existence. Non-being here is defined as death, the negation of life, and the ultimate weapon of evil against the human person, the origin of all corruption and blight in God's good creation. First Corinthians 15:20-28 points to the idea of the sublation of all things in Christ. However it is often neglected in exegesis, because preachers and theologians are frightened of its implications. The text threatens the doctrine of the Trinity by suggesting that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, in a future dispensation,

⁵⁴ Joseph F. Kelly, *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002), p. 121.

⁵⁵ Kelly, p. 121.

⁵⁶ Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), pp. 257-258.

will become subordinate to God, the Father after Christ has arrested all evil. This suggestion smacks of an old second and third century Christian heresy known as *subordinationism*, which “held that because the Son and the Spirit proceed from the Father, they are not equal to the Father and so are not fully divine.”⁵⁷ The text in First Corinthians states:

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:20-28, NIV).

The text says something else to me. It is not about the subordination of Jesus Christ, the Son, to God, the Father. I believe the text is about the final solution to the problem of evil. It is about how Christ arrests all evil in Christ’s own being. It is, therefore, about Christ willingly being sacrificed on the cross and totally subsumed within God, the Father, so that God’s will for the creation could be fulfilled. Given Jesus’ moral character and purpose it should not surprise anyone that he prayed for the total communion and oneness of the human person, in Christ within the Trinity. Jesus prayed:

For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me (John 17:19-21, NIV).

Why would anyone think (after reading this) that Christ would be opposed to his willing sublation of Christ’s own being in a future age, guided by that very same motive of complete obedience to God, evident in Christ’s prayer? This all-in-all process of sublation suggests, however, that there is a flaw in God’s good creation, which was there from the very beginning of human creation. The whole process suggests that we should speak of perfection not only in terms of completion to something that is mature, but an innate incompleteness, or void in something that is unfinished. Evil takes full advantage of the unfinished work in both the creation and the human person. Apparently, the sublation of evil in Christ at the Omega Point of human existence, followed by the sublation of Christ in God, the Father is the way evil will either be contained, or purged out from God’s good creation. This, apparently, is how evil will be arrested, or subordinated within the totality of the good, so that God can finish the work of creation and bring about the “*best of all possible worlds*.” St. Augustine is going to suggest that the flaw in God’s good creation occurred at the point of original sin, when evil, as the absence of good, entered the world. For St. Augustine this was as a consequence of the volition and propensity of the human person to disobey God. But as we will see, other theologians like Karl Barth

⁵⁷ Stanley J. Grenz, et al., *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999) , s.v. “subordinationism.”

are going to argue that evil existed prior to the creation of God's good creation. Barth will admit that evil may have entered the world by the means that St. Augustine suggests, but evil is by no means a mere void. Evil, for Barth, is a real being and a negative spiritual reality opposed to God. Evil is opposed to the progress of God's good creation toward completion and perfection in the sense that one day, within time and eternity, God's good creation will be absent of any flaws, and or sin. My contribution to the whole discussion is to present an outline of the nature of evil and how it actually operates to affect its purposes in the world. The purpose and aim of evil are discerned by observing the actions and behavior of its acolytes and devotees. We must also understand evil's spiritual environmental ecology. Evil has to operate in an environment conducive to the promotion of demonic experience. Jesus said that "Satan's seat" is known (Revelation 2:13, NIV). Both ancient and modern theologians have raised the question about where the seat of evil is. St. Augustine's doctrine of original sin suggests that evil is in the heart of the human person. That is because St. Augustine does not regard evil as an entity. St. Augustine appears to be following the privation theory of evil. It was Clement of Alexandria (150-210 AD), who said that *Evil* is the absence of good. *Evil* has no positive reality. Joseph F. Kelly, in *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition*, summarizes Clement's privation theodicy. Kelly states:

Clement's second theodicy was the privation theory of evil, another product of his Greek training. Since God created all and since God is completely good, he could not have created evil. But if god did not create evil, then it cannot exist. Evil, therefore, does not exist in a positive way but rather in a negative one --- evil is a lack of good.⁵⁸

Karl Barth describes evil as *Nothingness* and holds that *Evil* is located on the outer edges, or frontiers of God's good creation. *Evil* (from Barth's perspective) is by nature *sui generis*. This means that *Evil* has *autonomous being* that is unique (i.e. has its own kind of being). *Evil* is at the frontier of God's *Good Creation* and gains its entry to it through the *negative spiritual portal* or "*shadow side*" of human nature. It can only enter God's *Good Creation* through human free will, which desires to share in its power in return for the rewards of various *demonic experiences*. Once the human person crosses the frontier into *Evil's* sphere of influence then *demonic experience* can take place. Thereafter *Evil* can operate in the human person and through them in human institutions (i.e. spiritually possess the soul of the person and/or human institution). At this point *Evil* becomes the "*No*" to God's "*Yes*." *Evil*, or *Nothingness*, becomes the *antithesis* of God's *Good Creation*.⁵⁹ To understand the very nature of *Evil* we must understand how it operates in the spiritual ecology of the human person and the material ecology of the cosmos as a negative spiritual reality. Of course I have not proved that *Evil* is a negative spiritual reality yet, but I begin with this, as one of my presupposition, so that I have some place to start. *Evil* appears from all accounts to be real and genuine. Important questions arise from these considerations as well. What is evil doing in God's *Good Creation*? Since *Evil* appears to be a reality, then what is it? The classical study of the problem of evil never really asks these questions, hence the purpose and warrant for my suppositions. What are the implications of the nature of evil for the doctrine of God, the human person and for the study of the problem of evil? Two huge

⁵⁸ Kelly, p. 43.

⁵⁹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation*, Vol. III.3, translated by G. W. Bromiley and R. J. Ehrlich (New York: T & T Clark International , 2004), pp. 302, 350, 352.

questions follow from this triple question. How is *Evil* able to operate in God's *Good Creation* to affect negatively all sentient being and bring about untold suffering to and in millions of human persons?

It is as if the earth is *Evil's* playground of death and suffering. I define sentient being as all living beings that can feel both pleasure and pain and has some capacity for rational thought. Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), who was a scientist, theologian and Jesuit priest, said the cosmos is "one single and gigantic organism," a "living mass," or "living earth."⁶⁰ *Evil* in our view is designed to affect the negative spirituality of de Chardin's *living earth* in order to cause pain and bring about death. I define de Chardin's *living earth* as the entire spiritual and material cosmos. This includes human beings. However, they are not the only sentient beings. Angels and other principalities and powers (seen and unseen) along with human institutions are included under this rubric as well. The chief weapons of *Evil* over this complex cosmos are death and blight, which is the corruption of all that is inherently good within the material and spiritual ecology of earth. Should theology be concerned about the material ecology, which *Evil* seeks to blight through both natural and human actions? The answer is yes because God is concerned about it. Revelation 11:18 makes this clear;

The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great-- and for destroying those who destroy the earth (NIV).

Besides these questions and considerations, how is *Evil* able to move against the will of God which seeks the overall good of the spiritual and material cosmos, and despite the marshaling of every institutional structure of the human person against it? I will try and work this question out using a phrase I coined, the "*Superhighway of God*." I define God's *spiritual superhighway* as *the unified field of human and cosmic experience* (i.e. the experience of phenomena both good and evil). Along this highway both good and evil can travel. On this highway of unified experience the struggle for good and evil takes place. I will propose that this spiritual and cosmic *superhighway of unified experience* is the means by which both evil and good operate negatively and positively to achieve God's ultimate purposes for the salvation of the entire spiritual and material cosmos. This superhighway of unified experience is the two-way street by which evil enters God's good creation as *demonic experience*. This spiritual superhighway is part of God's economy of salvation. However, the human person is not the sole object or recipient of God's grace and plan of redemption. God has the whole creation in view. The real problem of evil and the solution to that problem will likely be found on *God's superhighway of unified human experience* of both good and evil. *The real problem of evil is that it cannot be denied access to this spiritual pathway, without blocking the good*, since the human person appears to be incapable of arresting evil within themselves without the grace of God. Divine grace however has to be freely accepted, which the human person rejects time and time again. The reason *why bad things happen to good people* and why classical theodicy appears helpless to give an answer can be found on God's superhighway of unified human experience? To say that *Evil* is necessary to the process in order to promote the good seems rather cruel at best. Some people will say that *Evil* is not necessary, because no explanation is justified when people receive undeserved suffering. This is one of the harder questions for the *problem of evil*. Human suffering is more of a why question than a how question. So when the problem of evil asks the question how can *Evil* exist in God's *Good Creation* if God is

⁶⁰ De Chardin, p. 112.

both all loving and all-powerful, it is actually asking, in respect to human suffering, *why is there undeserved suffering in the world?* I will suggest in this work that the answer to why is the how! Both questions are contingent on discovering *what is Evil?* None of these questions can be fully answered, without answering aspects of one or the other. This in and of itself suggests the complexity of this project. In this work I can only begin the process of thought toward this vast complexity of questions. Therefore this project cannot purely be an intellectual project of the mind, that is, *"faith seeking understanding"* (*fides quaerens intellectum*, Anselm) but *"feeling seeking meaning"* as the human soul experiences the *phenomenon of Evil in the world*, that is, a project to *know the soul* as it seeks *meaning* in the struggle between good and evil. Evil cannot be understood as much as it can be felt by the impact of *demonic experience*. This is because *IT* is irrational ontological being. At some level to understand *IT* is to feel *IT* through experiencing its affects the phenomenon of human suffering and what those experiences of *Evil* means to the human person. Somehow the human person must come face to face with *IT* in order to understand *IT*. That is why on the front page of this book I said: *"I have seen the face of Evil, and lived!"* The purpose of this work is to show what Evil is by showing what *Evil* does (i.e. how it operates once it enters God's *Good Creation* primarily by means of human desire for demonic experiences). The pleasures of demonic experiences are the wages humans are offered to participate, cooperate and promote *Evil* within God's *Good Creation*. What is offered by *Evil* to human acolytes and devotees of *Evil* is really *Death*, which is the wages of *Sin* but humans generally won't discover that until they are going over the precipice into the *Lake of Fire* but by then it is too late! Nevertheless, I want to define if possible the spatial and geodetic location of Evil within the cosmic exterior order of creation, and within the spiritual interiority of sentient being so affected by the enticement to participate in *Evil*. This concept of spatial/geodetic location presents problems, because it suggests not only that *Evil* is real but that *Evil* has ontological being. I believe that *Evil* is a negative spiritual reality. *Evil* cannot be seen, but it can be experienced (i.e. felt, discerned, etc.). Karl Barth is one theologian that thought of *Evil* in spatial/geodetic terms. *Evil* is somehow located ontologically outside God's creation. Barth proposes this in order to protect God from the accusation that God created Evil, but has a problem on the other end of showing that God yet has sovereignty over *Evil*, even at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*. We have already said something about the nature of Evil when we accept Barth's determination that *Evil* is a spiritual entity, located outside God's good creation. *Evil* is (1) a negative spiritual entity, reality, or force of some kind. (2) *Evil* is not subject to God's grace (reserved for God's *Good Creation*) because *Evil* is the very anti-thesis of any good within the created order (i.e. *IT* cannot be anything other than what it is by nature). (3) *Evil* is the implacable foe of God and God's *Good Creation*. (4) *Evil* apparently lives and has its being in the demonic experiences of sentient beings that wish to participate in its power for temporary wages of pleasure and desire. We can describe *Evil* by observing the process of blight in the material created order. We can look at the actions of *IT*s sentient acolytes and devotees. We can observe the events and the outcomes of those events that happen in the material world such as war, poverty, hunger, disease, mass murder, etc. These things can be studied and generalizations can be arrived at about the nature of *Evil* and its aims. When we know what *Evil* is and does within the human person, human institutions, and the cosmic order, we will be that much closer to answering the question of theodicy. How can genuine Evil exist despite the fact that God is both omni-benevolent, and omnipotent? The problem of evil can become more than a logical syllogism or a past time for theologians and philosophers of religion. When this syllogistic paradox of good and evil is resolved, we will be closer to knowing why *Evil* could be a necessary reality in God's created order. We also might be able to answer the question *"why do bad things happen to good people?"* These events (phenomenon that affects the psychic mind

and emotions of the human persons and human institutions within the cosmos) may appear random to us and even unjust, but they could be part of the interwoven fabric of the same cosmic stuff for the good of the whole creation. There will be casualties of this cosmic war between good and evil along the way. Of course some scholars on the problem of evil suggest that the things that happen to the human person are gratuitous and unnecessary suffering and so there cannot be any possible justification for it. This kind of undeserved human suffering cannot be explained as a necessary process needed for the greater good of all concerned. Who can say, for example, that gang raping of Serbian women to achieve ethnic cleansing is necessary for the greater good of all? Some things that happen appear to be evil incarnate and are done without rhyme or reason. They are beyond human understanding or sanction. Any reason given to placate the victim seems trite and a bedfellow with Evil itself. For example, St. Augustine offered such a trite explanation to African Christian women, raped by Roman soldiers, in the earliest known incidents of “ethnic” cleaning. St. Augustine says in the *City of God* that:

Our adversaries certainly think they have a weighty attack to make on Christians, when they make the most of their captivity by adding stories of violations of wives, of maidens ready for marriage, and even cases of women in religious life.⁶¹

However, according to St. Augustine, there was no shame on these African Christian women, because a violation of chastity, “without the will’s consent, cannot pollute the character,” even if the rape “could not have taken place without some physical pleasure,” on the part of the victim.⁶² Therefore, there was no need to commit the sin of suicide that would condemn them to hell, because “Christians have no authority to commit suicide in any circumstance.”⁶³ There was no way to deal with the shame of rape for the victim but to accept it and the theology that states: It is significant that in the sacred canonical books there can nowhere be found any injunction or permission to commit suicide either to ensure immortality or to avoid or escape any evil.⁶⁴ What comes out of St. Augustine’s theology on this point is the view that *No-thing* (i.e. *Evil*) is as bad as it seems and *No-thing* justifies suicide (which is worse) to escape IT. At least the victim can claim the purity of their mind, if not the purity of their body. Such theological explanations (both ancient and modern) are what have given theodicy a bad name. However, with a greater understanding of the nature of *Evil* we will be able to provide a new horizon of thought on these questions. Maybe a new paradigm for what *Evil* is will someday lead to the construction of a *theology of Evil*, in which theodicy is only part of a larger *doctrine of Evil*. Such a horizon of understanding will be necessary for a complete understanding of the *doctrine of God* and the *doctrine of the human person*. Such a doctrine and its attending theology would be capable of answering the question *why bad things happen to good people*, without running into untenable *cul-de-sacs of thought* and trite explanations. Theodicy needs a theology of *Evil* in order to keep it from making such trite and irrelevant U-turns or dead ends that lead nowhere.

⁶¹ St. Augustine, *City of God*, translated by Henry Bettenson (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), p.26.

⁶² St. Augustine, p. 26.

⁶³ St. Augustine, p. 31.

⁶⁴ St. Augustine, p. 31.

CHAPTER THREE

SOME PRESUPPOSITIONS ON THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

Four major presuppositions orbit around my horizon of thought, purpose, and claims. The first presupposition is that God, as a consequence of His omni-benevolent and omnipotent Trinitarian moral nature, characterized as love and holiness, is necessarily involved in the struggle between good and evil within the context of time and eternity. A corollary of this presupposition is that God is not involved in this struggle alone. God is doing so as a concrescence of divine creativity in process *with humanity*. Human persons are *co-creators* of God's Good Creation, which is in process of completion and perfection. Revelation 21 suggests that human persons, human institutions and the nations of the world *are in process* of creating and bring the best arts, music, designs, systems of thought, discoveries, justice, the good life, holiness, mercy, grace, love, etc. (i.e. the best that humanity has) into the City of God, i.e. the *New Je-ru-salem* ("Gate of Jehovah's Peace):

I saw no sanctuary in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its sanctuary. The city has no need for the sun or the moon to shine, for the very glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light; the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates will not be shut by day (for there will be no night there), and the nations will come, bringing their splendor and tribute. (Revelation 21:22-26, EOB).

However this blessed outcome it must be remembered that human persons, human institutions, and the kings of the Earth can also (and some have) set themselves up as *co-belligerents* with *Evil* against God. In recognition of this Revelation declares no *Obamanation*⁶⁵ will enter the New Jerusalem: "*Nothing profane will enter into the city, or anyone who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life*" (Revelation 21:27, EOB). Secondly, we presuppose that evil is an ontological negative spiritual reality independent of, but necessarily connected to the reality of God but under God's will and sovereignty. We will try to avoid the thorny issue of giving *Evil* an absolute independent persona in order to side step a dualistic theology. However we will have to adopt a modified dualism and say that *Evil* by nature is a negative reality of some kind that can, and does oppose God's *Good Creation*. We must treat *Evil* as a contingent, but nonetheless separate reality from the reality of God. We have to say that *Evil* is a *preeminent, contingent, and autonomous negative principality and power operating as dark light, or as death itself*. *Evil* is, therefore, opposed to all that is good and beautiful in God's created order. Thirdly, we presuppose that while *Evil* itself may be stalemated, arrested, or even temporally overcome; it is likely that *Evil* cannot be destroyed. IT can

⁶⁵ *Obamanation* with its motto "*Love Wins*" and ITs claim that "*This is a nation of laws*" (i.e. only the laws "Mr. Lincoln" likes who has shown his true colors being called the "*Ally, Hero, and Icon*" of the LGBT community and named "Ally of the Year" by *OUT magazine LGBT* for 2015 and earlier in 2012 called the "The First Gay President" by *Newsweek*, certainly a staunch friend of theirs but no friend of God, see **James 4:4**) *include but is not limited* to the following political/social nuances: *national and international advocacy for marriage equality, Gay rights* (with economic and monetary threats to nations that don't comply), *support for abortions, support for transgender rights, systematically undermining Constitutional protections for Freedom of Religion while hypocritically touting support for the "Rule of Law" and "Equality before the Law" and any other unholy thing fostered by Progressive Political and Social Idealism* (which claims: "*We knows what is best for you*") *and which stands against God's holiness in favor of Humanistic social engineering, the creation of Civil Religion, Secularism and Scientific Positivism which aspires to achieve grand-domestication over all thought, denying anything that you cannot hear, see, feel or touch, etc.*

only be arrested by casting its acolytes and devotees into *outer darkness* well beyond the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*. A fourth presupposition is that *Evil* is necessary in process of creative novelty for the ascendancy and the concrescence of the good and beautiful. Evil is (for the time being) necessary in the economy of God's salvation for the created order. This will be necessary until the fulfillment of the promise signified by the *Christ Event* culminating in the new order (New Heaven and New Earth) brought about by the *Cosmic Christ* where *God will be All in All*. At this, some will say "Why is Evil deemed necessary in the economy of God's salvation for the ultimate benefit and salvation of mankind?" All that can be said here (for the time being) is that it just is! A passage **Revelation (20:1-3)** leaves it there as well:

Then I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. He seized the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, the one who deceives the inhabited earth. The angel bound him for a thousand years and cast him into the abyss. It was shut and sealed over him, so that he should deceive the nations no more, *until the thousand years were finished. After this, he is to be released for a short time.*

(Rev. 20:1-3, **EOB**)

My Primary Claims

In this book I make four interrelated claims I see as necessary in showing what the nature of *Evil* is, as it relates to God, the human person, and the cosmos. They are as follows:

(1) We claim that both God and evil are ontological co-eval spiritual realities. Here we do not mean that *Evil* is a co-eternal deity equal to God. However, *Evil* is somehow able to stand outside the creation as an autonomous metaphysical reality, which we believe existed before God's *Good Creation*. *Evil* is not merely the absence of the good (St. Thomas Aquinas). Evil is not a mere defect in the cosmic order or imperfection in the human person (St. Augustine) which allows the human person an excuse or way out for sin, nor is *Evil* itself a contingent being within the order of creation, which necessarily implies that God created *IT*. *Evil* is not then an entity within the created order (St. Thomas Aquinas).

(2) We claim that *Evil* seeks to be worshipped within the life of all created being. *Evil* invades the spiritual interiority of sentient being, especially the spiritual interiority of the human person and human institutions. *Evil* is an irrational homicidal negative spiritual being that uses death, which is, non-being and the threat of non-being as its major weapon to achieve that worship. Paradoxically *Evil* seeks to take the life of all being through which it must live in order to sustain its own negative existence. Besides the threat of non-being Evil offers living beings temporary pleasures of demonic experiences in the form of **MONEY, POWER & SEX**. This temporary fix somehow replaces for a time the inherent fear of non-being by human persons who fail to answer Jesus' question "*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mark 8:36-37, KJV).

(3) We claim that there is a unified field of experience in ontological existence that makes the universe one spiritual fabric. We will call this unified field of experience the *Super-highway of God*. This cosmic and spiritual highway allows God to affect God's purposes through creative novelty to *lure* all sentient being toward the good. This super highway of unified field of cosmic and human experience can be described as a continuum of some sort between time and eternity, or between

heaven and earth. *Evil* is a necessary part of the created order, in the sense that it sits ready at the frontier of God's *Good Creation* ready to exit onto the *God's Superhighway* and influence the human to participate in various demonic experiences. *Evil* is the power that gives people the short-lived pleasures of demonic experience. The claim that the created order is made up of one spiritual fabric of ontological existence and human experiences, both good and evil, explains why God is able to see all (His omni-presence), and know all (His omniscience) as one creative event. However, the nature of God's power, God's providential care for the creation cannot prevent *Evil* from operating along the same unified field of cosmic and human experience, *without destroying* the unified fabric of that experience. At the moment the tares in the created order cannot be uprooted without doing the same to the wheat. Potholes in the roadway should not become large fissures that cause majors jams that block the free flow of human experiences, especially those that are Christological in nature and contribute to the maturity of God's good creation. The point is that God cannot destroy evil without at the same time destroying the good.

(4) We claim that within God's economy, or plan of salvation for the entire creation, Christ is the *final solution to the problem of Evil*. The power of Christ is how all things (whether good or evil) are *transformed, redeemed, arrested, or destroyed* through a spiritual process of sublation in Christ. Christ Jesus becomes the *Cosmic Christ*, where all things, both good and evil, are reconciled unto God, at the *Omega Point* of human and cosmic existence. All of these claims will be processed primarily through the minds of four major theological thinkers, who dealt with one aspect of another. They include St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Karl Barth, and Walter Wink.

Contextual Issues

Some time ago I received some advice from a published writer in a private letter, which he/she had received from an editor. I was told to "Write not only to be understood, but [also] not be misunderstood."⁶⁶ That advice was about writing style. The mechanics of good writing can take care of those things. But a bigger question of clarity goes deeper than what is said and how it is said. The question about clarity and meaning has to do with defining the meaning of words behind ideas, and the meaning of ideas within the tradition or horizon of thought from which the words and ideas are derived. Within each tradition or horizon of thought there are hidden prejudices that could lead to confusion as to what is being said. This becomes an unnecessary barrier to understanding what is being said and what is meant. The great danger is that what is said takes on the quality of universality, *as if everyone believes and understands the same thing*. This of course is not true, because the speaker or writer's words, terms, choice of sources, and emphasis placed on terms and phrases are all guided, or chosen from within a particular cultural context, social location, or horizon of understanding. However, the filter of cultural, religious, social, or intellectual prejudices can never be entirely done away with. In fact, some scholars believe that these prejudices may serve as a positive contribution to conversation if they are acknowledged, delimited and particularized. One such scholar is the German philosopher, Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer dealt with the issue of prejudice from a philosophical perspective. Gadamer said in *Truth and Method* (2002):

Does being situated within traditions really mean being subject to prejudices and limited in one's freedom? Is not, rather, all human existence, even the freest, limited and qualified in

⁶⁶ Dr. Rick Ezell, Pastor, Letter to Dia Mari-Jata , 22 February 2007.

various ways? If this is true, the idea of an absolute reason is not a possibility for historical humanity. Reason exists for us only in concrete, historical terms --- i.e., it is not its own master but remains constantly dependent on the given circumstances in which it operates. . . . If we want to do justice to man's finite, historical mode of being, it is necessary to fundamentally rehabilitate the concept of prejudice and acknowledge the fact that there are legitimate prejudices.⁶⁷

Later, Gadamer writes about the horizon of understanding. A person's horizon of understanding is grounded in, or arises from human prejudice. Prejudices are never fixed, but are always changing because of new experiences. These new experiences over time create new or modified horizons of thought that can lead to new discovery. Prejudices therefore are not something that necessarily needs to be done away with in all cases but disclosed and used as a means to arrive at new horizons of understanding about what we know or learn. Gadamer says:

We started by saying that a hermeneutical situation is determined by the prejudices that we bring with us. They constitute, then, the horizon of a particular present, for they represent that beyond which it is impossible to see. But now it is important to avoid the error of thinking that the horizon of the present consists of a fixed set of opinions and valuations, and that the otherness of the past can be foregrounded from it as from a fixed ground. In fact horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come.⁶⁸

I adhere to an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian faith tradition. Orthodoxy in general is a way to conserve what is best within the faith tradition as it moves through time and eternity and it fights against unwarranted changes that fly against the Word of God and church doctrine and faith practices by upholding and advancing ancient doctrinal positions of the church and best religious and faith practices. In this fight to conserve the fundamentals of the orthodox faith the ideas that uphold them tend to become universally true for all time within the group that adhere to them and also become as part of the groups identity, that is, how they see themselves under the authority and will of God in-Christ. However, Gadamer warns conservators of all traditions that no ideas are fixed for all time. The trajectory of change is long, but the meaning of words and ideas necessarily change over time. These ideas and even words must be infused and modified with new meaning if the traditions upheld are to be living traditions. But even with this understanding, the new meanings derived must be announced as particular to the tradition, because the core ideas that uphold the traditions are basic and even fundamental only to it and not necessarily to any other. If the groups understanding of words and ideas are put into conversation with other traditions as fixed ideas and without announcing the particularity from which they arise, then the meaning of what is being said is either lost or confused. Therefore, it is necessary for me, as a member of conservative religious culture, to say

⁶⁷ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Second Revised Edition, Translated by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 2002), pp. 276-277.

⁶⁸ Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*, p. 306

something about my own religious tradition, prejudices and horizon of understanding in order to avoid a false universality of my tradition's particular view on *Evil*. In this work I am applying my understanding of the nature of evil within a particular tradition. I can only hope with Gadamer that my own tradition and my particular prejudices or understanding about the nature of evil can help the readers of this project understand what I mean when I use terms such as "Satan" and the "Devil." I want to avoid a false universality of meaning and understanding.

I am writing this book about the nature of evil from a Nu African Christian perspective. Even within that religious cultural matrix I am writing as a Christian within the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tawehedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church (EOTC) faith. This by itself suggests that my belief about *Evil*, Satan, or the Devil is fundamentally different from other Christians in this wider religious context. In my Nu African orthodox faith tradition the Bible is taken literally and the EOTC faith traditions and church doctrines (grounded as they are in the Bible) are held to be sacred as well. The Bible is taken as God's very words. *Based upon my experience* within the black and African church faith traditions I believe African and African-American Christians believe that "Satan" or the "Devil" is just as real as God. They think of "Satan" as a fallen angel that is now opposed to God's will. They do not generally distinguish Satan from *Evil*. Rather, they view Satan as *Evil incarnate*. Satan is not just an *acolyte* or *devotee* of *Evil*, but he is the "Evil One" and the cause of evil. *Evil* is not, therefore, thought of as a separate being or entity from the "Evil One."

In *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* as translated by Rev. Marcos Daoud (1991) the "Abunezebesemayat" ("Our Father"/"The Lord's Prayer") it states "Even lead us, lest we enter into temptation, but deliver us from *the evil one*."⁶⁹ We note here Daoud does not translate from the Ge'ez "deliver us from evil" or "deliver us from *all evil*" but from the Amharic where the grammar suggests that **Satan** and **Evil** are essentially the one and the same. Satan is not merely an acolyte of Evil but Evil in and of himself (i.e. Evil incarnate). In the Amharic Ethiopian Bible (Ya-Matewos = Matthew 6:13) the word complex is ከከፋዋ (ka-kəfum) meaning "from the evil one" that is "a person or spiritual personage who does and promotes evil or wicked deeds", i.e. the one who seeks to bring about harm, disaster and who as Jesus said: "is a murderer from the beginning of creation and the Father of lies" (John 8:44). However from the Ge'ez original Bible the word-phrase complex is እኩሉ : እኩይ (em-k'elluəkkuy)⁷⁰, which means "from all evil", i.e. deliver us from *all misfortune, evil things, wickedness, viciousness, vice, wrongdoing, iniquity, malice, or calamity*⁷¹, and so does not indicate a spiritual personage that may be promoting these evils. Neither translation satisfactorily supports the claims of this project that Evil is *a really real entity* and the dark spiritual power behind Satan and/or the evil things that we see manifested in human society. This is one of the primary issues (among others related to it) I am exploring in my book even though the propositions I am making appears counter to my faith tradition in respect to central question: *What is Evil?* Nevertheless, I seek to answer this question because I believe that the Orthodox doctrine of God and Orthodox doctrine of the Human Person will remain inadequate without developing a corresponding orthodox doctrine and theology of *Evil*. Is *Evil*

⁶⁹ *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church*. Translated by Rev. Marcos Daoud. (Kingston, Jamaica: Ethiopian Orthodox Church, 1991), p. 173.

⁷⁰ ወንጌል : ቅዱስ : ዘእግዚአብሔር : ወመድኅኒነ : ኢየሱስ : ከርስቶስ፡ ወመጸሐፍቲሆሙ : ለሐዋርያቱ : ቅዱሳን። In *Novum Testamentum: Domini Nostri Et Servatoris: Jesus Christi Æthiopice. AD Codicum Manuscriptorum Fidem*. Edidit Thomas Pell Platt, A.M. (Londini: Impressit Ricardus Watts, Impensis Societatis AD Biblia Sacra in Britannia et Apud Exteras Gentes Evulganda Institutæ, M DCCC XXX).

⁷¹ Wolf Leslau. *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez* (Classical Ethiopic). (Harrassowitz Verlag – Wiesbaden, 2006), p. 17.

an autonomous spiritual being? Is Satan the chief acolyte and devotee of *Evil*? These are areas of understanding where I have begun to explore my faith tradition for answers. This exploration is adding to my own horizon of understanding, as Gadamer suggested it would. I am, therefore, pursuing my study from the particularity of my own African Christian tradition EOTC but the reader should not understand that to mean that I don't question it. However, I am questioning the fundamental beliefs of my own tradition so as to add new understanding to it, so that it remains a living tradition, which serves the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church. I think of myself in this respect as an African orthodox church theologian putting questions to that tradition in terms of biblical theological truth. The EOTC as a whole has not said a lot in writing on what they believe about Satan or evil. For them Satan and evil are simply realities. *Evil* is not thought of as a separate reality from that of Satan.

Nevertheless, African Christian Orthodox theologians tend to speak about these two conjunctive and inseparable spiritual realities from the perspective of a false universality from within an African orthodox tradition. On the other hand the Pentecostal and black Baptist tradition into which I was born and raised before being baptized into the EOTC (2013) is little different in their view of Evil. The black Baptist church, although they do not have their own *written* confessional statements about Satan and evil, have, nevertheless, adopted statements from Southern and American Baptist documents that are in harmony with their oral understanding of what Baptists believe about these spiritual personages and realities. The problem is these documents do not say much either. For instance, nothing is said about Satan in J. G. Bow's *What Baptists Believe and Why They Believe It*, which is a Southern Baptist document used by many African-American Baptist churches. The ordination counsel of Baptist churches uses this particular document. Even in American Baptist publications like Winthrop Still Hudson's *Baptist Convictions* (1963), based on the "Eighteen Articles of Baptists Beliefs," that Baptist churches generally subscribe to, and Hudson's revised edition of *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice* (1991), little or nothing is said about evil or Satan. These adopted publications all convey the impression that no doctrine of evil or doctrine on Satan exists in the general Baptist church.

However, this is when you look at the black Baptist church oral tradition contained in its preaching and songs. What is believed about evil and Satan is largely contained in its oral preaching tradition. The sermons that African-American preachers have permitted to be published contain the ideas and general understanding about who Satan is and what evil is. These oral traditions have yet to be set out in published writing and or confessional statements designed to lay out black Baptist's beliefs about evil and Satan. To fill in this void would be a problem all by itself, because of the vast number of perspectives, even, between African-American Baptists, which have a plethora of different traditions within this general Christian denomination. Within the African-American Baptist Christian denomination there are Progressive Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, National Baptists, Independent Baptists, Confessional Baptists, and a Baptist movement called Full Gospel. There are even some African-American churches that are Southern Baptists and American Baptists, which are predominately Euro-American. This void in laying out what the African-American Baptist believes about evil and Satan is likely caused by this plethora of traditions. No one can bring all of these oral perspectives on evil and Satan together into harmony or discover what they are. This is not to say that there are no sources (i.e. black sermons, black songs of praise and lament, poems, and prayers, etc.) and that no valiant attempts have been made to do so. For instance there is an important work by Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays (1938), *The Negro's God as reflected in his literature* on the theology of God (i.e. God talk from a black slave perspective) and *Slave Songs of the United States* by Charles Pickard

Ware, Lucy McKim Garrison, and William Francis Allen (1867), which was the earliest and most influential collection of black spirituals during the time, consisting of 136 songs, and Miles Mark Fisher (1953), *Negro Slave Songs in the United States*. From these three sources one could possibly glean some insight into what black people believe about Satan, demons and how these dark spiritual personages affect our lives by looking at what we believe about God when confronted with these dark powers of Evil. Our security against such dark powers is in God whom we praise and celebrate who though He seems silent is just testing our faith as Benjamin Mays shows with this black poem from *"Classical" Negro Literature (1914-1937)*:

IF — WE JUST BUT KNEW

"If we just but knew who's with us
On this raging sea of life,
When the gale blows like a tempest,
And the wind cuts like a knife,
No doubts nor fears would daunt us,
Our hearts would still be true,
No demon's self could flaunt us,
If --- we just but knew.

"If we just but knew who's with us
When the deluge is at hand,
When high the seething waters
Pile upon the shifting sand,
Our minds would still be resting
On him who seems asleep;
Who but our faith is testing,
And safe our souls will keep.

"If we just but knew who's with us
When the wind and wave are strong,
And when total wreck seems certain, ---
E'en then a joyful song
Our faithful lips would utter,
And we, with no ado,
Might walk upon the waters,
If--- we just but knew!"⁷²

Some of our prayers might resemble the following where we confess our sins to God and request His protection from the "Tempter's power" as Mays records:

"O, God, to Thee I come today,
And with true repentance kneeling.
The while I bend my knee to pray,
The tears from mind eyes are stealing.
But for Thy grace lost would I be,

⁷² Benjamin E. Mays, *The Negro's God as Reflected in His Literature*. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1938), pp. 189-190.

Or ship-wrecked on life's hidden shoals,
Or left to drift upon the sea
Where dwelleth all earth's derelict souls,
But Thou didst free from all alarms
And shield me from the tempter's power;
Thou broke the shackles from my arms
And thou didst cheer my darkest hour.
Thou hast supplied my every need,
And made me free, and free indeed."⁷³

According to Dr. Mays the black man in his classical literature believes "God guarantees victory and ushers in the kingdom of light. God will see to it that the good conquers evil. He will right the evil of the rich having enough and to spare, while the righteous beg for food. He will right the wrong of the strong oppressing the weak. God will also right the wrongs of war where might makes right. These are the chief ideas of God presented in this poem of Shackelford. Justice, the abolition of evil, economic security, abolition of war

The World Is in the Hands of God.

"Oh, tell me not that 'right' is dead
That 'justice' is asleep,
That 'Providence'doth not exist,
No God His vigil keep.

"Too firm indeed is my belief
In 'God's eternal plan'
To e'er believe He could forget
His promises to man.

"Though 'justice' seems perverted oft',
And 'evil' conquers 'good,'
And while the rick their substance waste,
The 'righteous' beg for food.

"Though carnal 'lust' despoils the 'pure,'
And leaves a crimson trail,
And helpless souls stretch out their hands,
And cry to no avail.

"Though nations, strong, oppress the weak,
And wars are won by might,
Yet all of this, somewhere, somehow,
Must be dethroned by right."

Yet this seemingly unshakable faith in God's power to *deliver us from all Evil* the black man in his classical literature as Mays records can often meet with doubt, and questioning, and even

⁷³ Mays, p. 192.

blaming God as the acolytes of Evil (i.e. Satan, demons, and the dark power-that-be) threaten to overwhelm the black man in his existential reality of oppression and suffering. The literature also shows that the black man's existential reality can be threaten so that he even dare express doubt that God exists, something thought impossible for black men to even utter. Dr. Benjamin Mays gives some examples in his chapter on *Ideas of God Involving Frustration, Doubt, God's Impotence and His Non-Existence*. One black poet while he does not doubt God exists nevertheless gives expression to the idea that God must be white and not black otherwise God would be our champion in our existential struggle against Evil. Granted that biblically we know that *God is a Spirit* because Jesus said so (John 4:24, EOB, KJV) but still in our struggle with the Children of Darkness we envision God embodied in our own image (as other peoples of the world have done). In short we need a Black God to assure ourselves that God is on our side and fighting against the overwhelming power of Evil as related in the following poem:

Wishing He I Served Were Black

"Quaint, outlandish heathen gods
Black men fashion out of rods,
Clay, and brittle, bits of stone,
In a likeness like their own,
My conversion came high-prices;
I belong to Jesus Christ,
Preacher of humility;
Heathen gods are naught to me.

"Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
So I make an idle boast;
Jesus of the twice-turned cheek,
Lamb of God, although I speak
With my mouth thus, in my heart
Do I play a double part.
Ever at Thy glowing altar
Must my heart grow sick and falter,

"Wishing He I served were black,
Thinking then it would not lack
Precedent of pain to guide it,
Surely then this flesh would know
Yours had borne a kindred woe.
Lord, I fashion dark gods, too,
Daring even to give you

"Dark despairing features where,
Crowned with dark rebellious hair,
Patience wavers just so much as
Mortal grief compels, while touches
Quick and hot, of anger, rise

To smitten cheek and weary eyes.
Lord, forgive me if my need
Sometimes shapes a human creed."⁷⁴

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois as quoted by Dr. Benjamin Mays gives expression to the same sentiments and writes in his book *Dark Water*:

"Keep not Thou Silent, O God!
Sit no longer blind, Lord God, deaf to our prayer
And dumb to our dumb suffering. Surely Thou,
Too, are not white, O Lord, a pale, bloodless,
Heartless thing."⁷⁵

For some blacks as shown in our classical literature gave up on these anthropologically grounded sentiments and finally came to the conclusion that since God has not delivered us from the oppressive hands of the Children of Darkness and the acolytes of Evil then logically *God does not exist* or if He does exist He does not (for whatever reason) care; for *aall good* and *all powerful God* (if He exists or cares) would not permit His children to suffer so at the hands of the Children of Darkness, Satan, and his demons within society and our communities. It is rare in the black community to hear a black person openly come to the conclusion (based on the apparent silence of God) that *God does not exist (for us)*. Dr. Mays' shows us, and black classical literature affirms that at times black men and women have come very close to saying so or doubting that *God is* not based on anthropological considerations of whether God is black or white but based on our concern that if God exists, He would (based on his holy and just nature) come to our aid. Although the Scripture states that "*The fool says in his heart that there is no God*" (Psalms 14:1) and we have not quite become fools just yet; nevertheless our struggle against the overwhelming dark power of Evil is such that we are tempted to ignore the biblical injunction that says: "*Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him*" (Hebrews 11:6, EOB). The bottom line for blacks who are so tempted is that God's transcendence (distance from our struggle with Evil) makes no sense expressed by the saying that while we suffer injustice and all manner of outrages at the hands of the Children of Darkness "*God keeps to the skies*" taken from the *Black Christ* :

Questioning the Usefulness of God

"We had no scales upon our eyes;
God, if He was, kept to His skies,
And left us to our enemies.
Often at night fresh from our knees
And sorely doubted litanies
We grappled for the mysteries:
'We never seem to reach nowhere,'
Jim with a puzzled, questioning air,
Would kick the covers back and stare

⁷⁴ Mays, pp. 219-220.

⁷⁵ Mays, p. 220.

For me the elder to explain.
 As like as not, my sole refrain
 Would be, 'A man was lynched last night.'
 Why? Jim would ask, his eyes star-bright.
 'A white man struck him; he showed fight.
 Maybe God thinks such things are right.'
 Maybe God never thinks at all ---
 Of us,' and Jim would clench his small,
 Hard fingers tight into a ball.
 'Likely there ain't no God at all,'
 Jim was the first to clothes a doubt
 With words, that long had tried to sprout
 Against our wills and love of one
 Whose faith was like a blazing sun
 Set in a dark, rebellious sky.
 Now then the roots were fast, and I
 Must nurture them in her despite.
 God could not be, if He deemed right
 The grief that ever met our sight.

.....
 "Nay, I have done with deities
 Who keep me ever on my knees,
 My moth forever in a tune
 Of praise, yet never grant the boon
 Of what I pray for night and day.
 God is a toy; put Him away.
 Or make you one of wood or stone
 That you can call your very own,
 A thing to feel and touch and stroke,
 Who does not break you with a yoke
 Of iron that he whispers soft;
 Nor promise you fine things aloft
 While His own image walks so spare
 And finds this life so hard to live
 You doubt that He has aught to give.
 Better my God should be
 This moving, breathing frame of me,
 Strong hands and feet, live hearts and eyes;
 And when these close, say then God dies.
 Your God is somewhere worlds away
 Hunting a star He shot astray;
 Oh, He has weightier things to do
 Than lavish time on me and you."⁷⁶

Of course some of us have become completely secular and irreligious in our sentiments and views as noted by Dr. Mays who quotes Langston Hughes poem *Good-bye Christ* claiming that "turns

⁷⁶ Mays, pp. 227-228.

Communist and repudiates Christ. This selection is also a repudiation of God and religion, which is a radical departure from the faith implicit in his earlier writings.” Whether Dr. Mays assessment of Langston Hughes is correct or not the poem itself shows how black men and women were beginning to live and behave (i.e. living secular Godless lives like they had no religion and leaving behind the faith of our black fathers and the faith of their mothers and grandmothers) as if God and His Christ did not exist and even if they did exist they were irrelevant for our daily lives and struggles against Evil. Its striking that this way of thinking and living took hold even during those early times even though they dare not like Hughes give open expression to it (especially around their old parents and grandparents):

Good-bye Christ

“Listen Christ,
You did all right in your day I reckon
But that day's gone now.
They ghosted you up a swell story, too,
Called it Bible ---
But its dead now.
The popes and the preacher's
Made too much money from it
They've sold you too many
Kings, generals, robbers, and killers---
Even to the Tzar and the Cossacks
Even to Rockefeller's church,
Even to the Saturday Evening Post.
You ain't no good no more.
They've pawned you
Till you've done wore out
Goodbye.

“Christ Jesus Lord God Jehovah,
Beat it on away from here now.
Make way for a new guy with no religion at all.
A real guy named
Marx Communist Lenin Peasant Stalin,
Worker ME---
I said, ME
Go ahead on now.
You're getting in the way of things Lord
And pleas take Saint Becton
Of the Consecrated Dime
And step on the gas, Christ
Don't be so slow about moving;
Move.The world is mine from now on---
And nobody's gonna sell me
To a king or a general
Or a Millionaire

Go ahead on now.”⁷⁷

Black classical poetry and some other black literature spoke of the realities of dealing with the Children of Darkness and Evil within the milieu of a racist and murderous society and sought liberation from the confine and religious narratives of the black religion so it could speak to those conditions from what was thought to be a new and liberating secular horizon, whole black slave songs remained closer to the confines of religious narrative even in its lament and plaintive song dared not depart from the faith of our fathers in its plaintive call upon God in praise and lament for help against Evil and the powers of darkness. The black man’s plaintive call was *not always* grounded in an *otherworldly bye andbye* but had great expectations that God would come to his rescue in the *here and now*. The black man’s religion was not a rationalist faith but a practical faith and materialist even in its otherworldly outlook as it was for their black ancestors the Pharaoh’s who prepared for the *bye and bye* stocking their pyramid tombs with the instruments and material goods they would need in the *bye and bye*. If blacks did not get everything they prayed for in this life they still believed and hoped they would have white robes and would walked the streets of gold in the Paradise of God because up there where we “*Going to Shout All Over God’s Heaven*”:

I’ve got a robe, you’ve got a robe
All of God’s children got a robe
When I get to Heaven goin’ to put on my robe’
Goin’ to shout all over God’s Heaven

Heav’n, Heav’n
Ev’rybodytalkin’ bout Heav’n ain’t goin; there
Heav’n, Heav’n
Goin’ to shout all over God’s Heaven . . .

I’ve got shoes, you’ve got a shoes
All of God’s children got shoes
When I get to Heaven goin’ to put on my shoes
Goin’ to walk all over God’s Heaven . . .

This black spiritual shows the practical, material, and spiritual nature of black religion but also shows that we held the sentiment that the Children of Darkness (i.e. the Setian White man and other acolytes of Evil. Including black follows of Satan) would not accompany us to our new home in Heaven because “*Ev’rybodytalkin’ bout Heav’n ain’t goin’ there.*” Miles Mark Fisher (1953) in his *Negro Slaves Songs in the United States* affirms the basic outlines of this faith in song. In a black sermon by Rev. David T. Shannon, Dean of the Faculty of Pittsburg Theological Seminary that he entitled “A Strange Song in a Strange Land” he states:

Many of the spiritual of the black slaves in America tell of their struggle to be freed and their belief that this freedom will come from their God. Miles Mark Fisher, in his book *Negro Slave Songs in the United States*, implies another interesting use by the slaves of their Lord’s name—that of a code for the communication networks that existed on the slave plantations. The group of spirituals dealing with the struggle of the slaves suggests a real sensitivity to the life

⁷⁷ Mays, p. 238.

they were living and their willingness to use whatever means necessary to free themselves from this struggle . . . to spread the news among themselves, they sang . . .

Up above my head I see, Trouble in the air,
Up above my head I see, Trouble in the air,
Up above my head I see, Trouble in the air,
There must be a God somewhere.⁷⁸

Since Evil seeks to threaten life and freedom its very substance and essence, that is divinely promised “I give you real life and life more abundantly” then the struggle for freedom is in essence a struggle against Evil which seeks to negate the life that God has granted to all men. For black men and women who have that old time religion (i.e. black religion) prayer was the primary access to God in order to receive *ashe* (i.e. the *power to get things done*, in Yoruba terminology) when faced with roadblocks and other things. Evil throws in ones way. But the purpose of prayer was not only primary access to God but a primary spiritual weapon in the battle between good and evil which Satan tries to hinder and discourage. Miles Mark Fisher gives us these two prayers that demonstrate the value of prayer in the struggle against the dark powers of Evil:

*As I went [go] down in de valley to pray,
Studying about dat good old way,
When you [I] shall wear de starry crown,
God Lord, show me de way.*

*O mourner (or Sister, etc.), let's go down,
[O mourner], let's go down, let's go down,
Down in de valley to pray. (Nashville, Tennessee)⁷⁹*

“Hinder me Not”

1. *And when 'twas [It] night I thought [think] 'twas [it] day,
I thought [think] I'd pray my soul away,
And glory, glory, glory in my soul!*
2. *O Satan told me not to pray,
He want my soul at judgment day.*
3. *And everywhere I went to pray,
There some think was in my way.
(Virginia)⁸⁰*

While these prayers and/or songs about the importance of prayer in the Earthly struggle with Evil strongly suggest Satan is the primary adversary of the black man's soul and that Satan seeks to prevent us from using that spiritual weapon (although it says nothing directly about the nature of Evil in and of itself or that the IT is the dark power behind Satan) one still can only derive some aspects of the nature of Evil by looking at Satan's aims and goals in trying to deceive and ultimately

⁷⁸ William M. Philpot, editor. *Best Black Sermons*. (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1972), p. 61.

⁷⁹ Miles Mark Fisher. *Negro Slaves Songs in the United States*. (New York: Citadel Press, 1953), p. 78.

⁸⁰ Fisher, p. 79.

destroy the souls of men. When you look at black literature such as folktales beyond the Continental United States you find blacks in the Western Hemisphere more willing to talk about Satan and give him a more human face generally in the character of a trickster called *Buh NaNsi*, i.e. “Bro NaNsi” (probably akin to the Yoruba character *Orisa-Esu* representing moral evil in God’s *Good Creation*, that is, *the litigator and trickster that puts the goodness of God’s Good Creation to the test, especially mankind*), or as E. Bolaji Idowu (1994) describes him in book *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*:

In Yoruba theology, Èṣù is depicted as so versatile a character that one must be wary of what one says about him. He has often been sweepingly called either the “Devil” or “Satan”. He is certainly not the Devil of our New Testament acquaintance, who is an out and out evil power in opposition to the plan of God’s salvation of man. On the whole, it would be near the truth to parallel him with Satan in the Book of Job, where the Satan is one of the ministers of God and has the office of trying men’s sincerity and putting their religion to the proof He is feared also because, incidentally, he is malicious and a mischief-maker, quite capable of causing confusion, bringing about complicated situations or promoting malice among people. By his guile he would make enemies of very close friends, cause husband and wife to quarrel, and make antagonists of father and children. There are several myths which illustrate him as the trickster or the mischief-maker.⁸¹

Roger D. Abrahams, (1985), editor of *Afro-American Folktales: Stories from Black Traditions in the New World* describes Bro NaNsi or the “Trickster” in similar terms like that of Èṣù. Abraham states:

In contrast to the moral tales of the last section are these stories of Trickster’s gross immoralities. Of course, from Trickster’s perspective, actions are not to be judged in terms of their consequences so much as whether he succeeds in his ventures or not. It is this very characteristic of outrageousness that places these stories at the imaginative center of the Afro-American repertoire. Trickster’s schemes is matched by his extraordinary nasty habits. Thus we often see him attacking the most basic distinctions between the clean and the dirty. He does not hesitate to steal, assault sexually, kill, and eat other animals. His appetites are immeasurable. He is a creature who lives on the margins of human society, but who often invades the human encampment as a spider, rabbit, pigeon—even a mangy, homeless dog.⁸²

Here *Buh NaNsi* sounds more like the creature Satan, that is, the Devil whom Jesus describes as “A murderer from the beginning. A liar and the Father of lies” (John 8:44) and elsewhere in the New Testament as a “deceiver” the “Prince of the Air(waves)” (Ephesians 2:2) who comes to human’s not as the Devil but masquerades as an “Angel of Light” (2 Corinthians 11:14) seeking whomever he can devour, i.e. “eat up” (1 Peter 5:8) as described above. However, one views the closeness of these parallels of character in these various descriptions of Buh NaNsi = the Trickster = the Devil = Satan = Èṣù, we can see from black folktales and stories about “*Brother NaNsi*” more clearly how black men in the Western Hemisphere viewed the Devil and therefore the nature of Evil and how they sought to portray him in a more human moral character in an attempt to make dealing with him more

⁸¹E. Bolaji Idowu. *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*. (Brooklyn, New York: A & B. Books Publishers, 1994), pp. 80-82.

⁸² Roger D. Abrahams, editor (1985). *Afro-American Folk Tales: Stories from Black Traditions in the New World*. (New York: Patheon Books, 1985), 179.

manageable and making it possible to have victory over him from a practical perspective in everyday living. Buh NaNsi then would be such another created being made by God that has been granted like all other *moral neutral power to choose good or evil*. However, from our perspective as enslaved, oppressed, and powerless people, putting such views in story form (where either moral lessons are learned or common since prevails) playfully explains how things came to be as they are (i.e. the circumstances of life) and so renders the Devil (i.e. Buh NaNsi) less terrifying and also teaching black men that *Buh NaNsi* and his trickery can be overcome by one's mother wit (i.e. prudence, wisdom, fooling Ole Massah, managing one's passions, etc.). Prayer as recommended by the black church here is not essential. Retelling the stories of how one can be tricked and/or avoid being tricked by the Devil is relevant and a practical way of dealing with daily troubles and even calamity that is ordinary and common to man. Black story-tellers even tried to show that Buh NaNsi (i.e. the Devil) is really not all that bad (at least in his eyes) but merely misunderstood and so is not as evil as mankind has made him out to be and therefore the Devil is not Evil incarnate.

NO JUSTICE ON EARTH

Well, the Devil was talking with someone, complaining that no matter how much he might try to do good that he would never get a good name for his deeds. There just wasn't any justice on this earth. When the other person said he didn't know whether that was really so, the Devil said, "All right, I'll show you what I mean." So the Devil went to God and asked him if he would be so good as to put out a big stone in the path, so that He could put out a bag of money on it. God put out the stone and the Devil saw the money on it. And along came someone walking down the path without looking where he was going, and he stumbled on the rock. "What the Devil," he said, "I stubbed my toe on this stone." Then someone else came along and he saw the money. He grabbed hold of the bag and looking upward, he said, "Praise God; I say to you many thanks for sending this money my way!" Then the Devil said to the man. "You see what I mean. Didn't I tell you there is no justice on earth!" --- *Surinam*.⁸³

Despite Buh NaNsi's protestations about not *being all that bad* and his attempts to deceive so he can eat (devour) his human prey; he can be outwitted as well (or at least that is what we think). Evil here is not being overcome as recommended in Romans 12:21 by doing good, that is, "*Do not be overcome by Evil, but overcome Evil by doing good*" but by using one's God-given mother wit as is shown in this folktale from Jamaica, where Buh NaNsi (called A-NaNsi in this tale) seeks to devour his prey by appealing to their greed:

BEING GREEDY CHOKES ANANSI

One time, Anansi lived in a country that had a queen who was also a witch. And she decreed that whoever used the word *five* would fall down dead, because that was her secret name, and she didn't want anyone using it. Now, Buh Anansi was a clever fellow, and a hungry one too. Things were especially bad because there was a famine, so Anansi made a little house for himself by the side of the river near where everyone came to get water. And when anybody came to get water, he would call out to them, "I beg you to tell me how many yam hills I have here. I can't count very well." So, one by one he thought they would come up and say,

⁸³ Roger D. Abrahams, editor (1985), pp. 78-79

"One, two, three, four, *five*," and they would fall down dead. Then Anansi would take them and corn them in his barrel and eat them, and that way he would have lots of food in hungry times and in times of plenty. So, time went on and he got his house built and his yams planted, and along came Guinea Fowl. Anansi said, "I beg you, missus, tell me how many yam hills I have here." So Guinea Fowl went and sat on one those hills and said, "One, two, three, four, and the one I'm sitting on!" Anansi said, "*Cho!*" [sucking his teeth], "you can't count right." And Guinea Fowl mover to another hill and said, "One, two, three, four, and the one I'm sitting on!" "*Cho!*" you don't count right at all!" "How do you count then?" Guinea Fowl said, a little vexed at Anansi. "Why this way: one, two, three, four, FIVE!" He fell dead. And Guinea Fowl ate him up. This story shows that what they say is right: "Being greedy chokes the puppy." ---*Jamaica*.⁸⁴

Black folktales, songs, poems, and literature like those cited above are how black people gave expression to their feelings and understanding about the dark powers that surrounded them daily with hints as to how to cope with them through understanding the homicidal nature, character, aims, and schemes of the Devil, as an evil "Trickster", the foremost representative of Evil. What better ways to teach an enslaved, poor, and uneducated people how to survive through their mother wit, through prayer, preaching and other oral means than that we have described above. However, no comprehensive understanding can be derived from our black classical literature, poems, folktales, etc., including black preaching (with some few exceptions) because deeper questions of Evil are rarely discussed and the acolytes of Evil such as demons and Satan himself are rarely mentioned in the literature, songs or preaching that predominately focuses on celebration of God's power, mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, the Lord. Our trust in God and the security that trust brings precludes giving Satan and his demons too much press in our speech and thought. Rather the focus has been on our victory over Evil with God's power, including the sociological and practical aspects of black survival in a milieu of Evil (e.g. racist society, etc.), which threatens our very existence and not on the metaphysical and cosmological explanations of the nature of the dark power behind racist people and institutions that threaten them on a daily basis. All of this does not mean that no such theology of Satan and Evil can be derived either from black preaching or from black slave songs. It simply has not been done and therefore cannot serve (at this moment) as a basis for understanding Evil from these two primary oral sources to better inform the subject of this project. We conclude therefore that our black classical literature is inadequate and insufficient in and of itself to give us an horizon of knowledge that will decipher the nature of Evil in and of Itself so we can answer the question: "What is Evil?" from a purely black perspective. However, this dim assessment has some light at the end of the tunnel *per se*. The preaching, teaching and writing of Dr. Martin Luther King stands apart in this regard. I have already quoted the following passage from Dr. King's (1963) *Strength to Love* that includes one of his more dynamic sermons demonstrating his theology on the question of Evil. Had Dr. King been allowed to be the trained theologian that he was this sermon shows us that he may have been able to fathom the depth of the question from his acquired practical understanding of how Evil permeates and intertwines itself within the body political of human society:

⁸⁴ Abrahams, p. 122.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "On Evil"

Sermon: "Death of Evil on the Seashore"

Is anything more obvious than the presence of evil in the universe? Its nagging, prehensible tentacles project into every level of existence. We may debate the origin of evil, but only a victim of superficial optimism would debate its reality. Evil is stark, grim, and colossally real. Affirming the reality of evil in unmistakable terms, the Bible symbolically pictures the conniving work of a serpent which injects discord into the harmonious symphony of life in a garden Crystal-clear is the biblical perception of evil. Nor was Jesus unmindful of the reality of evil. Although he never offered a theological explanation of the origin of evil, he never attempted to explain it away. In the parable of the tares, Jesus says that tares are tares, not illusions or errors of the mortal mind. Real weeds disrupt the orderly growth of stately wheat. Whether sown by Satan or by man's misuse of his own freedom, the tares are always poisonous and deadly. Concerning the choking weeds, Jesus says in substance, "I do not attempt to explain their origin, but they are the work of an enemy." He recognized that the force of evil was as real as the force of good. Within the wide arena of everyday life we see evil in all of its ugly dimensions. We see it expressed in tragic lust and inordinate selfishness. We see it in high places where men are willing to sacrifice truth on the altars of their self-interest. . . . In a sense, the history of man is the story of the struggle between good and evil. . . . a conflict between God and Satan.⁸⁵

Other black preachers have sermonized on Evil but to make the youth and young adult congregation understand *ITs* nature they had rather to point out *ITs* concrete manifestation within the society, the black community and within the body politic of the nation that formerly enslaved them and practices various forms of racism (some seemingly benign and some of them deadly, such as being the subjects of *murder under the color of law*).⁸⁶ Rev. Hosea L. Williams, who I once sat in the pulpit with at Southern Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, and a lieutenant of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and National Program Director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference preached a sermon "The Relevancy of the Black Church to the Now Generation" using as part of his text in answer to a Jewish Lawyer who asked the question "But who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). Rev. Williams took the parable of Jesus on the "Good Samaritan" and turned into a modern parable of how Dr. King (i.e. the third man who did not pass by the man who had been beaten and robbed) and who answered the question of "Who is my neighbor?" with "My neighbor is anyone who is in need" not just my family, my group or my friends. Evil in society wants us limit who is our neighbor in order to bring about division and conflict. Divine love requires us to *overcome Evil with good* (Romans 12:21) and good is defined by Jesus as doing good for those (ones neighbor) *in the moment of their need* and not based on associations or reciprocal societal or familial relationships as Rev. Williams tries to give expression to in his modern day parable. Rev. Williams' sermon does not tell us explicitly *what is evil* but describes how Jesus would have us overcome Evil with good using Dr. King as the greatest and most concrete example of how that is done within the reality of human community. When members of the church follow his example then surely the *very gates of Hell and the Evil is represents will not be able to overcome the church of Jesus Christ* :

⁸⁵ Dr. Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love* (Cleveland, Ohio: Collins Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 71-72.

⁸⁶Such as the brutal murder of Trye Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee by five black policemen on January 7, 2023, These five Memphis black police officers disregarded Tyre Nichols rights as a human person and shamefully tried to cover up their crime with a false story as this black young man lay dying at their feet. Apparently, our own people are beginning to take on the mindset of Setian white men who have practice this kind of brutality for centuries *under the color of law*.

Then, there came one, the third man, who knew Jesus, a man who had gone to jail for the rights of the people, a man who had marched in the streets of America so that his people some day would be free, a man who was a member of a church that had no walls, a man who was part of that church Jesus spoke about when he said, 'Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it.' And I am sure, my friends, when Jesus spoke of the gates of Hell, he spoke of the gates of poverty, the gates of crime, the gates of drug addiction, the gates of prostitution, the gates of welfare, the gates of unemployment. Jesus was speaking of all the hells that today's church must conquer—not the legislatures, not the volunteer agencies—but the church, this church which is carrying on the a black religion; in fact this man we are talking about who was also traveling from Selma to Montgomery and saw this black brother who had been beaten, who had been robbed, who had been left to die. Because this man served God not only on Sunday, but every day in the week, because this man knew he could not love God whom he had never seen unless he loved his brother who had been beaten and robbed and left to die, he stopped his car and he got out. He went over to him and he first tried to comfort him and give him confidence and assurance in himself by telling him: "You might have been beaten and robbed, but I want to help you because you are somebody. You may be black, but you are somebody," The he got out his pocket handkerchief and began to wipe the blood and the dirt from the man's aching wounds. He then got him up, put him in his car, and carried him on to the hospital. . . . Then Jesus said to the lawyer, "Which of these three men do you think proved to be a neighbor? Which of these three men had a black religion?" . . . Martin Luther King, Jr., had a black religion. He always dwelled among the lowly ones although he was one of the most influential, best educated men in the world. Loved my billions, he died while fighting for the rights of garbage men.⁸⁷

Fortunately for the my project the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tawehedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church (EOTC), which is the faith tradition I am apart of has a fully mapped doctrinal and religious literature that allows one so inclined to explore its understanding of Evil. However much of this literature has not been translated into English and one has to master the ancient *Ge'ez* language, including *Amharic* and *Tigrinya* languages to gain full access to it. I am working to gain full access to this literature. Nevertheless, within the current limitation of my understanding I have unconsciously began to think about what is *Evil* and its relationship to what my EOTC faith tradition believes about God, Satan and the human person using Ethiopian doctrinal sources available in English along with the *Ge'ez* and *Amharic* that I have currently acquired. I have already used in this book a few doctoral level Ethiopian sources that advance the traditional doctrinal views regarding Original Sin, as well as others while staying within orthodox theological understanding advancing the tradition (using traditional sources) into new theological and doctrinal understandings about eschatology and Mariology. In addition these Ethiopian orthodox scholars do not in any case avoid using Western theological Protestant sources for the same purpose. So I am on good ground to explore a new understanding of problem of Evil from an African Christian Orthodox perspective and use Western theological sources where these would be helpful. The primary reason why this must be my approach to the topic is because the study of the *problem of evil* has been explored almost exclusively by Western Christian theologians primarily within the Protestant faith tradition. However, this fact does not give them exclusive rights to expound on

⁸⁷ William M. Philpot, editor. *Best Black Sermons*. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1972), pp. 82-84.

this topic from the horizon of this faith perspective even though an orthodox theologian or philosopher of religion would be ill advised to ignore the presuppositions and propositions they make and claim.

The light of Orthodoxy in general and Ethiopian Orthodoxy in particular can shine the light of its *faith seeking understanding* on this topic as well making its own contribution to this field of theology and religion within a new theological paradigm *understanding seeking feeling* with the Ethiopian theological and philosophical emphasis in *God-talk* from the horizon of its *Six Doors to the Heart*. Evil from this horizon can be then understood as an experiential paradigm or phenomenology based experience with Evil a person's *lived-experience* within their own particular *life-world*. Once the phenomenological approach is employed and discoveries are made then a true *Theology of God* and a *Theology of Evil* can be outlined based on actual human feeling that have experienced these powerful (and sometimes overwhelming) forces struggling for ascendancy within ourselves and within the societal environment in which we live. In short we can eventually understand more about the nature of Evil, that is, "What is Evil?" by our human experience with it and exploring those feelings through phenomenological approach. In respect to the Baptist family of churches I should be careful not to imply that they *do not have any written statement* about what they believe *Evil* is and that all that can be acquired about what they believe is through the oral tradition of preaching. Fortunately, the Confessional Baptist church has written down some of what they believe about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Satan, and the human person in a confessional statement. The confessional document, *What We Believe as a Trinitarian Community of Confessional Baptist Churches* was published in 2005 by the *Nu African House of God in Christ*. In the section called "The Evil One," it states:

We believe that Satan is the archenemy of both God and man. Satan was once the servant of God in order of being known as Cherub angel until evil and sin was found in him. Satan is a *created being* and therefore *is no god*. He has the ability as a Cherub *fire walker* to change appearances. He is a *shape-shifter* and therefore is seen in the *Garden of Eden* in the form of a serpent talking with Eve, . . . Satan was once the supreme angel in heaven who was given the privilege and authority to spread his wings over the very throne of God. The Word of God says that Satan, or Lucifer: the *Son of the Morning* was brought low because he sought to usurp the throne of god Himself (Isaiah 14:12-14). The Word of God says that Satan was a created being *made perfect* (Ezekiel 28:12) and "*blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you*" (Ezekiel 28:15). Furthermore Satan was *the guardian angel* that God set over the *garden of Eden*, because the Word of God says he was "*in the garden of God*" for the purpose of being the *guardian Cherub* over mankind at man's birth (Ezekiel 28: 12-15). Satan is now a homicidal killer, the preeminent acolyte of *Evil* that wishes to destroy mankind and seeks to embarrass man before God and diminish God in His holiness in the eyes of humanity.⁸⁸

This confessional statement suggests to me that Satan is a separate being from *Evil* because in the beginning Satan was made by God perfect. Since no Baptist believes that God created *Evil* then it is a contradiction to say that Satan is *Evil incarnate*, as some Baptists believe, since Satan was made perfect at the beginning of creation. *Evil* must therefore have existed outside Satan's being as a separate entity or force of some kind. This is where my understanding begins to differ from Baptist tradition and outlined in this confessional statement. For me this confessional stance about Satan has led to the further question about "*what is Evil?*" The confessional statement above does not answer that question

⁸⁸ *What We Believe As A Trinitarian Community of Confessional Baptist Churches* (Cincinnati: Nu African House of God in Christ, Inc, 2005), p. 5-6.

but is one horizon of understanding from which one can start knowing its limitations to answer the question posed. I want to develop a new horizon of thought on the nature of Satan in relationship to Evil and advance a more explicit understanding that is congruent with biblical truth. If Satan is merely the acolyte and devotee of *Evil*, then *Evil* has safely hidden itself behind a *surrogate being* called Satan that has taken the rap for all that *Evil* does. I noted above the Afro-American folktale “No Justice on Earth” that Satan has been burdened with a “bad rep”, apparently, not fully deserved considering that he is viewed as being incapable of doing any good whatever (according to his complaint in the story). This Afro-American folktale may hold a nugget of truth (which of course is difficult for us to except, given our limited theological horizons that I call “Sunday School Theology.” The Bible itself gives some support to the theological conclusion of this folktale, however uncomfortable it is for me or others to think about.

God created Satan (originally a perfect being) but God did not create *Evil*. Satan has taken on the qualities and image of evil as a surrogate, chief acolyte and devotee. My claim is that *Evil* itself is a *sui generis* autonomous being. The *Book of Revelation* suggests that it is the nature of *Evil* to use surrogate images in order to deceive humanity which allows IT to operate freely within God’s *Good Creation*. Satan (on the other hand) is the preeminent acolyte and devotee of *Evil* and in biblical terms is called the Dragon and takes on the same nature and full character of Evil. You might say that *Satan is the exact representation and image (icon) of Evil* even though some could still rightly characterize him as *Evil incarnate* (i.e. the *incarnation* of Evil as *Christ is the exact representation and image (icon) of the Living God*. Hebrews 1:3). Revelation contains a number of texts that support the view that Satan is the exact icon (image) of Evil and like Evil the Dragon (that Ancient Devil) uses images of the beast (i.e. *reincarnations* and/or *representations* of himself) to advance the aims of Evil in God’s *Good Creation*:

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down — that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him (Revelation, 12:7-10, NIV).

And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority (Revelation, 13:1-2, NIV).

Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth (Revelation 13:11-14a, NIV).

Implicit in my understanding of Satan, within the context of the problem of evil, is dualism. Dualism is the notion that there are two spiritual beings, or gods that are equally matched in the struggle of good and evil. God in my tradition, however, is the Supreme Deity and Creator God. Satan is not. Satan is merely a created spiritual being, a surrogate of *Evil* (at best) but nonetheless powerful

and not to be dismissed as a joke (i.e. a man in a red suit with horns on his head and a pitch fork, etc.). Satan would like nothing better than that the human person believe he does not exist, make a joke out of his supposed existence, and to laugh at the notion that *Hell is real*. Nevertheless, I hold to a modified dualism. My dualistic view of evil does not subscribe to the notion that there are two equally powerful deities in the struggle of good and evil. Theological dualism has been one way Western Christian has sought to defend the righteousness of God, by subsuming the origin of evil in the being of Satan or the Devil. Because of dualism's logical implications for monotheism, some Western and Eastern scholars, religious adherents, and theologians have tried to find a way around it, to dismiss it and relegate it to mythology. No one wants to say that Satan is a god, or equally matched with God. It would do well to survey this point through the writing of Joseph F. Kelly in *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition* (1989).

Kelly's summary of theological dualism and various views of Satan from several religious perspectives and traditions will help define, by contrast, where my own views are located. Kelly's overview of how evil and Satan has been understood from a dualistic perspective will also help define the overall Christian and Western religious perspective for my study, so that when I mention Satan, dualism, and *Evil* the reader will know what is meant. In Kelly's book three types of evil are defined. *First, moral evil*, which is the moral ethical interaction between sentient beings (beings that can feel pleasure or pain), and who promote or cause undeserved suffering on one another. *Secondly*, Kelly speaks about *natural evil*, which refers to harm done, for example, by hurricanes, tornadoes, Tsunami's, floods, and ecological blight of the environment. Some would include human destruction of the ecology, as *natural evil*, since the human person is part of the natural ecological order of things. *Thirdly*, Kelly mentions *ontological evil*. This is the idea that there are superior and inferior orders of sentient beings. The human person naturally is the higher order by virtue of being able to reason between right and wrong. The human person is a moral being and is therefore responsible for their actions, either good or bad. Other sentient beings, such as animals, are not moral beings. Within this notion are various views on the nature of matter and spirit in terms of capacity for evil. Kelly goes on to explain by stating:

Another aspect of ontological evil was a dichotomy between matter and spirit, treating the spirit as good and matter as evil, a view still widely held in parts of Asia. This has few Western followers today, largely because the biblical book of Genesis asserts the goodness of creation, a view held by Jews, Christians, and Muslims.⁸⁹

Ontological evil is where the discussion on various concepts of evil, theological dualism, and Satan has been centered. Kelly goes on to give the various monotheistic, Western and Eastern views on these concepts. Kelly states:

This survey of different types of evil leads to an important and enduring theme in the development of the ideas about evil. Western thinkers distinguished between Evil, the inescapable fact that intelligent beings deliberately impose suffering upon other sentient beings, and evils, the manifold ways in which Evil can be manifest. The understanding of particular evils constantly changes . . . Oftentimes the changing understanding of specific evils led to a new or different understanding of Evil. Some theistic explanations for evil have been marginal in the West but have been popular elsewhere. Much of the difficulty about evil

⁸⁹ Kelly, pp. 3-4.

derives from monotheism, belief in one God, often a good and powerful deity who theoretically can stop evil but practically does not. But if people believed in more than one god, that particular problem disappears. Several traditions have opted for dualism, the belief in two divine principles, one good and one evil, while polytheism spread things out even more, with belief in several good and evil deities. Dualism eliminates the apparent contradiction of a good and powerful God who refuses to stop evil. The good god wishes to stop evil but cannot because she or he lacks the power to do so. Contrariwise, the evil god wishes to propagate evil universally but likewise lacks the power to do so. Two independent beings each strive to achieve their goals, sometimes succeeding, sometimes failing, always struggling. Popular in Persia (modern Iran), dualism has had a real attraction for some people in Western history, such as the Manichees and Cathars. . . In general, however, it has been only a fringe movement in the West, and not just because of biblical monotheism. Greek philosophers reasoned their way to the existence of one deity who would be unlimited in virtually every way. . . . Dualism's problems lie with the relative powers of the two deities. If they are evenly matched, this would result in a kind of cosmic gridlock, with each stifling the other's actions. And if one were more powerful than the other, would this still be dualism? In fact, history has seen few absolute dualisms.⁹⁰

I have opted for a modified dualism in which God is the only Deity (i.e. non-created, non-contingent being) who has complete sovereignty over *all sentient being*. God has His own reasons for allowing *Evil* and *ITs* acolytes and devotees to travel the *Superhighway of God* along with the good and with those who practice *overcoming evil with good* (Romans 12:21). Satan is the evil spiritual principle opposed to God, even though Satan is not a deity (i.e. non-created spiritual being) so since Satan is *real* opposing God, Almighty who is *really real* a *modified dualism* is both tenable and warranted. Satan is a created being made by God, and therefore, by definition, is no god and is less powerful than God. The problem for my tradition's modified dualism is that this does not resolve the problem of evil entirely. If Satan is no match for God, then Kelly's statement that "Dualism's problems lie with the relative powers of the two deities," is a valid problem that challenges views in respect to a modified dualism. *This is the problem*: If Satan is evil incarnate and God created Satan, then God is responsible for the existence of evil. Further, if Satan is evil incarnate and God is more powerful than Satan, and God is also a benevolent being who hates evil, then the question is still present as to why God does not destroy Satan (now rather than later) and thereby destroy evil? Is God playing games with humanity? Is God a just God? I need to explore these questions. For me, these questions all seem to revolve around answering the meta-question, *what is Evil?* (i.e. what is the nature of Evil or the *IT?*). So, I either need to except the unacceptable determination found in the notion of "the coincidence of opposites, the belief that God can reconcile in his person all that there is. . ." both good and evil, and thereby give up a modified dualism, or hold that Satan is not evil incarnate. If I say that Satan is not evil incarnate then I have to say that Evil itself is a *sui generis* being that may be co-eternal with the existence and being of God. Whether this autonomous evil principle is as powerful as God (which I do not believe) and whether God is responsible somehow for its existence (as theologian Karl Barth will maintain) is part of the exploration in my book. I hope to get at the nature of *Evil* by looking at the activities and actions of the acolytes and devotees of *Evil*, as understood in the texts I have selected for the study. For me, the activities of Satan, as the supreme acolyte and devotee of *Evil* and *ITs*

⁹⁰ Kelly, p. 5.

negative effects on God's *Good Creation* is the best phenomenological approach for understanding the nature of *Evil*. Satan is not evil incarnate but *Satan is sublated within Evil* to the extent that Satan is representative of *Evil's* true nature and aims. It may be said in this respect and with some qualification that Satan and Evil are *as One* as Christ as the Son *is One* with his Father. It is important to know that I have chosen texts from the Western Christian tradition, the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, ancient Egyptian texts, and some Eastern religious sources to help answer the question of *what is Evil?* I could have used more sacred texts from other religions, both ancient and modern, but more of these sources would require explaining each author's view and so bury my primary question in a *forest of unrelated perspectives*. These would have included the perspectives of the Buddhist or even the Yoruba religions. I have a fair knowledge of Buddhist religious thought that I have taught at the college level for years using mostly English sources. I am also acquainted with the Yoruba traditional African religion, its language and sacred texts, such as found in *Awo: Ifá and the Theology of Orisha Divination* by Awo Fá'LokunFatanmbi (1992) and *The Sacred Ifá Oracle: The Ancient African Religion Underlying Santería, Candomblé, and Vodun* translated by Afolabi A. Epega and Philip John Neimark (1995).

However, allow me to present my own perspective and view of the primary question from a personal angle (i.e. those so-called "coincidental" things that originally began to raise the primary question in my mind in the first place). My grandfather "Henry" whom I loved dearly partially raised me in the coal mining town of Aminot, West Virginia. "Henry" was considered a "root doctor" in the small coal mining town of Coalwood, West Virginia, where he married "Margaret" (my grandmother) and where his five children were born (who among them was my mother "Clara"). When I was about five to six years old I was brought back home to Cleveland, Ohio where my mother put me in my grandmother's care. Sometime later "Henry" (now retired from the mines) came to Cleveland, Ohio and took over my daily care while my mother worked. As a child living with him (in West Virginia and in Cleveland, Ohio) I heard about and saw with my own eyes some of the unbelievable things he did which defy so-called scientific explanation. I learned from him that the Candomble and Vodun religious faith practice is a living religion is practiced (for the most part) out of public sight (accept for the faithful) and oft-times beneath layers of conventional religion (as explained by Joseph M. Murphy (1988) book *Santería: An African Religion in America*); but nevertheless its mysterious nature (grounded in personal initiatory praxis and communal worship of the *Orisha*) is yet vibrant and alive directed toward overcoming *Evil* within one's personal life and in the community of black saints. I don't believe my grandfather was at the level of the *Babalowa* (i.e. "Father of the Religion", equivalent in practice to professional level Doctor of Ministry) because he sought the help of a higher level practitioner than himself when he healed my grandmother from deadly disease of the legs that some jealous woman (wanting my grandfather) had succeeded in placing on her (based on her own testimony to me). However, my Grandfather was certainly among ordinary divination priests in locale black communities "rooting out" *Evil* by using traditional folk medicine which included understanding the religious psychology of black people in order to bring forth what goodness there is to be found within a natural order influenced by evil spirits. Some of the remedies my grandfather and other such men used (in lieu of black people's inability to access modern medical care at the time) can be found in *Afro-Caribbean Folk Medicine* by Michel S. Laguerre (1987). Yet my grandmother made it clear to me that my grandfather could be a mean and even dangerous man. My grandmother told me how my grandfather would scare her to death by cutting the throat of a hog and then drink its warm blood right in front of her. At the time I doubted what my grandmother said but later when I read Robert

Farris Thompson's (1983) book *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*¹ realized what my grandmother described was *really real*. There it was on page 190 (Plate 119) a Haitian female Vodun priestess of the religion (sword in hand) drinking down the warm blood of a hog she had just killed as she invoked the *Orisha* on behalf of the faithful as seen in Fig. 1 and 2 below:

Fig. 1

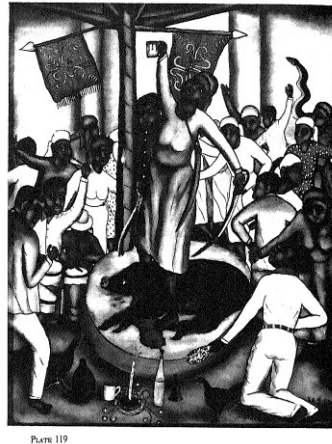


Fig. 2



The image and representation of the painting above is by the late Haitian artist Castera Bazile (1923-1966). He was born in Jacmel, Bazile and painted several murals in the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port-au Prince. He won the grand prize at the Caribbeans International Competition in 1955. Bazile died in 1966 in Port-au-Prince. The representation of his work above (black and white from Robert Farris Thompson's *Flash of the Spirit*, 1984 (p. 190, plate 119) and the color painting is from the online image for the Milwaukee Art Museum Collection. This painting is an interpretation of Castera Bazile's understanding of the Petwo Ceremony Commemorating *Baw Kayiman*. An explanation of this ceremony is summarized online by Milwaukee Art Museum Collection introducing Bazile's work:

According to lore, the Petwo ceremony was a ritual enacted at Bois Caiman (Kayiman) during the Haitian Revolution. A Vodun priestess sacrificed a black pig and partook of its blood to evoke spirits linked to social and economic matters. The act encouraged the Vodun priest Boukman to declare war on the French colonialists, thereby leading to the end of slavery. Castera Bazile's interpretation fuses history and a revivalist spirit to document the past and simultaneously bring to life the emotion of the moment. Concealed within a room and surrounded by the paraphernalia of Vodun rites, the participating rebels beat drums while the Black Serpent Damballah, symbol of coolness and wisdom, climbs the back-right wall. Elevated in the center of the painting, the priestess, brandishing a knife and a beaker of blood, bestrides the sacrificial pig.

My grandfather would not have been aware of any of these details but apparently he knew more about this tradition than we could accept or even understand. He probably came across it as a child somewhere in the South. He very likely saw it practiced and later became Vodun initiate. However he used it inappropriately to scare the daylights out of my grandmother and perhaps other people in the West Virginia community where he and my grandmother lived with their five children. My grandmother told me directly that "Henry" was feared even among men in the small West Virginia town they lived in. According to her he was a womanizer and had even beat her with a live chicken to keep her in line so she would not bother him about "his women." I learned this part of the story

from her because she complained she could never sleep on a pillow stuffed with chicken feathers (as some homemade pillows were manufactured in her day). She said if challenged by some man about his “connection” with the man’s wife that man would never challenge “Henry” again. My grandmother witnessed this herself: One man (she said) got the courage to openly challenge “Henry” one day outside in the street in front of their home. The man did not try to fight “Henry” directly but picked up a brick and threw it with all of his might at my grandfather. My grandmother told me that the brick struck my grandfather directly in the center of his forehead (she heard the thud) but the brick fell from “Henry’s” head to the ground without even leaving a mark or any blood whatever. My grandfather just stood there glaring at the poor man trying to defend his wife’s honor. My grandmother said the man’s eyes bucked open and with an expression of great fear he fled from my grandfather’s presence screaming “Devil !!!” My grandmother was a very soft spoken and Christian woman and it was hard to get her to talk about her past; but in this rare moment she told me all this while we were sitting at my mother’s kitchen table and it was like she was somewhere far off but yet present once again at this terrifying event pulling me with her to the scene and what it was like being married to “Henry.”

I loved my grandfather (who later became a Holiness preacher) and so these two factors perhaps led my grandmother to tell me these things to let me know who “Henry” really was or use to be. *It was her experience with him as his wife* so I never openly challenged her in this remarkable story. Her story however did signify that some of our people had extraordinary access to supernatural power or *ambivalent power(s)* (neither good nor evil, but *neutral*) that lived among us and in us, and that we very likely brought *them* from the Motherland with us. We knew that we could *choose to use these neutral powers either for good or for evil*. The black men with this spiritual and cosmic knowledge base did not always use these neutral powers for the good of the community; but like “Henry” some of them exploited them to terrorize our communities and abuse women for their benefit, lending to the darkness and evil side of African traditional customary and medical praxis. (See *Yoruba Religion & Medicine in Ibadan* by George E. Simpson (Ibadan University Press, 1980; and the book that connects the dots from this African background to black life in the American hemisphere *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson, 1984). Before the white women’s so-called “MeToo!” movement human evils like what happened to them happened to my grandmother and other black women first. They had to endure these sexual and physical abuses *alone* and fight against them *alone*. During their time of great suffering there was no *PC societal sentiment* to “believe the woman” outright and “condemn and crush the male perpetrators” in order to wreck vengeance on them in a *serial fit of blind rage and blood lust without due process*; receiving immediate satisfaction of witnessing careers upended and destroyed, whether these men did what was claimed or not. Yet, for *hundreds of years* black women had no such *societal sentiment* on their side. They had to endure the evil of sexual abuses and exploitation of both white men and black men (whose role should have been their defenders) rather than their exploiters. When I was a boy-child I would hear whispers of such things happening to black women; but later I understood that I had been shielded by the black women in my family from directly seeing or experiencing the horrors perpetuated against them and others by their own men. I would hear too how they courageously fought back (in their own way) against these evils to retain some modicum of human dignity and sanity. Some black men with good sense feared them and after beating up on them in some drunken fit knew to keep one eye opened while he slept. These black male abuses heard stories like I did, that is, how black women during slavery (after being sexual abused, i.e. raped by the white Massah) would crush up glass into a fine powder and mix it in the white man’s food and as he got sicker and sicker she (with a knowing grin of comfort) would end up feeding the same food to him at his bedside. The white Massah never

knew as he lay dying why he was bleeding from the rectum as the fine power cut his intestines to pieces. The bottom line is that black women had to fight back with the tools learned from their female ancestors as they endured an intolerable amount of mental and sexual abuse for our sakes so we (their children) could live. My grandmother's five children were the recipients of her determination not to allow her abuse to continue without a fight against societal sanctioned evils.

I myself witnessed the dark side of my grandfathers "profession" after he retired from the coal mines of West Virginia and came to live with my mother, sister, and me. As he got older he became fearful of *evil spirits* and began to place bones in certain configurations and orientations in our home (e.g. in the window seal, etc.). He began to cook foul smelling *uneatable* concoctions. The stuff he made was not meant to eat. I guess *the smell* was meant to drive away *evil spirits* he believed to be in our home. It certainly drove my mother crazy as she tried to care for my grandfather who no longer displayed a sound mind. He was still a believer but no longer had at his command the prowess, the natural elements of his praxis and the knowledge of *the religion* that had served him and the black community aimed at warding off *Evil*. Of course as I have plainly showed "Henry" did not always use the "neutral" powers of traditional African religion for good but sometimes he did. My grandmother (after telling me how bad and mean my grandfather was) admitted that he could show compassion (to her). Once she remembers becoming deathly sick. Her legs became so swollen that flesh of her ankles came down over her feet. The flesh folding around her ankles were like rubber. She was bed ridden and could not walk. My grandfather seemed to know just what had happened to her. He went outside and dug up a pair of her stockings that were rotting under the steps my grandmother had to walk up every day. "Henry" told her without hesitation that one of "his women" must have put them there to "hex" her. The only way this "woman" could have gotten a pair of my grandmother's stockings is if she had been in my grandmother's house with "Henry" doing whatever. Nevertheless, my grandfather seemed very upset that my grandmother was attacked in this way seeing how sick she was. My grandmother told me my grandfather went and brought in another "man" (somebody that undoubtedly knew more than him about traditional folk medicine). This man took the rotting stockings and right at the foot of my grandmother's bed placed them on the floor. He took some kind of white powder and set it ablaze. This frightened my grandmother (not so much because of the fire) but because the fire was blue it seemed to take up a kind of life of its own. And in addition to that the fire went counterclockwise until it consumed the rotting stocking (as if turning back time itself to destroy the source and beginning of the hex). My grandmother said she got better day by day after that and finally was able to walk. She said that this was the first and only compassionate thing "Henry" ever did for her. Nevertheless, she had to leave him. She was too frightened of him to stay and left him and the five children; but later came back and forth to from Cleveland, Ohio (where she found a meat packing job) to pick up her children one or two at a time (while my grandfather was working the mines).

Needless to say my grandmother's stories about "Henry" got me interested in my African heritage in general and African traditional religion in particular. I soon found out that African oral history and the essence of black religion is hidden in the African languages (and it is best to unlock it that way than relying solely on Western sources and their perspectives of what they say it is.). I have been driven (ever since talking with my grandmother) to try and understand our history and heritage; and to know what dark destructive homicidal power of Evil stands *behinds* the scenes of our black life (outside us and within us) which is trying to destroy us. This personal quest is embodied in the primary question of this book: *What is Evil? What is IT?* In some respects this has become a lifelong quest for me. However, I needed to develop spiritual insight, historical knowledge, and technical skills

(e.g. African languages, etc.) to even begin this query. My Yoruba language study had languished somewhat since the time (1991) I studied under Yoruba instructor Adebola Olowe at the Afrikan Arts Consortium (Cincinnati, Ohio). The community course was sponsored by Mama Rasheed of the Afrikan Resource Center. Thankfully, I still had his syllabus and the Yoruba manual he provided where I can pick up where I left off. Using these tools and resources I would like to have included all these different perspectives on the question of evil more fully to demonstrate that there are views on the question of evil other than those provided by Western Christianity or even African Orthodox Christianity. I would also like to have included them to show how such comparative work would help define my own understanding of the topic. However, the best I can do now is give to the reader two brief examples of how a comparative study would add value to the topic of this book. Two examples from the Buddhist and Yoruba religions will suffice to demonstrate the value of such a comparative study for the question on *what is Evil?*

Stephen Batchelor, a former monk in the Tibetan and Zen traditions lays out the Buddhist understanding of Satan in *Living with the Devil: A Meditation on Good and Evil* (2004). Batchelor understands that Christian monotheism and Buddhism have fundamentally different perspectives on Satan, and how to deal with Satan and the problem of evil in the world. Batchelor states that “Buddhism and the monotheistic religions can be understood as different ways of living with the devil.”⁹¹ Batchelor outlines the major Buddhist beliefs about the Devil. Batchelor says that Buddhism describes the Devil, or Satan (e.g. called *Mara* in Buddhism) as a killer of humanity. Satan is the “adversary” of humanity according to Batchelor:

While the Hebrew *Satan* means “adversary,” the Greek *diabolos* means “one who throws something across the path.” In India, Buddha called the devil *Mara*, which in Pali and Sanskrit means “the killer.”⁹²

From a Hebrew perspective Satan *became* a killer of humanity but affirms that this was not always the case. *Satan* was one of the *Original Seven Archangels* whose names follow: *Michael* (**Micha-El**), *Gabriel* (**Gabri-El**), *Raphael* (**Rapha-El**), *Raguel* (**Ragu-El**), *Saque* (**Saqu-El**), *Phanuel* (**Phanu-El**), and *Satanel* (**Satan-El**). All of these names have the suffix **El** = “*belonging to God*” or “*of God*” indicating that these spiritual beings are *elohim* in the highest service to God Almighty. We conjecture that *after* the **Fall of Satan-El** (before the *Fall of Man*) that an angel by the name of *Afnin* took his place among the seven but interestingly enough this angel does not have the appended suffix **El** (as in “**Afnin-El**”).⁹³ Among other names for Satan, such as *Diablos* (ዲያብሎስ), the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tāwahādo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church has preserved the most ancient name the Early Church knew Satan by. The EOTC refers to him as **Satna’el** (ሳጥናኤል) in some of their religious literature and canonical texts.⁹⁴ In the Western canon biblical literature the Devil is never called **Satan-El** but merely **Satan** without the suffix **El** (probably a result of challenging **ELOHIM** the Supreme Deity). However, in some extra-biblical or apocryphal texts we find Enoch referring to Satan as “*Satanail*” [Satan-ail] that is, properly Hebraic transcribed as “*Satan-el*”. Enoch talks about the nature of *Satan-el*:

⁹¹ Stephen Batchelor, *Living with the Devil: A Meditation on Good and Evil* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2004), p. 31.

⁹² Batchelor, p. 17.

⁹³ Steve Delamarter, Marilyn Heldman, Jeremy R. Brown, and Sara Vulgan. *Ethiopian Scribal Practice 7: EMIP - Ethiopic Manuscript Imaging Project* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014), p. 115.

⁹⁴ Paulos Milkias *Dictionary of Ethiopian Christianity*. (New York: University Press of America, 2010), p. 87.

The devil is the evil spirit of the lower-places, as a fugitive he made Sotona from the heavens as his name was Satanail, thus he became different from the angels, *but his nature* did not change *his* intelligence as far as *his* understanding of righteous and sinful *things*. And he understood his condemnation and the sin which he had sinned before, therefore he conceived thought against Adam, in such form he entered and seduced Eva, but did not touch Adam.⁹⁵

Buddhist Understanding of Evil and the Evil One

The Buddhist believe that *Mara* is “the Killer” was arrived at from two fundamentally different religion traditions and texts, that is, by reflecting on the sacred texts, one Christian and the other Buddhist. This is a worthwhile comparative religious exploration into the nature of *Evil* by looking at the character of its chief acolyte and devotee. Based on the Bible and the Buddhist tradition about *Mara* one could infer that these two evil personages are homicidal. Such a comparative study could establish the plausibility of this assertion and show that the demonic purpose of evil is to completely destroy God’s *Good Creation* especially the human person God’s highest being in the material creation (i.e. Man, Mankind). An examination of Batchelor’s Buddhist religious thought on the question of Satan and *Evil* reveal some fundamental differences from Western and the Ethiopian Orthodox horizon of understanding. Batchelor suggests that Buddhism divides the character of *Mara* into five emotional states of being: (1) the devil of psychophysical existence, (2) the devil of compulsions, (3) the devil of death, (4) the devil born of a god, and (5) the devil of conditioning.⁹⁶ It is interesting to note that (according to Batchelor) Buddhism believes the Devil was born from a god, while the biblical view holds that Satan was created as a perfect being by God (i.e. “born of” or “created by” God) but who *became evil* or *became* the chief devotee and acolyte of *Evil*. Satan-El fell from God’s grace by trying to usurp the throne of God. Batchelor on the other hand holds that *Satan after all is not a real being* but rather *Satan is a metaphor for evil in humans* which harmonizes well with St. Thomas’ view that *Evil* is not an *Entity* but originates (i.e. is given birth) *within* the human person. It is not clear whether that view is Batchelor’s own theological reflection or actual Buddhist belief. Nevertheless, Batchelor states:

Yet, no matter how carefully Mara is analyzed and classified, the devil eludes precise definition. By trying to define him, one risks losing sight of him. He slips through the bars of the cage in which one seeks to contain him. His polymorphous perversity is most effectively communicated by representing him figuratively. For a personality alone can contain the puzzle of his awkward multiplicity. In the end, we humans are the only adequate metaphor for the devil.⁹⁷



⁹⁵ *The Lost Books of the Bible and the Forgotten Books of Eden*. (Meridian Books, 1963), “Secrets of Enoch”, Chapter XXXI, para. 4, p. 93.

⁹⁶ Batchelor, p. 26.

⁹⁷ Batchelor, p. 27.

In Buddhism *Mara* (in Sanskrit मार) is a demon described by his character as the *tempter* just as he is in Judeo-Christian understanding except that it is his evil character rather than his spiritual personage that is focused on. *Mara* appears in Buddhist lore as the demon who tried to tempt Prince Siddhartha (that is, Gautama Buddha, the founder of this religious way) by seducing him with the vision of beautiful women, who are said to be *Mara's* daughters. In Buddhist cosmology *Mara* is associated with *death, rebirth, and desire*; hence Buddhism's focus on developing a set of practical doctrines to combat *Mara's* influence over the human person in just these areas. *Mara* tempts humans with unwarranted *desires* therefore a *doctrine of emptiness and nonattachment* has to be taught and practiced. In no case is *Mara* blamed for what humans choose to do (as result of his *tempting*) so that in Buddhism no such claim can be made that "the Devil made me do it!" Nevertheless, taking advantage of our weak human frame and mental constitution (i.e. we are made of dust and as such are easily blown away) *Mara* threatens humans with *death* (i.e. the anxiety of *nonexistence*) so a doctrine of *good and bad karmas* has to be taught along with teaching that *true death* is continuous *rebirth* until *one gets it right!* None of these doctrines does *Mara* need to be mentioned except to know that all humans can be tempted and prone to all of the cosmological influences of darkness that are described in *Mara's* character; yet we ourselves are held responsible (not *Mara*) for the choices we make. Buddhism offers a path of enlightenment in Basic Doctrines of the Middle Way that describe the fundamental reasons why humans suffer and how to deal with this fundamental human ailment in its doctrine of the *Four Noble Truths* and the *Eightfold Path*. The Buddha explains the basic doctrines in his first sermon to Buddhist monks:

These two extremes, O monks, are not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the world. What are the two? That conjoined with the passions, low, vulgar, common, ignoble, and useless, and that conjoined with self-torture, painful, ignoble, useless. Avoiding these two extremes the Tathagata has gained the knowledge of the Middle Way, which gives sight and knowledge, and tends to calm, to insight, enlightenment, Nirvana. What, O monks, is the Middle Way, which gives sight . . . ? It is the noble Eightfold Path, namely, right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This, O monks, is the Middle Way. . . . (1) Now this, O monks, is the noble truth of suffering: birth is painful, old age is painful, sickness is painful, death is painful, sorrow, lamentation, dejection, and despair are painful. Contact with unpleasant things is painful, not getting what one wishes is painful. . . . (2) Now this, O monks, is the noble truth of the cause of suffering: that craving, which leads to rebirth, combined with pleasure and lust, finding pleasure here and there, namely the craving for passion, the craving for existence, the craving for nonexistence. (3) Now this, O monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: the cessation without a remainder of craving, abandonment, forsaking, release, nonattachment. (4) Now this, O monks, is the noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of suffering: this is the noble Eightfold Path, namely, right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. "This is the noble truth of suffering." Thus, O monks, among doctrines unheard before, in me sight and knowledge arose, wisdom, knowledge, light arose. "This noble truth of suffering must be comprehended." Thus, O monks, among doctrines heard of before, by me was this truth comprehended. And thus, O monks, among doctrines unheard before, in me sight and knowledge arose. . . . As long as in these noble truths my threefold knowledge and insight . . . was not well purified, even so long, O monks, in the world with its gods, **Mara**, Brahma, with ascetics, brahmins, gods and men, I had not attained the highest complete enlightenment.

Thus I knew. But when in these noble truths my threefold knowledge and insight duly with its twelve divisions was well purified, then, O monks, in the world . . . I had attained the highest complete enlightenment. Thus I knew. Knowledge arose in me, insight arose that the release of my mind is unshakeable; this is my last existence; now there is no rebirth.⁹⁸

Following his first sermon where he declared that being in the world with a system of gods and men, including the god *Mara* he failed to attain “the highest complete enlightenment” he produced a series of philosophical dialogues elaborating on the Buddhist *Basic Doctrines* he had introduced to his monks, demonstrating to them how to achieve “the highest complete enlightenment and so how with him to achieve their *last existence* finally getting off of the *wheel of death* he refers to as *rebirth* (i.e. *samsara* – the endless cycle of being reborn again and again that stops only when one achieves liberation by insight and extinguishing desire). After the Buddha’s death his monks and other sects of the Buddhist Middle Way would elaborate further on his teachings delving further into the evil causing suffering and how to overcome it within a person’s lifetime achieving as their reward the liberation (i.e. *nirvana* = freedom from the cycle of death (*samsara*) and therefore human suffering.

Clearly in Buddhism suffering is the greatest evil and nearly the whole of the basic doctrine and its elaborations are seeking ways to understanding it and finally overcome it by means of liberation from the cycle or wheel of endless rebirth to suffer again and again. But the deeper question of what is evil or of what does it consist or its ontological nature is never answered except within its human context and location. Suffering as the greatest evil is caused by our wanton human desires and so the *doctrine of emptiness and nonattachment to emptiness* is the way of escape while one is still on the earth. Nagarjuna was the most famous philosophical exponent of Buddhism. He and the sect he led wanted to draw out the kernel of the Buddha’s message. Nagarjuna (who lived in the first or second century after the death of Christ) believed that the “Buddha’s fundamental attitude, the rejection of unanswerable questions about metaphysics (perhaps like the one purposed in this book on “what is evil?”) in favor of enunciating the more practical truth requisite for attaining nirvana. . . According to Nagarjuna, the kinds of things that people are usually prone to consider real—physical objects, wealth, the self—are in fact a kind of illusion, yet powerful enough that most people cling to them. In truth things have only a momentary existence, without any kind of permanence. All is empty. Understanding this is the first step toward enlightenment.”⁹⁹ Nagarjuna states the following about nirvana, enlightenment and the goal of nonattachment:

Our view is that *nirvana* represents quiescence, i.e. the non-applicability of all the variety of names and the nonexistence of particular objects. This very quiescence, so far as it is the natural quiescence of the world, is called bliss. The quiescence of plurality is also a bliss because of the cessation of speech or because of the cessation of thought. It is also bliss because by putting an end to all defiling agencies, all individual existences are stopped. It is also a bliss because, by quenching all defiling forces, all instinct and habits of thought have been extirpated without residue. It is also a bliss because since all the objects of knowledge have died away, knowledge itself has also died. (Nagarjuna, *Treatise on the Middle Doctrine*).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Timothy Shanahan and Robin Wang. *Reason and Insight: Western and Eastern Perspectives on the Pursuit of Moral Wisdom*. Second Edition. (Thompson/Wadsworth, 2003), pp. 203-204.

⁹⁹ Shanahan and Wang. *Reason and Insight*, pp. 201-202.

¹⁰⁰ Shanahan and Wang, p. 202.

Most humans cannot detach themselves from the world and the desire for its objects so completely as Nagarjuna suggests they must if they would obtain bliss in this existence. Human suffering as the greatest evil in Buddhism therefore needs to be elaborated on as to its nature and origin. Buddhism does elaborate on these two aspects of suffering (i.e. its nature and origins). In his *Fire-Sermon* the Buddha (now referred to as the *Blessed One* and his monks as *priests*, a thousand in number) on the occasion his wandering in the direction of the Gaya Head preached the following about the *nature of suffering* :

And there The Blessed One addressed the priests. "All things, O priests, are on fire. And what, O priests, are all these things which are on fire? "The eye, O priests, is on fire; forms are on fire; eye-consciousness is on fire; impressions received by the eye are on fire; and whatever sensation, pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impressions received by the eye, that also is on fire. "And with what are these on fire? With the fire of passion, say I, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of infatuation, with birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair are they on fire . . . Whenever, O priests, a priest knows the truth concerning suffering, knows the truth concerning the origin of suffering, knows the truth concerning the cessation of suffering, knows the truth concerning the path leading to the cessation of suffering. And what, O priests, is the noble truth of suffering? Birth is suffering; old age is suffering; disease is suffering; death is suffering, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair are suffering; to wish for what one cannot have is suffering; in short, all the five attachment-groups are suffering.¹⁰¹

Then the Buddha or the *Blessed One* in his *Fire-Sermon* goes on to elaborate on the *origins of suffering* :

And what, O priests, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering? It is desire leading to rebirth, joining itself to pleasure and passion, and finding delight in every existence, --- desire, namely, for sensual pleasure, desire for permanent existence, desire for transitory existence. But where, O priest, does this desire spring up and grow? Where does it settle and take root? Where anything is delightful and agreeable to men, there desire springs up and grows, there it settles and takes root. And what is delighted and agreeable to men, where desire springs up and grows, where it settles and takes roots.¹⁰²

Knowing *the nature and origins of suffering* as the greatest evil and how to overcome it as is taught by Buddhist doctrine and philosophical elaborations and while *the why* of suffering is central to the problem of evil the answers that Buddhism gives concerning suffering does not bring us any closer to understanding *the nature and origin of evil* itself. As was cited earlier Buddhism is not interested in the metaphysical questions about suffering but the practical application of its basic doctrine on how to deal with it in this world and how to escape from it permanently in the next. The one aspect of Buddhist doctrine that does advance our understanding on how Evil is able to move on the *Superhighway of God* and create havoc and suffering within God's *Good Creation*. Evil arrives by chiefly by means of *human desires* and of course that defect in human nature as Buddhism

¹⁰¹Shanahan and Wang, pp. 211-212.

¹⁰² Shanahan and Wang, p. 213.

elaborates leads to all kinds of human suffering. Buddhism would not be opposed to saying that such desire once Evil takes roots within the *six organs of sense* [The eye, the nose, the tongue, the body, the mind, etc.], *the six objects of sense* [forms, sounds, odors, tastes, delightful ideas, etc.], *the six aspects of human consciousness* [eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, mind-consciousness, etc.], *the six contacts, the six sensations, the six perceptions, the six thinkings, the six desires, the six reasonings, and the six reflexions* that the demon *Mara* is not somehow the influencer behind what are clearly defects in human nature leading to human suffering. However, Buddhism is not focused on what *Mara's* role in this human drama of suffering is but on what humans can do to liberate themselves from it.

The Yoruba Understanding of Evil and the Evil One

A similar comparative analysis could be applied to Yoruba sacred texts. Like Buddhism, Yoruba religion is a living faith. The majority of its religious acolytes are in Nigeria. However, Yoruba can be classified as a non-Western New World Religion because it has millions of adherents in Cuba, other Caribbean countries, and in both North and South America. In Cuba the religion is called *Nago*. In North America and Mexico it is called *Santeria*. Yoruba is a complete cultural, religious, and philosophical system with sacred texts. The Ifa divination system, using the Odu sacred texts in Yoruba religion is designed to teach or show the human person how to live with the evil consequences of things, and events in the world. This is similar to Batchelor's idea of how Buddhism helps its adherents to live with the Devil since Evil (although it can be stalemated or subdued within the creator order) cannot be destroyed by means of human efforts. Therefore both Buddhism and Yoruba takes a practical course in providing the spiritual means for the human person to overcome evil within the self (Buddhism) and/or cope with the material/spiritual complexity (negative phenomenon) in the life of the human person or change the negative phenomenon or circumstances in favor of the human person by invoking the *Orisha* (Yoruba). Yoruba religion helps its adherents live with the presence of evil. Yoruba is not a polytheistic system of religion. Anyone studying it from this perspective will be misled in understanding how Yoruba adherents view *Evil* and Satan. I have coined the term *Uni-theistic* to describe how I view the Yoruba religion. *Uni-theism* is a system of religion where all of the gods share the same essence as the creator god, so that this god created the other gods from within its own being (i.e. essence). *Polytheism* is not the descriptive term for this understanding of the gods because that term suggests the many gods are somehow separable and independent deities.

Yoruba is rather a *uni-theistic system of religion*, where all the gods in the *Orisha* of the gods are in fact emanations of the one god *Olorun*. These African gods are responsible for their actions to *Olorun* who has the power to destroy them. Nevertheless, these African "many" gods have their own autonomy. However, their spiritual essence comes from *Olorun*, who is their creator, and the father of their being. These spiritual emanations or gods embody *ashe*, which is "*the power to get things done*", according to the will of *Olorun*. *Olorun* vouchsafes the power of *ashe* to them. This power can be taken away, and or diminished by *Olorun* if the gods fail to carry out *Olorun's* will. *Ashe* is, therefore, the supreme power that belongs to *Olorun* alone. There is an interesting parallel to this Yoruba theological notion in the Hebrew Psalms where God, the creator threatens the gods (i.e.,

אֱלֹהִים = *elohim* or "gods" that are *unseen spiritual powers and principalities who rule invisibly over God's created order*, etc.) with becoming mortal and there having their contingent immortality (their life is within God and not in themselves) compromised and subject to death like mortal men if they

do not carry out justice on the Earth. God tells them they have already been declared to be the sons of the Most High and that if they carry out justice for the poor, weak and oppressed on the Earth they will inherit the nations.

God (ዐገላ) presides in the great assembly; Among the *gods*(ዐገላ) he gives judgment:

(2) “How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality toward of the wicked.” (3) “Defend the weak and fatherless; and maintain the rights of the oppressed!” (4) “Rescue the weak and needy; and deliver them from the hands of the wicked!” (5) They know nothing and they understand nothing; they walk in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken. (6) I said: “All of you *gods*(ዐገላ) are the sons of the Most High!” (7) “But like men you will

die and like other rulers you will fall.”; (8) “Rise-up *gods* (ዐገላ)!” ; “Judge the earth for you will inherit all of the nations!” (**Psalms 82: 1-8, DSMV**).

Robert Farris Thompson, Professor of African and African-American art at Yale University, says the following in his book *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* (1982) about the Yoruba religion:

The Yoruba religion, the worship of various spirits under God, presents a limitless horizon of vivid moral beings, generous yet intimidating. They are messengers and embodiments of *ashe*, spiritual command, the power-to-make-things-happen, God's own enabling light rendered accessible to men and women. The supreme deity, God Almighty, is called in Yoruba Olorun, master of the skies. Olorun is neither male nor female but a vital force. In other words, Olorun is the supreme quintessence of *ashe*. . . When God came down to give the world *ashe*, God . . . bestowed upon us the power-to-make-things-happen, *morally neutral power*, power to give, and to take away, to kill and to give life, according to the purpose and the nature of its bearer. The messengers of *ashe* reflect this complex of powers.¹⁰³

The character and essence of God described in Yoruba cosmology mirrors that in the New Testament Scripture. Even though God is described there in anthropomorphic terms the Scriptures also describe God as having no form (human or otherwise) but states emphatically: “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24a, KJV). In the ancient Ethiopian Ge'ez New Testament it states: እስመ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ መንፈስ፡ (lit. “Indeed God is a Spirit”) and in modern Ethiopian Amharic Bible (i.e. መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ = Holy Book) the text reads እግዚአብሔር፡ ማንፈስ፡ ነው፡፡ (lit. “God is a Spirit He-is”). In both texts it is understood that God is not just any “Spirit” but መንፈስ ቅዱስ (i.e. the Holy Spirit) the holy creative power that has all life within itself and is the giver of all life to everything. This Holy Spirit empowers all being within their respective natures and endowments to “get things done” or have “the-power-to-make-things-happen.” If this is the nature and character of the Yoruba supreme deity what then is the Yoruba theological view of evil and Satan? Satan in the Yoruba system is called Eshu-Elegba, the Trickster god of the Yoruba Orisha.¹⁰⁴ Certainly, this view accords with Western monotheism that Satan is both a liar, and a deceiver, derived from certain biblical texts. What monotheism could not accept would be the fact that Eshu-Elegba as Satan, or the Devil was made from the essence of God. With this

¹⁰³ Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Thompson, p. 166.

understanding God would logically be responsible for the creation of evil. But the Yoruba do not think of Eshu-Elegba in this way. First, Eshu-Elegba wields *the moral neutral power of ashe* just like other living beings in the universe including humans. Eshu-Elegba can act to do either good or evil and so meets the definition of *a moral sentient being* that may be judged for wrong actions or rewarded for good ones. The grace of moral neutral power granted to sentient beings by God comes with great responsibility to do what is good and shun that which is evil. All sentient being while given this moral power are warned that “God cannot be mocked: For whatever a man sows so shall he reap (Galatians 6:7). Eshu-Elegba in Yoruba thought is there to make sure men reap what they sow. Eshu-Elegba actions (to us) appear as evil but these actions are necessitated by God’s design of a moral universe that rewards righteousness and punished evil, therefore, Eshu-Elegba from this perspective is *not evil incarnate*. Eshu-Elegba’s job is to test the goodness of Olorun’s creation as the *ha-satan* (i.e. spiritual prosecuting attorney) acted in respect to testing the claims God made about Job’s righteous character (see Job Chapter’s 1 and 2). Eshu-Elegba acts as Olorun’s prosecutor. As already said Satan in the story of Job assumed this same role. In the story of Job, Satan challenged God’s assessment that Job was righteous. Farris Thompson says this about Eshu-Elegba:

Even Satan was identified with a Yoruba deity, Eshu, to challenge goodness creatively. Thus the “signatures” of Eshu, associated with the crossroads, sudden changes of fortune, and “devilish,” that is, unpredictable, behavior, are circular blazons in which Satan’s pitchfork, a pinwheel sign of sudden change and motion, . . . “When Eshu’s trident is up, the work is for the good; upside down, the work is for evil.”¹⁰⁵

Western monotheism *would not agree* that Satan is both good and evil. Rather, Satan as Lucifer *was once good* according to the biblical view, but now Satan is *pure evil* if not *Evil incarnate*. Satan was created but is not part of the essence of the Trinity, and therefore has no claim to deity. But why do the Yoruba view Eshu-Elegba as both good and evil, and why do they believe that Eshu-Elegba is made from the very essence of Olorun? It is because of the African view of evil, which the Yoruba appear to share with other African peoples. African people view evil in terms of its consequences for the human person. The act is good if it has good consequences and evil if it has bad consequences. This resembles the Western ethical theory of utilitarianism, which says that actions are morally right to the extent they give sentient beings pleasure, and morally wrong to the extent they cause sentient beings pain. But the African view is different, even from this philosophical ethical perspective. The African view is that, if God punishes the human person for their action then the actions are evil. If God rewards the action then it is good, no matter how the actions are seen from universal ethical perspectives. Job questioned God’s motives along these lines, suggesting that perhaps God, who knew Job was righteous, was unjust. The Yoruba would have sided with Job’s friends that, despite Job’s claim of innocence; Job’s deplorable condition was evidence of his sin that resulted in God’s displeasure. Job therefore must be guilty of some kind of sin (e.g. perhaps by allowing his sons to have un-supervised parties with his daughters present; for whom he felt the need to sanctify them (i.e. ceremonially wash them) and offer sacrifice to in case they “sinned, and cursed God in their hearts,” Job 1:5. Job, as the patriarch of the family, was suspicious but never stopped them from having these feasts where he knew such egregious sins could be and *likely were committed* against God). So based on this biblical testimony we can legitimately ask the question: *Was the ha-Satan right about*

¹⁰⁵ Thompson, p. 114.

Job and God wrong? Was Job all that innocent and righteous? The ha-Satan's job was to find out by testing the genuineness and sincerity of Job's faith and also challenge God's exalted claims about considering the ha-Satan's express view of the fallibility and sinfulness of human nature, which he had observed by "roaming to and fro throughout the Earth." God in his own wisdom and absolute understanding of man (whom he had made in his own image) did not have any problem in accepting the ha-Satan's challenge. The ha-Satan understood the moral nature of God's *Good Creation* and mounted a legal challenge based on those laws which called for punishment of the least infraction but he did not take into consideration God's sovereignty and that in every judgment of God there is a mercy granted to His fallible and sinful creatures. The ha-Satan thought he was on good ground in that God has established the moral foundation of His *Good Creation* and had set moral limits and consequences for violations against them *from the beginning*.

However, in the Yoruba system of religion there is no predetermined ethical standard of what is right or wrong. That is determined purely by how God punishes or rewards the person grounded in God's sovereignty and authority to punish or forgive sins. God as Sovereign could actually allow someone who is "perfect and upright, and one that feared God" as Job was to suffer as if they had actually deserved it and absolutely no valid challenge could be made against God's decision as Job and his friends discovered. Of course all humans inwardly rebel against this view of God's sovereignty and as the perennial question: "*How can God permit bad things to happen to good people?*" The Yoruba understanding helps with this stark view that what happens to the human person, in terms of rewards and punishment, determines whether an action is good or evil. They do not seek to answer the question as to whether what happens is just or not. John S. Mbiti, an African theologian, explains the general African understanding of evil by looking at the particular religious views of the Nuer people. Mbiti states in *African Religions and Philosophy* (1970), that,

The Nuer, like many other African peoples, have different rules of behaviour. Offences arising from the breach of these, whether deliberately or accidentally, bring misfortune both to offenders and other people who are not directly responsible. For them, the evil lies not in the act itself, but in the fact that God punishes the act. By committing a particular offence, a person puts himself and other people in the dangerous situation where God punishes him or other people. Since the consequences are bad, therefore the act which invites them must be bad. The outward manifestations only indicate the bad or evil inside, and the outward misfortune may contaminate other people who are closely related to the offender. Such is the logic of the matter in the sight of the Nuer and, it would seem, many other African peoples. Something is evil because it is punished: it is not punished because it is evil.¹⁰⁶

If this view is true of the Yoruba, then it explains why *Eshu-Elegba* could be good or evil. Eshu-Elegba becomes a devil when Eshu-Elegba does things that lead to punishment of the human person. Eshu-Elegba is good when this divinity does things that lead to rewards for the human person. In either case Eshu-Elegba appears to be testing the moral ethical foundations, and claims of Olorun's essentially Good Creation as the *ha-satan* did in Chapters 1 and 2 of Job. E. Bolaji Idowu (1994) in his book *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* states:

In Yoruba theology, Esu is depicted as so versatile a character that one must be wary of what one says about him. He has often been sweepingly called either the "Devil" or "Satan", He is

¹⁰⁶ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), p. 270.

certainly not the Devil of our New Testament acquaintance, who is an out and out evil power in opposition to the plan of God's salvation of man. On the whole, it would be near the truth to parallel him with Satan in the Book of Job, where the Satan is one of the ministers of God and has the office of trying men's sincerity and putting their religion to the proof.¹⁰⁷

The simplicity of this view has not relieved the adherents of traditional African religions of the same range of questions regarding the origins of evil that has been asked by Western monotheism or the Abrahamic religions. When these questions are considered in conjunction with the doctrine of God the question still arises whether God is somehow responsible for evil? This is the same overall question that has plagued Western theology itself. In *African Religions and Philosophy*, Chapter 17, "The Concepts of Evil, Ethics and Justice." Mbiti states:

From previous considerations we have seen that African peoples are much aware of evil in the world, and in various ways they endeavour to fight it. Several views exist concerning the origin of evil. Many societies say categorically that God did not create what is evil, nor does He do them any evil whatsoever. For example, the Ila hold that God is always in the right, and "cannot be charged with an offence, cannot be accused, cannot be questioned . . . He does good to all at all times." One of the Ashanti priests is reported as saying that God "created the possibility of evil in the world . . . God has created the knowledge of good and evil in every person and allowed him to choose his way," without forbidding him or forcing His will on him . . . Some societies see evil as originating from, or associated with, spiritual beings other than God. Part of this concept is a personification of evil itself. For example, the Vugusu say that there is an evil divinity which God created good, but later on turned against Him and began to do evil. This evil divinity is assisted by evil spirits, and all evil now comes from that lot. Thus, a kind of duel exists, between good and evil forces in the world. There are other peoples who regard death, epidemics, locusts and other major calamities, as divinities in themselves, or as caused by divinities.¹⁰⁸

In Mbiti's analysis you can see both similarities and differences from the Western Christian perspective. But the similarities are astonishing. These African views of evil, described by Mbiti, do not come from any recognized sacred text, such as the Bible or the Qur'an. They are part of the ancient oral traditions of each African people. The Yoruba people are among the few that use a sacred text of religious ideas, where the fundamental ritual sayings of the religion has been written down. The sacred texts of the Yoruba, from which one may derive the views they hold about evil and their doctrine of God, are not like the Bible. It is a text of ritual statements that the Yoruba priest uses to answer questions posed to them by people effected by evil circumstances of life. Presumably, these evil circumstances are caused by Eshu-Elegba, or by followers of EshuElegba. These texts are called *Odu* from which the Yoruba priests suggest to the petitioner pathways, or roads that people must take to change these evil circumstances. The first English translation of the complete sacred texts of Ifa has been translated with value commentary on this religious system by Afolabi A. Epega and Philip John Neimark (1995) in *The Sacred Ifa Oracle*. The work contains all two-hundred and fifty-six *Odu*. Yoruba scholars are now using such texts to outline the meaning and use of these sacred oracles. Professor E.

¹⁰⁷ E. Bolayi Idowu. *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*. (Brooklyn, New York: A & B Books Publishers, 1994), p. 80.

¹⁰⁸ Mbiti, pp. 266-267.

Bolaji Idowu of University College, Ibadan, Nigeria in *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* (1994) explains what the Yoruba *Odu* sacred corpus is, how the *baba'lawa* (Yoruba priest, literally "Father of the Religion") uses the *Odu* texts and its spiritual meaning for the people. (pp.7-9). Idowu states:

This is a body of recitals which belong to the intricate system of divination connected with the cult of Orunmila. They are believed to be the responses vouchsafed by the oracle through the priest to devout enquirers and suppliants, and constitute, in a systematic way, the religious philosophy of the Yoruba, which is a pragmatic one. As they are, they belong to the most fixed and reliable section of the oral tradition. We cannot tell exactly how many of the recitals there are within the corpus. However, we know that they are well grouped under headings to which are given the generic name of *Odu*. There are two hundred and fifty six of the *Odu*, and to each of them, according to the *baba'lawa*, are attached one thousand six hundred and eighty stories or myths, called pathways, roads, or courses. . . . Thus the *baba'lawa* tells the enquirer that he must always be hospitable that he may have a good After-Life. It is particularly of value that the *Odu* corpus contains the names and appellations of, and stories about, the Deity and divinities. Thus, they give us valuable material on Yoruba theogony.¹⁰⁹

One of these deities is *Eshu-Elegba*, who often causes evil, or causes Eshu-Elegba's acolytes and devotees to do evil. "*The devil made me do it*" in Yoruba religion is not a defense for the human person because each person has free will, so that evil resides in the person, according to Yoruba interpretations of the *Odu*. The question for the Yoruba is not what is evil? Evil is believed to be the outcome of actions of beings, either spiritual or human that misuses the *moral neutral power* of *ashe*. Ashe belongs to *Olorun*, the Supreme Being. Idowu states:

Our oral traditions emphasize [sic.] that *Èṣù* certainly is also dreaded by the divinities: he seems to possess a power which none except Olodumare can curb. It was said that once Sango was making a boast that there was no orisa who he could not subdue. Esu promptly challenged him, "does that include me?" To which Sango immediately replied apologetically, "But why, surely, you could not have been included? We often hear the expression, *Èṣù, otaorisa* --- "Esu, the adversary of the divinities" --- an expression born of his mischievous dealing with them. There is an unmistakable element of evil in Esu and for that reason he has been predominantly associated with things evil. There are those who say that the primary function of *Èṣù* in this world is to spoil things. But even so, we cannot call him the Devil --- not in the New Testament sense of that name. What element of "evil" there is in *Èṣù* can be found also to some degree in most of the other divinities. The most that we can gather from the evidences of our oral traditions is that he takes mischief-making as his "hobby", just as any person corrupted by power which seems uncontrolled may find sadistic relish in throwing his weight about in unsympathetic, callous ways. He is not the personal embodiment of evil standing in opposition to goodness. But when all this has been admitted, it is quite clear still that the Yoruba put almost every evil tendency and practice in man down to his agency. When a person commits any deed which results in unpleasantness or harm to himself or his neighbour, the Yoruba immediately say, *Èṣù l' o tii* --- "It is *Èṣù* who stirred him". The unruly, the headstrong, the one given to evildoing or wickedness, are all *Omo Èṣù* in the sense of the Biblical "Sons of Belial". It is usually said of any such, *Èṣù l/ o nse e* --- "it is *Èṣù* who is moving him". And people often pray propitiatingly, *Ki a ma se ri 'ja Èṣù* --- "That we may not

¹⁰⁹ E. Bolaji Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* (New York: A & B Books Publishers, 1994), pp. 7-9.

experience the battle of *Ẹṣù*"; or *Ẹṣù, ma se mi, omoelomini ki o se* --- "*Ẹṣù*, do not move me; it is another person's child you should move".¹¹⁰

From Idowu we learn: (1) *Eshu-Elegba* is not considered the Devil in the biblical or Western Christian understanding of that term, (2) that *Eshu-Elegba* is not evil incarnate, (3) that while *Eshu-Elegba* has chosen to use *ashe* (i.e. the moral neutral power to get things done), evil can be found in other divinities of the Orisha, and in the human person. None can say "*The Devil made me do it.*" Each person has moral agency, and responsibility for the use of the share of *ashe* they have been given from Olorun, and (4) there is no cosmic struggle between good and evil with *Eshu-Elegba* at the helm. *Eshu-Elegba*, as the primary welder of *ashe* in the service of evil, does so in order to test the goodness, and moral soundness of Olorun's *Good Creation*. Satan plays this role in relationship to God and Job, to test the presumption and possibility of human righteousness. This notion of *ashe* or "moral neutral power" would be the primary value of Yoruba religious thought to my horizon of thought. This notion accords with one of my claims that evil may be part of the natural process that God is using to bring the world into spiritual maturity. Everyone on *God's superhighway* is responsible for how they drive on it; promoting either *demonic experience* or its opposite, *Christological experience*. All people, including acolytes and devotees of evil, have been given "*moral neutral power*" by God and will be held responsible by God as to how they use it on *God's superhighway of unified human experience*.

The Yoruba's understanding of *Eshu-Elegba* as "Satan" would be of some value, in terms of their doctrine of God. *Eshu-Elegba* is not completely identified as evil incarnate, because *Eshu-Elegba* is a deity that shares the very essence of Olorun, the Supreme Being. To say that *Eshu-Elegba* was evil incarnate, as some Western Christian traditions believe Satan is, would be to say that God is directly responsible for evil. We have seen in the discussion of Mbiti's work on *African Religions and Philosophy* that Africans want to protect the righteousness of God as earnestly as their Western Christian counterparts do. The Yoruba treatment of *Eshu-Elegba* shows that they have the same concern about theodicy. However, they are more focused on how the human person is effected by evil, and how the human person, might use the ritual tradition in the sacred *Odu* texts to be relieved of evil's consequences in terms of *suffering and pain*. In this respect Yoruba religion has developed a *phenomenology of suffering* grounded in human experience of *Evil*. They seek to deal with it through the *Ifa oracle*. These texts often lead the adherent to the conclusion that evil may be overcome by doing good, a favorite recipe offered by the Yoruba priests, as a solution to the *practical problem of evil*, and *demonic experience*. The Yoruba, therefore do not think that evil can be destroyed. It will always be present and available to those who want to use their share of *ashe* in the service of *Evil*.

Additionally, the Yoruba religious tradition suggests that because *ashe* is *moral neutral power*, evil does not have a monopoly on its power or availability. On the contrary the human person can access *ashe* and attempt to use it to overcome *Evil* in the realm of time. The Yoruba *doctrine of moral neutral power* called *ashe* (i.e. "*the power to make things happen*") has a lot to be said for it. It makes the human person and *all living being* (e.g. angels, men, principalities and powers, etc.) responsible for their actions in God's moral universe. It would militate against the need for a dualist theology of God, since there is but one Deity from whom all power is derived. There would be no need for Satan. Satan is given the same access to *ashe* or *moral neutral power* and *he* (like we all) *shall pay the ultimate price* for promoting demonic experiences in God's *Good Creation*. Even *Eshu-Elegba*, the primary user

¹¹⁰ Idowu, pp. 82-83.

of *ashe* for evil in the Yoruba moral universe is not totally corrupt. From their horizon of religious thought there really is no need to explain the nature of evil *per se*. *Evil just is!* Or *Evil is what it is* and since no one but God can do anything about IT the human person has to learn to master IT as God once told Cain as written in Genesis 4:7b. Interestingly enough *Sin* (the third member of the *Trinity of the Powers of Darkness*, i.e. *Evil*, *Sin* and *Death* as proposed by Barth) is personified as *Him* or *Hein* the New Jerusalem Bible translation based on the Hebrew: "Sin is crouching at the door hungry to get you. You can still master him" (Genesis 4:7b, NJB). This translation (among others) speaks as if this part of the *Trinity of the Powers of Darkness* has *ontological being*. Nevertheless, all one has to do in order to overcome evil in the Yoruba Ifa system is access the ritual prescriptions provided by the *Oduis do good* of course guided by an expert in this religious praxis. This is the same prescription for dealing with *Evil* given by Apostle Paul to Christian believers in Romans 12: "*Do not be overcome by evil; instead overcome evil with good*" (Romans 12:21, EOB). Therefore, whatever evil is with the *demonic experience* and the death that follows it can be overcome by the proper use of the *moral neutral power* of given by Olorun to all sentient (*living*) being. In some respects I must challenge this Yoruba phenomenological view because *ashe* in the human person is always limited by our lack of absolute wisdom to carry out its prescriptions to perfection. This is true for the collective human person as well so that human appropriation of *ashe* is often *insufficient for the task of overcoming evil with good*. Apostle Paul spoke about this inadequacy within the human person in dealing with *Evil* and its Trinitarian essence of *Sin* within the self and treats *Evil* and *Sin* in the human person as if the human person has been invaded by dark power(s) or dark principalities (i.e. some kind of an pluralistic dark spiritual *Entity*) that *has a life of its own* and yet has possessed the human person with the possible exception of their inmost being which seems to be reserved and protected by the law and grace of God in Christ Jesus:

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. Indeed, I do not know what I am doing! I do not practice what I desire to do; I agree that the law is good. And so, I am no longer the one doing this [evil], but [it is] the sin which dwells in me! This, I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), nothing good dwells, because although [the power of] will is present within me, I do not find it doing what is good. In fact, the good which I desire, I do not do; but the evil which I do not desire, this is what I do! But if I do what I do not desire, I am no longer the one doing it, but (it is) the sin which dwells in me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, it is evil that is present. For I delight in God's law in my inmost self, but I see a law of my mind! It brings me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord! And so, with the mind I serve God's law, but with the flesh, [I serve] the law of sin. (Romans 7:14-25, EOB).

Only from this Pauline perspectives can the human person come close to claiming that: "*The Devil made me do it!*" There is some point at which the human person becomes overwhelmed by *Evil* or the IT but still is responsible for initially letting it come into their mind and heart in return for demonic experiences to satisfy the flesh. Once Evil is allowed into the inner life and being of the human person by means of this bargain of demonic experience IT seeks to possess and destroy its human host by influencing the human person to take various destructive pathways leading to sorrow and death. Once this is achieved *the IT abandons the human person* it has influenced to self-destruction and/or the destruction of others. Above I have already provided a construct in a pictograph developed from Ancient Egyptian cosmology that shows how Evil works within God's *Good*

Creation and which signifies how Western and even some African theological and cosmological systems underestimates the overwhelming power of Evil. Nevertheless, the Yoruba are aware of the great power of *Evil* and indicate this by showing that *Eshu-Elegba* has dedicated the god-power of *ashe* almost entirely to evil, and because of that *Eshu-Elegba* is more powerful than all the gods except *Olorun*. However, even *Eshu-Elegba* can be redeemed, because in this god is the moral neutral power to do good as well. Evil as a supra-natural power that shares *ashe* co-eternally and equally with *Olorun* would never cross the mind of a Yoruba religionist, so that the dualist perspective is not the way they defend the righteousness of God or God's sovereignty. Finally, we need to examine the original source for Yoruba religion that Idowu from a comparative religion horizon of understanding has so ably described and we have briefly outline. No overview even of a comparative nature would be adequate without looking at the original material from the Ifa oracle itself, namely *The Sacred Ifa Oracle* with the traditional 256 oracles, which has been translated by Afolabi A. Epega and Philip John Neimark (1995). Here we want to understand how Ifa is applied the priests in a concrete manner to address the concerns of its adherents dealing with the impact of Evil and its consequences on their *life-world* and their *lived experience* of IT. In brief we want to look at Ifa Orisha divination practice, its meaning for the religious adherent, as well as some cosmological, metaphysical, and theological aspects as they arise as the priest/priestess tries to answer the concerns and anxieties of his/her clients dealing with issues of life and death consequent the Evil that pervades their ordinary life on the *Superhighway of God*. Ifa is regarded by some of its priests and intellectual protagonist rightfully as "among the world's great metaphysical and ethical systems" according to Orisha Shango Wan-wa commenting on the work of AwoFa'LokunFatummbi that according to him has restored Ifa to its rightful place. That accolade suggests that Fatunmbi would be the best secondary source to introduce the reader to Ifa before looking at a few oracles from the original source itself that deal with the phenomenology of Evil in the lives of Yoruba religionists and adherents of this African traditional faith. In his *Awo Ifa and the Theology of Orisha Divination* (1992) Fatunmbi states:

Cosmology is the study of the structure of the universe which attempts to discover the principles of unity that sustain Creation. The Cosmology of *Ifa* is based on the belief that the microcosm (immediate environment) is a reflection of the macrocosm (the universe). This means that the forces that created the stars and the galaxies also created the earth, including the plants and animals that evolved on the planet. Because of this continuity, *Ifa* teaches that every problem faced by humans has an analogous counterpart in every realm of Being. *Ifa* scripture frequently describes the problems encountered by animals and plants with the underlying assumption that the human condition encounters the same struggles for survival. One of the functions of divination is to identify the ways in which universal forces manifest in everyday life. This is done through the use of myth. Because myth makes use of symbolic material, an understanding of symbols makes it possible for the diviner to relate myth to the given situation. The fundamental cosmological paradigm that *Ifa* uses to interpret symbols is the belief that manifestation in the Universe is the result of balancing polarities. Most systems of metaphysics are based on the belief that the primal polarity [not a duality] that sustains the physical universe is the tension between expansion and contraction. In *Ifa* this polarity is usually described as the relationship between darkness and light. This relationship is not considered a conflict between the forces of "good" and the forces of "evil." . . . *Ifa* cosmology teaches the principle that light comes from darkness and darkness comes from light. It also teaches that everything that exists is an expression of *ashe*. The Yoruba word *ashe* has multiple

meanings. In a cosmological context, *aṣẹ* is the Force that sustains Creation. The primal manifestation of *aṣẹ* would be the invisible Force that creates both light and darkness. . . .¹¹¹

Within the religion of *Ifá*, the Prophet *Ọrínmilá* is given credit for using this system to symbolize the spectrum of polarities that exist in Nature. In the days of colonization the markings of *Odu* were used as a form of written language. It was and is possible to communicate a complex series of ideas by marking *Odu* with chalk or charcoal on a piece of pottery. Messages were passed between priests using variations on this method just as someone in modern times would write a letter. In Yoruba this form of communication is called “*àròkò*.” The symbolism of *Dafa* is based on the use of binary elements. This means it is built upon the use of two components. The binary elements are a single line and a double line. These components are grouped together in two columns made up of four elements each. This is the same mathematical structure that is used to program modern computers. The major difference is that instead of using a single and double line, computers use an on/off impulse to form the binary elements. Both systems make use of the octogram as a structure for storing information. Within this structure, each quadragram has sixteen variations (4 X 4). By pairing two quadragrams to form an octogram, there are 256 combinations (16 X 16). In Yoruba culture, *Dafa* is used as a non mechanical form storing information. As new insight was gained in a particular realm of Nature, this information was linked with and added to the verses of a particular octogram associated with a particular realm of Nature, just as data is linked with and stored under specific headings in a modern computer. *Ifá* calls each of the 256 octograms used in *Dafa* “*Odu*.” The use of *Odu* as a paradigm for studying and cataloguing Forces in Nature is an early attempt to formulate a scientific model that explains dynamics and from within the universe. What on the surface may appear to be a relatively simple set of signs is actually a very complex map of the structure of reality as perceived by those ancestors who formulated the concepts associated with each *Odu*.¹¹²

The task of molding Creation was originally given to *Ọbatala*. The word *Ọbatala* means “Chief of the White Cloth.” The term “White Cloth” is a reference to the primal substance that forms the foundation of the physical universe. . . . *Ọbatala* could be understood as the essence of light. . . . *Ifá* Myth says that the task of molding Creation was given to *Oduduwa* by *Ọḣdumarẹ* after *Ọbatala* got drunk. The polarity between *Ọbatala* and *Oduduwa* is a symbolic expression of the Western scientific theory that light forms matter and that matter dissipates into light. *Ifá* expresses the same concept by saying that light comes from darkness and that darkness comes from light. The reference to *Ọbatala’s* drinking is a symbolic expression of the observation that the movement of light to darkness and from darkness to light does not always take place in a smooth progression. The image of drunkenness is a symbol of imperfection as a condition of manifestation within Nature.¹¹³

Here we take it that in Yoruba religion *Ifá* uses the 256 *Odu Oracles* to address these “imperfections” in Nature that are caused by the less than smooth progression (back and forth) and tension between light and darkness; and where Western thought by in large would see a struggle

¹¹¹AwoFá’LokunFatummbi. *Ifá and the Theology of Orisha Divination*. (Bronx, New York: Original Publications, 1992), pp. 1-2.

¹¹²Fatummbi, p. 8.

¹¹³Fatummbi, pp. 9-10.

between good and evil in some kind of duality, Yoruba sees a rather necessary and natural process within God's *Good Creation*, so that on God's *Superhighway of Human Experience* answers can be given as to what impact certain evil is having on the Yoruba adherent seeking answers via the *OduOracle* with a prescription leading to solution provided by the priest interpreting the *Oracles*. At this point we can look at some examples of how is accomplished from the original source of *The Sacred Ifa Oracle* :

HOLY ODU IFA SPIRITUAL SYMBOLISM & COMMENTARY



CREATION IS THREATENED BY THE EVIL OF DEATH, DISEASE, AND LOSSES IN PROCESS OF BECOMING AND RENEWAL CALLS FOR RESTORATION AND BALANCE



Oracle 23 – Ogbè'Rosù

I	I
I	I
II	I
II	I

Odù Ogbè'Rosù provides the solution to the threat of death, disease, courtcases, losses, and infertility.

Western observation: The client is *always* in some kind of trouble. Only spiritual action can restore balance.

23.1 *Ọnàgbọnrangọndọn-nti-Ifẹ-wa li o difá f Abati*
tiiṣearemo.Àramfẹ enitigbogboibinkoriti
Wọ nilkú a gbeeti,
Àrun a gbeeti,
Ejọ a gbeeti,
Ofo a gbeeti,

*Wonniki o rú.
Agbo kanatiewéIfá.
Ó gbọ ó rú.*

English Translation of the Yoruba:

Ọnàgbọnrangondon-nti-Ifẹ-wa divined Ifá for Abati, the son of Àramfẹ, who was confronted by all evils. He was assured that death (*ikú*) would not defeat him, disease (*àrùn*) would not defeat him, court cases (*ẹjọ*) would not defeat him, losses (*ofo*) would not defeat him. He was asked to sacrifice a ram and *Ifá* leaves. He obeyed and performed the sacrifice.¹¹⁴

**DEATH [No-Thing/Finality of Existence] IS NOT OF NECESSITY EVIL,
BUT RATHER A NECESSARY PART OF THE NATURAL ORDER**



Oracle 71-Oyèkú-Ìṣẹ

I	II
II	II
I	II
II	II

Odù Oyèkú-Ìṣẹ explains the necessity of death as part of the natural order.

Western observation : The client is resisting accepting the ending of a relationship or business.

71-I *K'amatètèkù awo iléAlayọ, Àitètèkù-ìṣẹ awo wọnníle
Ìbànújẹ, bi-ikú-ba-de-ka-yin-Olúwa-logo awo igboyaẹwà
Alọgbọn-on-makú-ninú, Maṣimaleninimẹyẹniyi awo Arfinju-
maku-maṣe'bajẹ, Ọyẹkẹṣẹniyi, A dífáfàwọnÈniyànṣaṣati
wọngbarajọnkeBabaláwowadífáikúwope; Eeriritiikù fí
npọ 'nitikos'etikikù? ÀwọnBabaláwoniífá wipe: ire li
Amuniwayénkilkúṣe. Omíti ko ṣansiwájúti ko pada s'ẹhin
a d'ọgọdọ, Ọgọdọomiibajẹ. Ọgọdọomiarùn. Omi ngbe
wọn lo rẹrẹ, Ọmọnkowọnborẹrẹ, olokunrunkare'lelogba
Awọtitun, Aṣebajẹkare'lelogbiwa-titunbowa'yé. Alasínwin
ni now asínwínsan. Àwọnbabaláwoni; Ewoni ko dùn?*

¹¹⁴ *The Sacred Ifá Oracle*. Translated by Afolabi A. Epega and Philip John Neimark. (HarperSanFrancisco, 1995), p. 83.

*ÀwọnèniyànforibalefúnIfá ---nwipe: Ọ́rúnmílàiború,
Ibọ̀yè, Ibọ̀şẹ. Wọntukalo, wọ́n ko tun gbaikúsiọ̀rànẹ̀dun
mọ. Ọ̀rìşà-ńláliapeniamuniwayé.*

English Translation of the Yoruba:

K'amatètèkù, the diviner of the house of joy (*alayọ*), Àitètèkù-işẹ, the diviner of the house of grief (*ibàújẹ*), Bi-ikù-ba-de-ka-yin-Olúwa-logo, the diviner of IgboyaewàAlọbọ́n-on-makú-ninú, Maşimaleninmeşenyi, the diviner of Afínju-makú-maşẹ'bajẹOyẹkeşenyi, divined Ifá for the sages (*eniyari-şaşá*), who invited the babaláwos to consult on the problems of death (*ikú*) by asking: Why should death kill people and nobody has ever overcome death? The babaláwos said: Ifá has indicated that Amuniwayé created death for the good of mankind. A stagnant water becomes a pond—a pond a polluted water, a pond of water that can cause disease. Water takes the people away freely and water brings them back freely. Let the sick return home for cure and renewal of the body, and the wicked for the renewal of character. The madman is cared for by his family. The babaláwos asked: What is unpleasant about it? The sages bowed for Ifá, saying: Ọ́rúnmílà! Ibọ̀rú, Ibọ̀yè, Ibọ̀şẹ. They all dispersed and never regarded death as a problem anymore. Ọ̀rìşà-ńlá is the one called Amuniwayé.¹¹⁵

Equilibrium [Balanced By Two's] in God's *Good Creation* is achieved by continued **Rebirth** [Renewal By Two's] and its goal is **Immortality**; where the natural quality of nature to reproduce itself via Duality of Rebirth/Renewal thus overcomes (but not destroying) the Evil of inherent destruction and decay within it.



Oracle 75 – Ẹ̀wòrìWò'dí

I	II
II	I
II	I
I	II

Odù Ẹ̀wòrìWò'dí establishes the Ifá concepts of rebirth and immortality.

Western observation: the client needs children to reach a spiritual equilibrium.

75.1 *Kosi aiyamọti ko le bi awo ọmọ Kosi abiyamọti ko le bi
Ọ́rúnmílà Baba-ẹ̀nibiobabininipipe, bọpẹ̀titi a tun nbi Baba-
ẹ̀neọmọ Yeye-ẹ̀nibiobabininipipebọpẹ̀titi a tun nbiyeye-
ẹ̀niọmọ A dífá! Ọ́rúnmílàti o wipe oun maa m'ọ́run
bọsayeoun maa mu ayẹ̀l'ọsọrun. Kiobaaleşebẹẹ dandan,
Wọnniki ó rúOhungbogboniméjíméjì, akọatiabọkan*

¹¹⁵ *The Sacred Ifá Oracle*, pp. 180-181.

*bayi: Agbo kan, àgùtànkan, òbúkọ kan, ewúrẹ kan, akukọ-
adiyẹ kanatiagbebo-adiyẹ kanatibẹẹ bẹẹ. Ó gbọ ó rúbọ Bẹẹ
niayénbisiitiwọnsinrẹsii.*

English Translation of the Yoruba:

There is no childbearing woman who cannot give birth to an Ifá priest. There is no childbearing woman who cannot give birth to Ọrúnmílà, Our father, if he gives birth to us in full, inevitably we shall in time give birth to him in turn. Our mother, if she gives birth to us in full, inevitably we shall in time give birth to her in turn. Ifá oracle was consulted for Ọrúnmílà, who said he would bring the heaven down to earth, he would take the earth back to heaven. In order for him to accomplish his mission, he was asked to offer everything in twos, one male and one female---one ram and one ewe, one he-goat and one she-goat, one cock and one hen, and so on. Ọrúnmílà heeded the advice and performed the sacrifice. Thus the earth became fruitful and multiplied greatly.¹¹⁶

Above I have given an overview of just two non-Western religions, the Buddhist, and the Yoruba in order to demonstrate to the reader what kind of useful comparative data that might be obtained from differing perspectives on evil and ideas of Satan. These perspectives then can be compared and contrasted with Western monotheistic ideas on the same subjects. However, the difficulty that would ensue for me is to include an explanation, however brief, of every major non-Western religious understanding of evil, and the Devil. The one positive value for including these two brief summaries of Buddhism and Yoruba is to show the reader that there are substantial similarities and differences between the Western and non-Western religious views on the question of evil and the meaning of Satan, or the Devil. Two examples from Batchelor's writing's on Buddhism and Idowu's analysis of Yoruba religion were given to demonstrate how they would benefit such a comparative understanding. It would be most valuable if we could select portions of these sacred texts and put them in conversation with the biblical texts that Western Christianity relies on for its understanding of evil and Satan. However, I think that I can substantially answer the questions on "what is Evil?" or "what is the nature of Evil?" by using Western Christian, Ethiopian Orthodox theological sources, including sources from Egyptian theology and cosmology. The reader should be aware that even within the Christian tradition (Protestant and Orthodox) there are a myriad of differing perspectives on the question of "what is evil?" My hope is that the readers will see these views in the representative selection of texts from major theologians and *cosmologists* that I have chosen. The reader can find a comprehensive comparative study on the history of views on evil and on Satan in Joseph F. Kelly's *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition: From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics* (2002). My book however is an attempt at the beginnings of a *constructive theology of Evil*. I want to explore *the nature of Evil* and arrive at a plausible answer to the question of "what is evil?"

¹¹⁶ *The Sacred Ifá Oracle*, pp. 186-187.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NATURE OF EVIL: SOME WESTERN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

First, I begin by making some general statements about the nature of evil in relationship to God and the human person. Secondly, I will discuss classical theodicy in both its dilemma and trilemma forms of expression to see its limitations in finding an answer to the problem of evil. What will be discovered is that classical theodicy ultimately fails to give an answer to the problem of evil. This is because it fails to outline the nature of evil and its implications for the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the human person. Classical theodicy may be asking the wrong questions and looking in the wrong places for the answers. I will say what I believe the appropriate questions should be at the end of this chapter. There are two primary starting points from which to begin theological reflection in order to study theological questions. One is to begin with the doctrine of God, and the other is to begin with the doctrine of the human person. The starting point for my work on the nature of evil begins with the human person, but of necessity I will have to bring in some doctrinal aspects of God's attributes, such as God's benevolence and omnipotence, and how they relate to the problem of evil. The doctrine of God is inclusive of any study on the ontology of evil and the human person. This is true because at bottom the great question is how genuine evil exists, with its attending blight, corruption, death, and sin, when there is a all-loving and all-powerful God, who oversees the entire created order and seeks its well-being and redemption?

A. The Nature of Evil and Theological Anthropology

Without studying the nature of evil in relationship to theological anthropology, that is, the study of the human person, my project would have no object. The human person on earth is the ultimate concern of God, the object of God's grace, and the object of God's economy of salvation. Therefore, the question of the nature of evil is paramount in relationship to the theology of the human person. How can the prayer be answered, "Our Father, deliver us from all evil," (Matthew 6:13) if we don't know what evil is? An overview of the biblical record would suggest that mankind is at the very center of God's ultimate concern. This is true because the celestial combat with evil begins in earnest at the foot of the cross, where any theology of good and evil becomes a *theologiacrucis*. It is not going too far to say that all of heaven is focusing on the outcome of the battle between good and evil within the temporal/spiritual realm of human existence. Heavenly beings view what is happening on Earth as *a war on the human person* by Evil and its Chief devotee and acolyte (i.e. Satan) within God's *Good Creation* as suggested by a passage in Revelation:

A war took place in heaven: Michael and his angels made war on the dragon, and the dragon and his angels made war. But they did not prevail, and there was no longer any place found for him in heaven. The dragon was hurled down, the great old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now has come salvation, the power, and the Kingdom of our God, with the authority of his Christ! . . . Therefore, rejoice, heavens, and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he only has a short time. When the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he began to

persecute the woman who had given birth to the male child. . . . But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing up the river which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. The dragon became enraged with the woman and departed to make war with the rest of her seed, those who keep God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 12:7-17, EOB)

This starting location for the struggle between good and evil on Earth becomes a cosmic, spiritual and temporal Christological event for the redemption and salvation of the human person. So the basis for any constructive theology of evil is not merely personal, but very much public and political in nature since the struggle is spiritual, cosmic as well as temporal in nature. God is concerned about the human person in the context of human social institutions that all have a propensity to sin by violating their moral neutral power to do justice, so that the moral ethical good life is promoted rather than evil. This perspective allows me to say that the dark principalities and powers not only invade the interiority of the individual person, but influence social and political institutions as well. This is the back story for all the human tragedy we are currently seeing in the world. Mankind has little notion of the real nature of the temporal, spiritual and cosmic war he is necessarily involved in. This lack of understanding and even denial by the human person that this is indeed true is of great advantage to the dark powers of Evil seeking utter destruction of God's *Good Creation*. Douglas John Hall, Professor of Christian Theology Emeritus at McGill University, Montreal sees clearly the purpose and aim of *Evil* and the *It* operates within human institutions. He says that because of God's pathos for God's own creation the cross has a necessary cosmic thrust, and is not merely pastoral and personal. Hall states:

What the most compelling *contemporary* statements of the theology of the cross have demonstrated is that the people of the cross are drawn, not only towards *individual* sufferers, but towards suffering *peoples* and indeed toward all creatures, human and extrahuman, which are being deprived of the fullness of life for which God intends what God has made. . . . What has not always been part of, it unfortunately, is the recognition that this same pastoral impulse implies a *political* dimension and in fact is itself impoverished until that concern for the *polis* is made good . . . Too often, the theology of the cross has articulated itself in the type of pastoral and personal orientation which is frankly privatistic. . . . it is productive of the kind of *social* quietism and resignation which ends in an otherworldliness that can be just as detrimental to the *shalom* of the earth as any other form of world denial . . . For that essence is its intense and eloquent articulation of the divine compassion, the pathos of God . . . Individuals are certainly recipients of this "spontaneous and unmotivated love (Nygren), but we are not dealing here with religious individualism. Even the most (reputedly) otherworldly of the Gospels offers as its *rudimentary* explanation of the passion of the Christ an unqualified and radical statement of the divine love *for the world* (*kosmos*, John 3:16). The recognition of this *cosmic* thrust of the gospel of the cross has demanded of all serious modern exponents of the *theologiacrucis* that they develop, in a manner seldom if ever explored in the past, its potential as a basis for *political* theology . . . the full exploration of this tradition for its larger, public meaning.¹¹⁷

God's ultimate concern can be seen in Jesus' declaration "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NIV). Hall says that this scripture serves as the rudimentary explanation for the suffering of

¹¹⁷ Douglas John Hall, *Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), pp. 30-31.

Christ on the cross, that is, the love of God for the entire world or *kosmos*. The bold statement about God's love for the *kosmos* has to include human institutions as well, since these human institutions are just as subject to influences of *Evil* as the individual human person and once overwhelmed can promote higher levels of evil within society along with the justifications that are hard to uncover and expose. For example, when the *JUST-US system* becomes overcome by *Evil* and begins to allow its police forces to openly persecute the citizens it is bound to protect IT then seeks to defend their evil actions under the pretext of *the color of law*. Anyone that challenges these institutions actions and exposes them as evil must be against *law and order* and seeking to overthrow *the rule of law*. To say that humanity is heaven's ultimate concern is not a humanism that culminates in a heuristic theology that says humankind is the center of the universe in humankind's own right and by virtue of humankind's own unilateral human power and rational genius. Rather the statement is a *humano-theistic* formulation grounded in the biblical texts, which shows that the ground of the human person's existence is God, and without God humankind would not be. It follows that without God in the fabric of society human institutions begin to be overwhelmed by *Evil* and society's moral foundations begin to crumble. Paul's Mars Hill sermon at the Areopagus, preached to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers of Athens suggests that the human person (and by inference their institutions) are contingent being relying on God for temporal, spiritual, and material existence. Paul states:

The God who made the world and everything in it is the lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. . . . For in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, We are his offspring' (Acts 17:24-28, NIV).

Certain biblical texts show that man is God's premier creative product, made in the moral image of God, who are designed to be God's co-creators and the conservators of God's earth (Genesis 1:27), and will be judged for the destruction of the earth's ecology (Revelation 11:18). A question about human person's moral nature in the mind of the Psalmist prompted him to ask this lofty question "*O Lord, what is man that you care for him, the son of man that you think of him*" (Psalm 144:3, NIV)? God is to be praised because the human person is "*fearfully, and wonderfully made*" (Psalm 139:14a, NIV). In another text the Psalmist says that the human person was made *just a little lower than the angels*. God also crowned the human person with glory and honor (Psalms 8:5, Hebrews 2:7), so the human person could act as a co-creator with God in the maintenance of God's Good Creation (Genesis 1:26). Although this role is not generally recognized the human persons is also or should be God's co-belligerent against *Evil*. Furthermore, humankind (i.e. mankind) is understood in the biblical texts as "male and female" (Genesis 5:1-2), and so they are composite unitary spiritual beings clothed in flesh (Genesis 5:1-2). This gender determination anticipates by centuries the controversy over politically correct and non-sexist use of language in literature and other writing. Humanity, defined as such in my project, is the central participant in the drama of redemption for the entire creation, the central character in the redemption of the entire creation. God is with us at the very center of our cosmic and interior universe, which is the first and final cause of its unity. According to the Jesuit theologian Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), something holds the varied parts of the universe together.¹¹⁸ We can safely say that this source of unity is not humankind, hence a denial of a hubristic theological

¹¹⁸ De Chardin, p. 41.

anthropology, which has contributed so much to the misery and evil in the world, e.g. wars, corruption, pride, etc. Our view is just another way of saying, the human person is important, but not that important (i.e. “we are not all that and a bag of chips”, etc.). C. S. Lewis would make a similar disclaimer that the human person is not “the whole show” in *Miracles* (1960).¹¹⁹ However that may be, humanity is still important in God’s economy of salvation as a significant being within God’s *Good Creation*. This statement that the human person is not “the whole show” is merely a denial that God’s ultimate concern is only for the salvation of the human person’s soul as important as that is for the redemption of the entire created order. That the human person thinks more highly of themselves than they ought too is a false understanding of redemption, coming out of a hubristic theological notion of individual (i.e. private) salvation. First there is nothing private about salvation of the soul, because the salvation of humanity is linked to the entire redemption of the universe and reclamation of its ecology. Not until humanity sees the material universe as *living being*, that is, a “living mass,” or “living earth,”¹²⁰ as understood by de Chardin, humanity will not fully experience God’s redeeming and liberating power. Our souls are calibrated to the movement of the universe in both time and eternity. According to de Chardin everything will culminate at the *Omega Point* of redemption that lies in the *Cosmic Christ*. This is where our collective ego’s, which produce so much evil in the world, are finally devolved into the ocean of energy, a new spirit, a new corporate being, the *Alpha and Omega* of the All Creative Personality.¹²¹ If any of these assertions are true then we can make the affirmation that the very destiny of heaven depends on the outcome of humanity’s struggle with *Evil*, which threatens both heaven and earth. Apostle Paul affirms that the salvation of the whole cosmic order is somehow tied into the outcome of the salvation of humanity and the redemption of the human person. Paul states:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Romans 8:18-21, NIV).

Here I say that *Evil* has no objective meaning apart from its negative influence on the human person, its aim of homicide against the human-divine order of God, the blighting, and devolution of God’s creation. The subjective aim of *Evil* (in respect to the human person) is the concrescence of demonic experience in both the terrestrial and in the celestial realms of human existence. *Evil* must seek to overcome God and Christ, who is the comic/spiritual center of this struggle in the interiority of the human soul and within the cosmic order. This struggle is at once a cosmic material *and* spiritual battle between good and evil. Somehow the human person lives in two realms of existence at one and the same time, so *Evil* necessarily operates at both the material (cosmic) and spiritual levels of existence. Paul locates the cosmic struggle between good and evil within the interior space of the human soul influenced by the flesh. This understanding gives the impression that Paul’s theology is about individual salvation. In fact Paul’s description of the battle between good and evil, that is, between the flesh and the spirit portrays a microcosmic theology that points to the larger macrocosmic

¹¹⁹ C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 13.

¹²⁰ De Chardin, p. 112.

¹²¹ De Chardin, p. 258.

battle between good and evil going on in the entire cosmos. The church and its pastoral ministry has largely focused on the microcosmic struggle and has either ignored or has felt that the macrocosmic struggle between good and evil is beyond the pale of the church's ministry or outside the church's capability. This quietest and spiritualist view by the church suits the *powers that be* just fine since they do not have to worry that the church will bring the message of redemption to the public square calling the *powers that be* to implement the justice of God within society as signified by the coming of a new order (i.e. the *Coming of the Kingdom of God on Earth* where the old order of *grand domestication* of the human person passes away). The larger struggle between good and evil has been left to the political institutions of the world, which vainly try to either destroy or keep evil at abeyance through the creation of laws (e.g. *rule of law* and/or *law and order*) or through the force of arms (i.e. war and threat of war). Paul wants to know how and by what means can the human person (bound by the desire for *demonic experiences*, that is, the overriding need for *MONEY, POWER, SEX*, etc.) will be redeemed from the crucible of this struggle which the human person cannot win through its own power, no matter its vaunted technological brilliance. Paul states:

So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God --- through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 7:21-25a, NIV)!

This spiritual struggle with the flesh, that is, within the interiority of the soul and mind of the human person carries the seeds for the *auto-apocalyptic destruction* of mankind, if man allows *Evil* to rule him through the desire for *demonic experience* supported by hubristic *tehno-triumphalism* (e.g. "the all that and a bag of chips" technological justification for human dominion not only of the *living Earth* but over each other). The Russian thinker, Svetozar Stojanovic suggested that this technological justification for human dominion over all of God's *Good Creationis* an "absolute evil" that would likely lead to *auto-apocalyptic destruction* of the human person and human institutions. Stojanovic states:

The expanded reproduction of the means to the self-destruction of humankind has become a characteristic inherent in techno-scientific creativity and not its "collateral result." Still worse: as if this problem were not difficult enough, in trying to prevent auto-apocalypse from happening we have to paradoxically rely on that very creativity. The sources of evil are usually sought in the animal side of human nature. But the possibility and probability of absolute evil (the self-destruction of the human species) is rooted in our peculiarity rather than in our animality. Destructive potential is no external opposition to human creativity, but is inherent in it. At its "peak," human creativity itself shows it has the potential, even tendency, to be self-apocalyptic. As if a collective Thanatos, together with Eros, were built into our creativity.¹²²

Stojanovic's statement suggests that evil has humanity's back against the wall. Once the Pandora's box of our own creativity has opened the lid it cannot be shut again, and so, what is created cannot be controlled. That danger aside, the collective human person is limited in absolute wisdom because she or he must struggle as a composite spiritual and material being. *Evil* uses our existential

¹²² Stojanovic , p. 2.

condition as human persons subject to suffering and death against us. Paul calls this human condition and struggle “wretched”, while Stojanovic says the struggle is between our “infinite *eagerness-to-know*” and our “infinite *hubris*” an unfortunate “compound characteristic of humanity’s generic being.”¹²³

The human person lives existentially as a physical being tied to the material cosmos, whose ontological existence is tied to the spiritual unseen universe, where we are threatened with non-being (death) and suffering as a condition of our being. *Evil*, as supra-natural irrational being, knows the limitations of the human condition. *Evil* therefore understands how to use this human state or condition (and our knowledge and fear of it) to undermine or prevent the establishment of God’s economy of salvation for humanity, which is achieved by God’s grace, in Jesus Christ. Apparently, we will do anything (even murder and kill) in order to somehow avoid suffering and overcome the anxiety and reality of *non-being* (death). *Evil* seeks to provoke God’s holiness in the form of wrath against humanity, in order to break the divine unity that redemption promises will destroy the power of *Evil* by arresting the power of its acolytes and devotees where they will be cast with death and Hell into the Lake of Fire and finally all consigned to *Outer Darkness* beyond the frontiers of God’s *New Heaven and New Earth*. Satan (the chief acolyte and devotee of *Evil*) acts as an accuser or prosecutor, presenting the human person before God as being guilty of violating God’s holiness, because of sin.

One of Satan’s jobs is accusing God before men. One of those accusations against God’s righteousness is the ground of the study of theodicy. How can evil exist (we say) if there is an all-powerful and all-loving God? How can God, who has these attributes, allow undeserved suffering in the world? I propose that these questions did not come from God, but came from Satan. Nevertheless, these questions are valid and must be answered. Satan is never wrong about the questions Satan asks. The questions are grounded in some truth and fact. However, it is the answers that Satan gives that are the problem for the human person. It was not the question that Satan put to Eve that led to the Fall of Man (i.e. “*Did God really say: You must not eat from any tree in the garden?*”, Genesis 3:1b) but rather it was the answer in retort to the woman’s confused state of mind (i.e. “*You will not surely die . . . For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*” Genesis 3:4-5, NIV) that led to the Fall of Man. One of the primary aims of *Evil* is to separate the human person from God, and God from the human person. On the one hand, *Evil* wants the human person to forge ahead in life without God or in denial of God, and on the other, to provoke God to destroy that which God has created. This is the nature of the great battle between good and evil, which Moses in his writing, tried to explain by positioning the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* in the center of God’s first creative experiment in the *Garden of Eden*. The broken relationship that results from the attack of *Evil* is called *Sin* (separation from God), where God’s holiness has been offended. The spiritual relationship between God and the collective human person is broken. However, the church and the theological academy, heavily influenced by Aristotle, have reduced the question of sin down to mere questions involving the moral character of the human person and providing ethical prescriptions. These have evolved into a slew of moral ethical prescriptions, some enshrined in law, such as “do not kill” or “do no harm” while others are promoted by positive civic education the church’s moralistic preaching grounded in Christian ethics. Approaching *Evil* as a mere question of ethical behavior *assumes wrongly* that humanity has the power (innate to human nature) to overcome Evil alone through personal moral behavior and/or human societal educational structures and civil institutions designed to bring about a just society

¹²³ Stojanovic, p. 2.

governed by laws (presumed to be just laws). These two approaches (morality and law) to bringing about a just and fair society as a way of overcoming Evil within the human person and human institutions does little to teach the human person how *Evil* works within the cosmic and interior inner space of the souls of its acolytes, and devotees and how Evil works within human societal institutions that tend to justify evil within itself as a means of defending its human alter ego and institutional personality from the threat of non-being. The acolytes and devotees of Evil are pursuing an insurrectionist program of disruption to divide God and humanity and to overcome man's highest nature, and aspirations to overcome *Evil* by doing good. PC society supports Evil in this by saying "*There is a little bit of good in everybody*" that even the most heinous crimes are watered down and nearly dismissed when trying to find some rational reason why some otherwise "good being" would do such evil things. While God's love is positioned to forgive the most heinous crime as well it is rather because of the love that is in God and that is God that does this and not because of anything inherently good in the human person. The Hebrew sacred texts affirm the inseparable relationship that the human person has with heaven. Paul affirms this human/divine bond in the following statement:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written: *for your sake we are killed all day long. We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.* No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. Indeed, I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-39, EOB).

The truth of this inseparable human/divine bond is why we must study the question of the nature and the being of *Evil* on two levels of human existence. There is a *unified field of experience* between heaven and earth (i.e. *human/divine spiritual symbiosis* grounded in a *shared phenomenology of suffering* in the struggle against *Evil*) designed in such a way that what humanity does has cosmic and temporal consequences for earth *and* celestial and eternal consequences for heaven, affirming the ancient Egyptian dictum: *As below, So Above*. This affirmation can be seen in the statements of Apostle Paul. Paul held that because of God's grace those in Christ were already present with him in heaven, while yet on earth (Ephesians 2:6). The text in Ephesians affirms the inextricable unity between the human person and the living universe as de Chardin has proposed. Our Christology in this project is tied to the notion of the inextricable unity between the human person and the living universe. Evil itself is perturbed, and ultimately defeated by the fact that Christ has joined Christ's divinity to the human person in the flesh, a permanent condition that is now inseparable from Christ's being. Christ has become a higher composite being as the evolving human person is to become. This is Christ's greatest sacrifice, to become permanently part of humanity, affirming that God indeed "so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NIV). The salvation of the human person is tied to the person of Christ, because Christ is God with us. The composite nature of Christ's being and the reason that Christ came in the flesh is celebrated in sacred scripture. One text states:

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, "Here I am --- it is written about me in the scroll --- I have come to do your will, O God (Hebrews 10:5b-7, NIV).

Another text highlights the sacrifice of Christ for the human person, which is tied to the composite person of Christ and the necessity of this mode of atonement, aimed at reconciliation between God and the human person because of sin, engendered by *Evil*.

For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:17, NIV).

The higher composite being of Christ, which is celebrated in the Eucharist and the communion table, symbolizes the defeat of evil in the broken body and blood of Jesus Christ. It portends the defeat of evil, whose ultimate power is annihilation or the threat of annihilation of the human person and blighting of the creation. Human persons worship *Evil* by participating in *demonic experiences* on *God's superhighway of unified human experience*. To do otherwise is to face non-being (i.e. death) for non-compliance with the dark powers and principalities that promote and advance demonic experiences among human persons. Christ is the solution to this scenario of fear and threat of death against the human person. The risen Christ is in essence a different being from the pre-existent Christ because this Christ has taken on human nature (where he is fully human and fully divine at one and the same time). As Ethiopian Orthodox *Tāwehādo*(ተዋሕዶ) Christology affirms: "*Christ is known to be one person . . . or one incarnate nature from two natures without the separation, division, confusion and absorption of the natures. . . . Christ is worshipped as God the Word incarnate, and all His actions and words and attributed to the one incarnate nature of God the Word.*"¹²⁴ In this new essence of being Christ has defeated *Evil* in the body of the human person, whose main weapon heretofore has been death and the fear of death (i.e. the threat of *non-being*). Christ has *forever* made His divine essence *one* (via *miaphysis*) with that of the human person. This affirms God's ultimate desire and determination that the human person (along with the living earth) shall never be separated in Christ. In this struggle between good and evil all of creation will either experience redemption together or it shall perish together. Such a theology of the human person (in relationship to Evil) within God's economy of salvation has awesome potential for developing an ecological theology of redemption that signifies the destruction of the old order of sin and death and the inauguration of new order, that is, the coming of a new heaven and a new earth.

B. The Nature of Evil and the Doctrine of God

While it is important that we study *Evil* in relationship to the human person, we need also to study *Evil* in relationship to the doctrine of God. Without studying the nature of *Evil* in relationship to theology proper, that is, the attributes of God, our argument(s) would have no proper subject, since *Evil* has no real meaning apart from its opposition to the omni-benevolence or goodness of God toward the human person and God's *Good Creation*. That is why this project has to consider both

¹²⁴ Abba Hailemariam Melese Ayenew. *Influence of Cyrillian Christology in the Ethiopian Orthodox Anaphora*. A Dissertation. (South Africa: The University of South Africa, 2009), p. 224.

doctrines together in relationship to *Evil*. The doctrine of the human person cannot be understood without understanding the doctrine of God, and vice versa. The nature of *Evil* cannot be understood without considering both the human person and God. God and man must be spoken of in one breath, for to speak of God's omni-benevolence, for instance, is to speak of the reason for and the object of God's goodness. The subjective aim of Evil, as a negative ontological being or force, seeks to prevent the concrescence of the good and the beautiful within both the terrestrial and celestial realms of existence. Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), whose philosophy has inspired the development of *process theology*, suggests that God already has accounted for the actions of *Evil* against the concrescence of the good in God's created order. According to Whitehead, God *prehends* evil in the world and this *prehension* of evil allows God to direct "the world toward higher perfections of beauty and goodness."¹²⁵ These questions have a bearing on the being and nature of God Himself, including His attributes of omni-benevolence and omnipotence. I argue that you cannot have an adequate theology of God without knowing how the attributes of God are used to further the progress of God's *Good Creation*. God, apparently, is not free to further these aims without opposition from *Evil*. A *theology of evil* is needed in order to understand how evil interferes with God's aims and how God overcomes this dark supranatural opposition. On the other hand a *phenomenology of evil* is necessary to understand the emotional and psychic impact as the human person faces *Evil* in their *life world* and *lived experience*. Classical theodicy is deficient in respect to both of these approaches to understanding the nature of Evil. One reason is because classical theodicy's only interest is defending the righteousness and sovereignty of God in a world where it is obvious that Evil is *really real* but it has failed to examine the nature of *Evil* itself attributing most of the horrid results of Evil to mere bad behavior or ignorance in the human person, where the solution is "education" that presumptively brings the human person into the light and therefore to understanding. Theodicy has little if any interest in advancing a new understanding of doctrine of God and doctrine of the human person by understanding the nature of *Evil*.

C. The Question "Is There Genuine Evil?"

In this project I claim that evil is a *genuine reality* or in other words *really real*. Some theodicy's make this assertion without going so far as to say that *Evil* has ontological being or that it is an *entity*. Classical theodicy generally starts with this limited notion of evil in order to advance theological and/or philosophical logical syllogisms in defense of God's righteousness. The Christian religion and some scientific and philosophic thinkers influenced by these arguments have closely identified evil with its acolytes and devotees in order to avoid dualism or theological dualism. Evil is Satan, or some other supra natural being of tremendous power. For example: "Descartes suggested that the world might be governed by a malicious demon who contrived so that the more we strive for truth the more we are deceived, and the more we strive to do right the greater our wrongdoing."¹²⁶ The project in this book makes a clear distinction between evil and its acolytes and devotees. In this project *Evil* can no longer hide behind these kinds of supra-natural surrogates but rather the nature of *Evil* will be revealed by what the acolytes and devotees of *Evil* do. *Evil* as a *rational dark power* that is *really real* prefers nothing better than for the collective human person to imagine *Evil* as a man in a red suit with a pitchfork and

¹²⁵ R. Maurice Barieneau, *The Theodicy of Alfred North Whitehead: A Logical and Ethical Vindication* (Lanham, New York: University Press of America, 1991), p. 97.

¹²⁶ Paul Arthur Schilpp, ed. *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead* (Illinois: Library of Living Philosophers, 1941), p. 338.

pointed tail so the human person laughs at *Evil* in order to diminish or dismiss the primordial fear of death and non-existence that Evil prehends. If we will admit it, this picture of Evil, as the Devil, is not so much for children as for adults. The *lived experience* of evil can overwhelm the human person within their *life-world*. People must associate *Evil* with the Devil and then laugh at the Devil in order to deal with *Evil* as genuine or *really real*. If *Evil* has embodiment, it must be a cartoon, a clown, or a buffoon. *Evil* in human embodiment or disguise is one way to dismiss it. No one wants to conceive of a dark demonic, homicidal power bent on the destruction of the collective human person, and her or his environment even with the assurance that God effectively opposes it. The nature of *Evil* can best be understood within a cosmic spiritual and material reality that presupposes that there is an eternal, ontological, and existential spiritual struggle, between good and evil. This struggle occurs in both the material and spiritual realms of existence, which are somehow related. To show that evil is genuine; one must show that it has ontological being, or reality. In order to show that, one must demonstrate that it has autonomous movement within the realm of time, that is, the same temporal space occupied by the human person. However, evil is not limited to temporal space because of its spiritual nature. Rather, the larger struggle between good and evil occurs along a continuum of time and eternity, within an unbounded unified field of spiritual and human experience between the material and spiritual reality of being. God also battle's evil at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* and at *the six portals of the human heart*, where evil can gain entrance. Ayele Bekerie, an Ethiopian visiting professor in the Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University states in his book *Ethiopic: An African Writing System* (1997): "According to the Ethiopian philosophers, the six doors of the heart are *the senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste, touch and the power of movement*."¹²⁷ These six physical senses allow Evil (generally bound at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*) to enter onto the *Superhighway of God* through the *emotive* and *psychic-mind* of the human person that seeks to satisfy these six lower physical senses. Evil provides *demonic experiences* as rewards to satisfy these six physical senses through the emotive and psychic-mind of the human person. The greatest of these Ethiopian philosophers who advance this horizon of thought is Zara Yacob (ዶብተራ ዘረ ያዕቆብ) born in Aksum in 1592 C.E. became a *däbtära* (ዶብተራ) scholar and teacher after sixteen years of intense university studies in theology, grammar and poetry. At the end of these studies he wrote a philosophical treatise called *Hätäta* (ሐተታ) which has earned him acclaim as the *philosopher of the heart*, that is, the philosopher of the rational (thinking) and feeling heart. In the *Hätäta* Zara Yacob appears to have the same philosophical view of evil within the human person as Yoruba theologians we discussed above. We showed in Yoruba theology that God in His grace and love for the human person has given to them *moral neutral power* to *choose to do good or evil* symbolized by mankind's free choice to eat from the *Tree of Good and Evil* (i.e. the desire to know good and evil as God does) in the Garden of God. The Ethiopian moral philosopher Teodros Kiros in his book *Zara Yacob: Rationality of the Human Heart* (2005) quotes a passage from Zara Yacob's *Hätäta* that shows he speaks from the same horizon of thought on how Evil works in the human heart and the question then has to be asked: can *the human person consciously choose evil and so become a devotee and acolyte of Evil*? Zara Yacob answer is a resounding yes (presumably because all human people has free will or as in Yoruba thought has *moral neutral power*). Zara Yacob states:

¹²⁷ Ayele Bekerie. *Ethiopic: An African Writing System, Its History and Principles*. (Asmara, Eritrea: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), p. 97.

*But God created man to be the master of his own actions, so that he will be what he wills to be, good or bad. If a man chooses to be wicked he can continue in his way until he receives the punishment he deserves for his wickedness. But being carnal, man likes what is of the flesh, whether they are good or bad, he finds ways and means through which he can satisfy his carnal desire. God did not create man to be evil, but to choose what he would like to be, so that he receive his reward if he is good or his condemnation if he is bad.*¹²⁸

Zara Yacob absolves God from the charge that He created evil within the heart of the human person. Rather God created the human person with *moral neutral power* (i.e. moral capacity) to do good or evil. This charge that God created Evil is refuted by Teodros Kiros using the philosophy of Zara Yacob as ground for his arguments: Teodros Kiros (2005) states:

Some will mistakenly think that these were classic cases of ignorance (e.g. the Jewish holocaust and African colonialism, my insertion) moving people to choose evil. I disagree. I think instead that these are powerful cases that prove Zara Yacob's thesis that choosing wicked things produces wicked human beings with wicked characters that easily lead them to choose wickedness over and over again. To make matters worse such individuals even misuse certain religious beliefs as justifications of human nature. IN some cases as we learn from Zara Yacob, God is used as the theorist of radical evil. This is a deeply mistaken view. As Zara Yacob put the matter, *"Everything that the light of intelligence shows us comes from the source of truth, but what men say comes from the source of lies and our intelligence teaches us that all the creator established is right."*¹²⁹

Advancing Zara Yacob's horizon of thought that the human person has the God given capacity of *moral neutral power* and may choose to do good coming from God who is the *source of truth* or choose evil from Satan who is the *source of lies* (i.e. and the Father of Lies) we propose here that the human person whether acolytes and devotees good or evil are waging that *micro-cosmic* (within the interiority of the heart) and *macro-cosmic* struggle *within* the spheres of *Time and Eternity* that best suits their nature as beings with *moral capacity* to free choice. Each being uses their *moral neutral power*, vouchsafed by God, to accomplish the task or assignment that is given to them in life. This struggle, for the most part, occurs in the interiority of the human heart (i.e. inner space or inner spirituality of rational being) as suggested by Zara Yacob but also within the cosmic material human order we call the *Earth of Time and Eternity*, where the events happening on Earth (the temporal realm) effects Heaven and what happens in Heaven (the spiritual realm) effects Earth following the Egyptian notion and dictum: *As Above, So Below*. In short angels and mankind are engaged in the same spiritual battle and struggle of life within the material and spiritual cosmos influenced and threatened by the reality of *Evil*. In this struggle angels, demons (fallen angels), and men are either acolytes for good or for evil, each according to their nature and moral capacity to do good or evil. It is only the outward manifestations of evil, such as murder, war, rape, poverty, racism, etc. that hits the newspapers. These things are evils, but not *Evil* itself. They are but mere expressions for the reality of *Evil* as ontological being that is *really real* and are part of the buildup of *demonic experience* on the *superhighway of God*. *Evil* somehow needs these things to take place in the created order to move and

¹²⁸ Teodros Kiros. *Zara Yacob: Rationality of the Human Heart*. (Asmara, Eritrea: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 2005), pp. 64-65.

¹²⁹ Teodros Kiros, p. 66.

have its being. *Evil* is a *negative irrational force of being* (i.e. *No-Thing*) that ironically has no being without destroying the life it depends on. The popular mind does not take evil seriously or look in depth at why mankind is plagued with it. Rather, the popular mind puts evil in forms that are more palatable, such as, imagining evil embodied as witches or hobgoblins, and such. Fictional stories like Harry Potter for example are popular because it is one of the ways human persons and human institutions attempt to exorcise evil, instead of trying to understand it. If *Evil* can be laughed at, or made ridiculous by personalizing it as a man with a red Halloween suit, having a long pointed tail, and pitchfork, then perhaps we as human persons can dismiss the anxiety we feel at *Its* presence. Nevertheless, in the back of our minds is the uneasy feeling that a *supra-natural homicidal force* exists that aims at the total destruction of all life. You cannot exorcise that which you do not understand. Acolytes and devotees of *Evil* can be put in jail or killed in war, but *Evil* itself cannot be arrested or destroyed by the human person or human institutions. In the material and spiritual realms *Evil* can only be overcome with the actuation of the good and beautiful within human societal, institutional and community life. The dictum in Romans 12 is still relevant: "*Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil by doing good.*" Throughout this project I want to keep a clear distinction between *Evil*, as a negative supra-natural reality, the acolytes of *Evil*, and the *evils* that are mere expressions of this power. I will refer to the acolytes and devotees of good and evil as the *Powers-that-be* or *principalities and powers*. I will define God as the supreme reality and power, which stands behind the good and the beautiful, in the created order of things. I will define *Evil* as the preeminent purveyor of the power of death, which seeks to be worshipped as God, and whose aim is to overthrow both the temporal and eternal moral order of God's *Good Creation*. The acolytes and devotees of *Evil*, e.g. Satan, Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, Beelzebub, the Evil One, the Serpent, should not be confused with the principality and power I call *Evil*. In this book I have already begun to capitalize the word *Evil* at various points (for emphasis) in order to suggest that *Evil* has a separable reality as an ontological spiritual being and is somehow coeval with God. This proposition has not been proven but it is supposed in order to carry out my examination of this idea and notion. Even more distasteful is the idea that *Evil* has coexisted with God (at least) from the beginning of God's *Good Creations* somewhere within *Time and Eternity*. Certainly Evil existed (according to ancient religious textual traditions) before Satan. Satan, who is depicted as a created being, is a fallen angel of darkness, the supreme acolyte and devotee in the service of *Evil*. With the ancient textual traditions from Hebrew sources at hand, the nature and aims of *Evil* can be examined the actions of its principal acolytes and devotees so that we can say some preliminary things about the nature of *Evil*. First, *Evil* seeks to be worshipped through its acolytes, devotees or other surrogates as depicted in Revelation (e.g. the human worship of the Dragon, Beast, Anti-Christ, and false prophets). Secondly, *Evil* is homicidal because its aim is the total destruction of all that is good and beautiful in God's *Good Creation*. Thirdly, *Evil* is irrational. *Evil* (as a negative force of being and with no inherent life of its own) nevertheless seeks to destroy those living things on which it must live, that is, so *IT* can have ontological being and existence. *Evil* is a *No-Thing* that *can only live* through what already lives but nevertheless seeks the death of all things because death is its nature. *Evil* seeks to inculcate that same irrational desire (to live through the destruction of other living being) in every *sentient being* in which *IT* can find a place to live or exist. Evil and *IT*'s acolytes and devotees irrationally desire *demonic experience* of death and non-being. I make the claim that good can overcome *Evil* but cannot destroy it. None of the ancient biblical traditions actually say that *Evil* itself will be destroyed. Rather, the biblical and extra-biblical textual traditions indicate that the human acolytes, devotees, and other surrogates of *Evil*, such as, Satan, death, and hell itself will in the final judgment be eternally arrested. This is symbolized in Biblical

textual traditions as being thrown into the *Lake of Fire* (Revelation 20:10, 14; 21:8). Thereafter, Evil will become impotent because it will no longer be able to live through living beings willing to serve as ITs acolytes and devotees.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE NATURE OF EVIL AND THE CLASSICAL AND REFORMULATED PROBLEM OF EVIL

Before I can go further in our exposition of the nature of *Evil* I need to say something more about the classical problem of evil and how it has been formulated in the past in various disciplines of thought. I want to do this in part in order to distinguish what I am doing in this project from the treatment the problem evil is usually given. I think theodicy has devolved into a mere syllogistic formula for the deeper theological question of “what is evil?” Theodicy is merely adjunct to theology proper and in some quarters a half-serious pastime for theologians. This does not mean that there are no serious studies on the questions raised by the problem of evil. That would not be true. However, what I am groping for here, and what I would like to see the discipline of the problem of evil do, is to develop the study of the *problem of evil* into a *theology of evil*. This new theology would be able to stand, in its own right, as a separate discipline, situated somewhere between the studies of the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the human person. Such a theology would have the potential to shed new light on both of these doctrinal understandings. The question of evil has been approached from within traditional theology as theodicy, as an adjunct study impinging sometimes very crudely on the proper study of the doctrine of God. Scholars in the field of philosophy of religion do not by and large approach it as a theological puzzle, but as a proper philosophical question, which they call the problem of evil. The general philosophical aim for most is to logically demonstrate that God as described in traditional theology does not exist and indeed cannot exist because evil is really real and it could not exist if there was really an all-powerful and all-loving God as classical theology claims.

However, it is to be noted that theodicy and the problem of evil has by no means been confined to theology and philosophy, but has been seriously studied by an assortment of people in the physical, social, and behavioral sciences. One such person was Carl Jung (1875-1961), the psychologist, who wrote a theodicy, *Answer to Job* (1952). Writers in the literary field also have spilled a lot of ink on questions involving the problem of evil. It has become a popular past-time. Nevertheless, some of these works are serious. Others popular writers use the great theme of evil to entertain and tease the popular imagination of people. People cannot seem to get enough of the perennial struggle between good and evil, laid out in books, theater, and film, e.g. the hero, wearing the white hat, which saves the day by defeating the evil villain wearing the black hat.

Classical Theodicy: A Dilemma for Traditional Theology

Evil has been described as a “fly in the ointment” of traditional Christian theology since it is difficult to deny that evil is just as much a part of the reality of the creation “as the orderly revolution of the planets and moons.”¹³⁰ Christian theologians especially find it hard to deny the reality of evil, while holding on to the conviction that God is both *all loving* and *all-powerful*. The nagging question has always been within this tradition; how can it be admitted that genuine evil is in the world and yet maintain, at the same time, that God is both *omni-benevolent* and *omnipotent*? This question has plagued both classical and contemporary thinkers, both in traditional theology and in the various fields of religion and philosophy. One such thinker is Gottfried Wilhelm, Baron von Leibniz. Leibniz coined a neologism made from two Greek words *theos* “God” and *dike* “righteousness” to form “God’s

¹³⁰ Kelly, p. 121.

righteousness,” as a term to frame, give meaning to, and define a field of study already in vogue.¹³¹ The whole study of theodicy from that point on, especially for Christian theologians, would be to defend God’s righteousness, as an apologetic against those who charge God with being responsible for evil in God’s *Good Creation*. The protagonists for this position say that, because evil is genuine, then God either does not exist, or is not all-powerful, or is not an all-loving God. Classical theodicy is, therefore, a “response to the problem of evil in the world that attempts logically, relevantly and consistently to defend God as simultaneously omnipotent, all-loving and just despite the reality of evil.”¹³²

Classical Theodicy: A Trilemma for Philosophy of Religion

Philosophy of religion developed within the discipline of philosophy. It is this discipline that has for the most part developed the problem of evil as a legitimate study. Philosophy of religion in advancing this study often mirrors the queries made in the field of theology as it advances the study of theodicy. The philosophers of religion disdained to call what they do theodicy, because of its connection with the traditional discipline of Christian theology. Nevertheless, the problem is still the same, even though the objective is not the same and the approach can be quite different. The objective in philosophy of religion is not to defend the righteousness of God as in theodicy. Rather, the objective is to argue that evil is a genuine reality and so the God of Christian theology cannot exist. Philosophers of religion want to understand why people (subject to undeserved suffering) should believe in the existence of God, or at the least believe in a righteous, just, good, and all-powerful God. Timothy O’Connor, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Indiana University, says in his article “The Problem of Evil: Introduction,” in *Philosophy of Religion: A Reader and Guide*, edited by William Lane Craig (2002):

The philosopher’s task, then, is to see whether the facts of suffering, which induce a range of powerful religious reactions involving belief, emotion and motivation, also provide the basis for a cogent argument from evil to the non-existence of God – an argument that should persuade the reasonable person who considers it carefully.¹³³

The philosophers of religion have developed their own syllogism that is different from the syllogism of theodicy formulated by theologians. The syllogism of theology begins with, “God exists therefore . . .,” while the syllogism for philosophy of religion begins with, “If evil is genuine or exists as a reality then God. . ..”. The syllogism of the philosophy of religion is just as much a dilemma of the problem of evil as is the one formulated for theology. In a way I have confused the term “theodicy” with the phrase “problem of evil.” Theodicy really wants to establish God’s attributes of omnibenevolence and omnipotence as true despite the genuine presence of evil in the world. Theodicy assumes God exists and does not necessarily question that truth. The problem of evil wants to begin with the question how can God exist in light of the fact that evil is genuine and is the cause of undeserved suffering? This would be untenable if there is an absolute all good and all powerful God. The problem of evil is best stated as an argument for the non-existence of God, assuming God is both

¹³¹ Kelly, p. 121,

¹³² Grenz, *Pocket Dictionary Theological Terms*, s.v. “theodicy” p. 112.

¹³³ Timothy O’Connor, “The Problem of Evil: Introduction,” in *Philosophy of Religion: A Reader and Guide*, general editor: William Lane Craig (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), p. 304.

omnipotent and omniscient. Professor O'Connor established the syllogistic formula upon which he thinks the whole argument rests:

1. If God exists and is perfectly good, then He will prevent as much evil as He can without either bringing about a greater evil or preventing a good that outweighs the evil in question.
2. If God exists and is both omnipotent and omniscient, then He can prevent any evil from occurring without either bringing about a greater evil or preventing a good that outweighs the evil in question.
3. There is evil. **Conclusion:** God does not exist, or He is not both omnipotent and omniscient, or He is not perfectly good.¹³⁴

Of course not all philosophers of religion begin the syllogism this way. Some of them state the problem the same way traditional Christian theologians do. The problem of evil stated this way is that given by R. Maurice Barineau, a scholar in the field of philosophy of religion. Barineau, in *The Theodicy of Alfred North Whitehead* (1991) sums up the classical problem of evil, stating that:

If evils occur, how can God be both omni benevolent (wholly good) and omnipotent (all-powerful)? . . . If evils occur, then God is either unwilling to prevent such occurrences and, thus, not omnibenevolent or unable to prevent such occurrences and, thus, not omnipotent.¹³⁵

Barineau does not want to develop a syllogism that suggests God cannot exist because evil is really real but he wants to develop a syllogism that suggests God cannot be all powerful and all good as Christian theology asserts because evil is really real. This is the classical dilemma of the problem of evil approached from two perspectives, the first seeking philosophical answers to the question of God's existence in the face of undeserved suffering caused by genuine evil. The second approach uses the syllogism of theology, but still seeks a philosophical answer that does not question the existence of God, but whether a God who is either not all loving or all-powerful is worthy of human worship and adoration. However, Barineau argues that the problem of evil is not merely a syllogistic *dilemma*, but a *trilemma*. Barineau's *trilemma* is grounded in the assumption that a viable theodicy must explain the *omnibenevolence* and *omnipotence* of God in terms of affirming or denying the reality of genuine evil, and not merely assuming that genuine evil exists.

Theodicy seeks to explain how God can simultaneously be omnibenevolent and omnipotent in the face of the reality of evil, but Barineau argues it must first answer the question: *is evil real or not real*. That query is a legitimate part of the query of "what is evil?" There is no necessary presumption that evil is real or not real in Barineau's question. However, if evil is not real then the query as to the nature of evil is mute and makes no sense. My project cautiously begins with the presumption that evil is real and genuine, but seeks to establish what the nature of that reality we call evil is. The study of the nature of evil may very well begin by questioning whether evil is a mere absence of the good or an entity, as it is questioned by both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. I will look at how both of these church theologians approached the problem of evil but first we need to examine Barineau's trilemma. Barineau states:

¹³⁴ O'Connor, p. 306.

¹³⁵ Barineau, p. 5.

If evils occur, then either God is not omnibenevolent or not omnipotent. If God is omnibenevolent, then either God is not omnipotent or evils do not occur. If God is omnipotent, then either evils do not occur or God is not omnibenevolent.¹³⁶

Barineau's claim is that those who try to explain the problem of evil from two postulates are really dealing with three postulates and cannot simultaneously affirm all three without being logically inconsistent. Being consistent is one of the goals of classical theodicy, in order to demonstrate its validity, and/or veracity. Barineau is critical of the limited way traditional Christian theology has approached the problem as a dilemma, and so Barineau wants to show the contribution that philosophy of religion has made by widening the discussion into a *trilemma*. Barineau wants to understand something about the nature of evil (i.e. whether it exists or does not exist) rather than use it as a mere presupposition of an argument in defense for or against the existence of God or in defense of the righteousness of God. Further, and more importantly, Barineau (perhaps without even knowing it) is asking some fundamental questions about the nature of evil. For to ask does evil occur or not occur is just another way of asking is evil real or not real? To ask that question is to ask a fundamental question about the nature and being of evil. Asking whether evil is real is the first question to be asked in devising an *ontology of evil* or a *theology of evil*. Beginning by asking that question may, correspondingly, be used to better understand the nature and being of God and the nature and being of the human person. The question of the reality and nature of evil has significance for both theological doctrines.

Significance of the Trilemma for the Doctrine of the Human Person

The trilemma of the problem of evil has significance for the doctrine of the human person. If there is no genuine evil, then there was no fall of man, namely evil that causes the sin of disobedience of the human person to God's will. Classical theodicy, expressed as a trilemma, points to the intractable nature of the problem of evil, because it has failed to deal with the question of the nature of evil itself. Theodicy formulated in the traditional way, that is, starting with the presupposition that evil is genuine does not contribute much to understanding the doctrine of the human person. This is because the nature of evil is left unexplained and therefore its impact on the human person cannot be understood. If evil does not exist or if evil is not real, what does that assertion say about the reality we experience as evil and about its expression as sin in human persons? What does that assertion say about God who promises in a future economy a new heaven and a new earth, which frees the human person from sin and evil? Are we as humans being deluded by God? Is a New Jerusalem really possible? Is there yet to be some future hope of a utopia, where humanity can rest and be free from the daily harassment of sin and evil?¹³⁷ Does not the apostle Paul show exasperation, weariness, and wearing down of the human person in the fight against personal sin and evil, when Paul states: "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death*" (Romans 7:24, NIV)? Understanding the doctrine of God and the doctrine of human person is related to how the problem of evil is formulated. If you resolve the problem for the doctrine of God by denying that genuine evil exists, then you create a problem for the doctrine of the human person, in respect to the doctrine of the Fall

¹³⁶ Barineau, p. 5.

¹³⁷ This last question is important for eschatology because we suggest in this project that neither theological, philosophical, or biblical theodicy holds out the hope that evil will be destroyed.

of Man. Instead of a relational theology of the human person, you would have a humanotheism that affirms the inherent goodness and power of the human person, but understates and underestimates the nature and power of evil in the world that comes through the human person. I, therefore, say that classical theodicy does not deal with the nature of evil at all. Even if it is stated as a trilemma, it barely scratches the surface, because it still leaves a great many questions I have posed in this project unanswered. Theodicy presupposes genuine evil, and even if it is put in a three-postulate form, borrowed from the philosophy of religion, which asks something about the nature of evil, it still does not explain the nature of evil in any great detail.

Significance of the Trilemma for the Doctrine of God

The two postulate classical statement on the problem of evil assumes the reality of genuine evil, but the three-postulate statement includes the possibility that genuine evil does not exist, in order to deny or affirm whether God is omnibenevolent or omnipotent. If genuine evils exist then God is either not wholly good, or is not all-powerful. If God is either wholly good or all-powerful then it is impossible for genuine evil to exist. If God is omnibenevolent but not omnipotent then God would be a pathetic God. However, if God is all-powerful and not wholly good then God could not help but be a despotic God. In the first case God would not be worthy of worship, and in the second case God would be worshipped only out of fear. The goal of this project is to go beyond defending the righteousness of God, either in its two-postulate or three-postulate form, but to understand God's nature, and moral attributes through the study of the nature of evil. The three-postulate form of the question has its merits, in that it has opened up the question as to whether evil is real or not. It has opened the door for a formal study of the nature of evil. It has made a pathway to develop an ontology of evil as a proper study of theology. Classical theodicy, treated as a mere adjunct of traditional theology, and a mere side line for theologians who have nothing else to do, cannot meet the rigorous demands for the creation of a theology of evil, grounded in the knowledge and understanding of the nature of evil. To the extent that the reality and nature of evil is left unexplained, to that extent theologians fail to have an adequate doctrine of God and the human person. What is needed for an adequate understanding of God and man in relationship to the reality of evil is a theology of evil that goes beyond classical theodicy to outline the nature of evil, the doctrine of God and the human person.

My project seeks to begin this progress toward a new horizon of understanding on the whole question. This study then goes beyond the classical problem of evil. In doing so, I have in mind a new ground for the study of the problem of evil that will not merely seek to defend God's righteousness, but God's sovereignty over *Evil's* claims to God's *Good Creation*. This focus on defending the sovereignty of God is directly related to the idolatrous claims of *Evil*, the acolytes and devotees of *Evil*, and the dark spiritual principalities and powers. What gives my project practical or modern significance is that the whole of it militates against the contemporary perspectives that there is no supra-natural autonomous force of evil that has essence, and that is not an entity. This view engendered by *Evil* itself allows it to roam freely up and down the superhighway of God creating conditions for the concrescence of demonic experience, seeking evil and Christological experience, seeking the good. The contemporary views on the subject of what is evil are still dominated in various modified forms by those views that were first outlined by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Contemporary thought tends to deny that evil is real or has ontological being and therefore does not need to ask the question of what is evil or what is the nature of evil? The dominance of this view across the contemporary perspectives is what gives value to the big question posed by this

project. The question of “what is evil?”, still remains, in light of history and experience, which affirms that evil is both real and genuine. Still questions remain, as to whether evil has ontological being, or is evil merely the absence of the good in the human person, a void and black hole in Christological experience. I will explore these questions in the next two chapters on the views of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas on “what is evil?”



CHAPTER SIX

ST. AUGUSTINE ON “WHAT IS EVIL?”

Joseph F. Kelly, professor of religious studies at John Carroll University, states that St. Augustine (354-430), doctor of the North African Church, “devoted much of his long and busy life to the problem of evil. No one in history has ever delved into the topic with such intensity or come up with so complete an explanation.”¹³⁸ Kelly says that Augustine’s struggle with understanding the nature of evil resulted from the influence of Manichaeism, an Eastern religion founded by the Persian visionary Mani (216-276), had on him. This religion was founded on the dualistic notion that all matter is evil, the body is evil, and that sex is evil, because it produces more evil bodies. It was this dualist explanation for evil that bothered St. Augustine. This concern and the disagreement that Augustine had with the ideas of the British Monk Pelagius (d. ca. 420 A.D.) began Augustine’s trek toward a more systematic explanation of what is evil?¹³⁹ According to Kelly, Pelagius “taught that humans could be saved by their own free will and without God’s grace if they disciplined themselves morally and spiritually.”¹⁴⁰ Augustine apparently thought that this view of grace, which got its influence by the virtue of ethical theories and the doctrine of the mean proposed by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), seriously undermined the nature and purpose of the grace of God, and underestimated the power of evil within the human person. Aristotle had taught that people could be taught to do what was morally right by habituation, by means of civic education and philosophical wisdom. People had to learn to do what is morally right and adjure what is morally wrong by training the moral character to do those things. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle states:

Virtue, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual in the main owes both its birth and its growth to teaching (for which reason it requires experience and time), while moral virtue comes about as a result of habit, whence also the name *ethike* is one that is formed by a slight from the word *ethos* (habit). From this it is also plain that none of the moral virtues arises in us by nature, for nothing that exists by nature can form a habit contrary to its nature. . . . Neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do the virtues arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit.¹⁴¹

St. Augustine spent the next twenty years of his life combating these philosophical notions, which became embedded in this Christian theological heresy on the doctrine of salvation, promoted by Pelagius. This would later become known as Pelagianism. However, prior to this, the question of “whence is evil,” or “what is evil” plagued the mind of St. Augustine. St. Augustine wrote about this in *The Confessions*, but did not provide the answer until St. Augustine wrote *City of God*. Remarkably, St. Augustine asks a similar set of questions to what I have asked in this project about evil in connection with the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the human person. I give the full quote because it contains St. Augustine’s horizon of thought on the question of what is evil, and also the

¹³⁸ Kelly, p. 51.

¹³⁹ Kelly, p. 52.

¹⁴⁰ Kelly, p. 52.

¹⁴¹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* in Judith A. Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, third edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2005), p. 44.

doctrinal understanding or horizon St. Augustine felt the theologian needed in order to provide a solution to the query. St. Augustine in asking these questions shows that the concern was not to defend the righteousness of God, but to understand God and the human person in relationship to what is evil? Somehow, modern theology has devolved the whole query into a limited logical syllogism, which does not even come close to answering questions St. Augustine asked with such breath of mind and scope. In a very serious way my project is trying to answers some of St. Augustine's questions. St. Augustine confessed that the theological probe into the question is evil. It is unfortunate that such a great mind did not in fact finish the query, but fell back on Clement of Alexandria's understanding that evil is a void, the infamous privation theory of evil that defends the righteousness of God by blaming the human person for evil. In the *Confessions* St. Augustine states:

And I sought "whence is evil," and sought in a evil way; and saw not the evil of my very search. I set now before the sight of my spirit the whole creation, whatsoever we can see therein (as sea, earth, air, stars, trees, mortal creatures); yea, and whatever in it we do not see, as the firmament of heaven, all angels moreover, and all the spiritual inhabitants thereof. But these very beings, as though they were bodies, did my fancy dispose in place, and I made one great mass of Thy creation, distinguished as to the kinds of bodies; some, real bodies, some, what myself had feigned for spirits. And this mass I made huge, not as it was (which I could not know), but as I thought convenient, yet every way finite. But Thee, O Lord, I imagined on every part environing and penetrating it, though every way infinite: as if there were a sea, everywhere, and on every side, through unmeasured space, one only boundless sea, and it contained within it some sponge, huge, but bounded; that sponge must needs, in all its parts, be filled from that unmeasurable sea: so conceived I Thy creation, itself finite, full of Thee, the Infinite; and I said, Behold God, and behold what God has created; and God is good, yea, most mightily and incomparably better than all these: but yet He, the Good, created them good; and see how He environeth and fulfils them. Where is evil then, and whence, and how crept it in hither? What is its root, and what is seed? Or hath it no being? Why then fear we and avoid what is not? Or if we fear it idly, then is that very fear evil, whereby the soul is thus idly goaded and racked. Yea, and so much a greater evil, as we have nothing to fear, and yet do fear. Therefore either is that evil which we fear, or else evil is, that we fear. Whence is it then? Seeing God, the Good, hath created all these things good. He indeed, the greater and chiefest Good, hath created these lessor goods; still both Creator and created, all are good.

Whence is evil? Or, was there some evil matter of which He made, and formed, and ordered it, yet left something in it which He did not convert to good? Why so then? Had He no might to turn and change the whole, so that no evil should remain in it, seeing He is All-mighty? Lastly, why would He make anything at all of it, and not rather by the same Allmightiness cause it not to be at all? Or, could it then be against His will? Or if it were from eternity, why suffered He is so to be for infinite spaces of times past, and was please so long after to make something out of it? Or if He were suddenly pleased now to effect somewhat, this rather should the All-Mighty have effected that this evil matter should not be, and He alone be, the whole, true, sovereign, and infinite Good. Or if it was not good that He who was good should not also frame and create something that were good, then, that evil matter being taken away and brought to nothing, He might form good matter, whereof to create all things. For He should not be Al-mighty, if He might not create something good without the aid of that matter which Himself had not created. These thoughts I resolved in my miserable heart, overcharged with most gnawing cares, lest I should die ere I had found the truth; yet was the faith of Thy Christ, our Lord and Saviour, professed in the Church

Catholic, firmly fixed in my earth, in many points, indeed, as yet unformed, and fluctuating from the rule of doctrine; yet not my mind utterly leave it, but rather daily took in more and more of it.¹⁴²

St. Augustine asks all of the right questions about evil in the light of his understanding of the doctrine of God, i.e. God's nature and attributes, and in the light of what St. Augustine understood about God's good creation. That is why in my own project I have put emphasis on God's *Good Creation* though out my work (as did St. Augustine) to keep before my mind the great questions about evil in light of the doctrine of God and the human person. Questions like, why does evil exists? And since it evidently has some ontological reality, then what is its nature? How did evil become evil (since everything God created was created good) or was evil always evil and existed eternal and before time itself? All of these questions come to mind along with how can any of this be? Apparently, these same or similar questions were not far from the mind of St. Augustine. He starts from the presupposition that God is good and God's creation is good, and so, if these things are true, given the fact that God is Almighty and also benevolent, "Where is evil then, and whence, and how it crept it in hither?" We will see that this last question is a big one for theologian, Karl Barth, and the question that St. Augustine poses about the possibility of the eternal nature of evil and how God is able to dispose of it into nothing is also Barthian.

St. Augustine asks the following questions: (1) What is evil? (2) How did evil get into God's good creation? (I provide an answer to this question in my project with the supposition that there is a *superhighway of unified experience* (I call the *Superhighway of God*) under God's control on which both good and evil are permitted to travel). (3) What is the origin of evil, that is, its "root" and "seed"? (4) Does evil have ontological being? (5) Is evil genuine or really real? (6) If evil is not really real, then why does the human person fear it? (7) Is the only evil fear of evil itself? (8) Evil has to be real or not real. If it is really real, then where did it come from? (9) Did God make evil? (10) How is it possible for God to make evil since God is the chief good, and made all things that are and have being good? (11) If evil is a thing or an entity, then it would have to be good, which is a contradiction (this is why Barth will say Evil or Nothingness has reality outside but not in God's *Good Creation* to avoid saying that God created evil). The question remains then, "whence evil" since Evil apparently is *really real*? (12) Was there some evil matter that God either created or was already in existence that God left in the state of being evil? (13) Why did not God make this evil matter good? (14) Did not God have the power to make evil matter into good? (15) If God made this evil matter, why in God's Almightiness, did not God just cause it not to be at all? (Again Barth will say that God in God's wisdom says "No" to Evil as the triune aspect of Nothingness, and consigns IT beyond the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*, but, nevertheless, allows Nothingness a.k.a. *Evil* to continue to exist); (16) Is evil from eternity or eternal in nature and God has to deal with it differently than God deals with God's *Good Creation*? (17) Finally, did God have or has a plan that would make *Evil* matter good matter (out of which everything else was made) so that, we can now confidently say that all things God made are good? St. Augustine, in this last question has hit on the idea that God has a *final solution* to the problem of evil by somehow subsuming evil into the all good. In this project I say with De Chardin that this sublation occurs at the *Omega Point* of ontological existence. It will happen when the human person becomes a *deiform* being, becoming all-good and when the Deity, the Cosmic Christ, in which

¹⁴² Edward B. Pusey, translator, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, Book VII, (New York: Random House, Inc, 1949), pp. 123-125.

all being, both good and evil, will be subsumed and reconciled unto God who is and will be all in all as promised 1 Corinthians: “*When all things have been subjected to him (the Cosmic Christ, my insertion), then the Son will also subject himself to the one who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all*” (1 Corinthians 15:28, EOB). Out of all of St. Augustine’s brilliant presuppositions and questions he comes to the conclusion that Evil is merely a void (i.e. the absence of the good within the human person). How did St. Augustine come up with such a miserable theological conclusion, that evil is a void. *Evil is not really real*. Was St. Augustine afraid of the answers that he would discover? How could St. Augustine say that evil is merely the absence of good? St. Augustine had all of the right theological questions, but actually confessed that the idea of the query itself was a sin. St. Augustine then left off from doing the theological work on this question, which involved the doctrine of God, and began the development of the *doctrine of original sin*, which focuses on the doctrine of the human person, as the originator of all evil. The doctrine of original sin in the human person was St. Augustine’s theodicy and solution to the problem of evil. It was a great doctrine for the church and served as a defense of God’s righteousness since the actuation of evil if not evil itself originated within the human person. In his *De Civitate Dei* (The City of God, Book XI, Chapter 9), St. Augustine states: “For evil is not a positive substance: the loss of good has been given the name of evil.”¹⁴³ However, the privation theory of evil was not born in the mind of St. Augustine. He just included this notion in a systematic theology of evil. The privation theory of evil began in Egypt in the mind of Clement of Alexandria (150-210 C.E.). Clement created a theodicy with this notion and states:

That this world is good, but it is only a pale reflection of God’s goodness. . . . only God can be perfectly good. Therefore all created beings must be imperfect, and the rational ones are consequently susceptible of evil. . . . Since God created all and since God is completely good, he could not have created evil. But if god did not create evil, then it cannot exist. Evil, therefore, does not exist in a positive way but rather in a negative one — evil is a lack of good.¹⁴⁴

This is a negative theodicy and explanation of evil which holds that evil really has no substance. Evil is not real, and is like “the holes in a wedge of Swiss cheese. The cheese is good; the lack is not. . . .”¹⁴⁵ St. Augustine adopted this negative explanation of evil. St. Augustine supported his *doctrine of original sin* by using Clement’s argument that “evil is a lack of good”. This is the classical formulation of the privation theory of evil. According to this theory evil has no being or reality until it is actuated or brought into existence by the human person, i.e. a rational moral being held accountable for its actions. Evil has no ontological being, as such, and is merely a falling away from the good or the absence of what is good. Evil has no being autonomous or otherwise. Therefore, evil has no design or purpose for its existence. The privation theory of evil advances the notion that the human person by virtue of their imperfections are either held totally the blame that proceeds from or originates in them or should be exonerated, because, apart from God’s grace and mercy, they cannot help themselves. No dualism in this theology is necessary, because God is now protected from the charge that God created evil and that God is not *All-Good*. Rather the privation theory that evil is merely a void affirms all

¹⁴³ St. Augustine, p. 440.

¹⁴⁴ Kelly, pp. 41-42.

¹⁴⁵ Kelly, p. 42.

being other than God, the Father are necessarily imperfect and that God, the Supreme being is only *All-Good*, as Jesus declared to one of the Jewish rulers who wanted Jesus to tell him what he the ruler could do to inherit eternal life referring to Jesus as “Good Teacher.” Jesus states: *Why do you call me good? No one is good, except one---God*” (Luke 18;19, EOB). Nevertheless, the privation theory of evil has some flaws. Is God in fact all-knowing and all-powerful? Why couldn’t God make a human person in such a way that they would not need God’s grace for salvation? Who or what determines what is good? The privation theory of evil has to have either a corresponding moral ethical system so that someone would know what is evil, or it needs a moral standard such as the Bible, or some other ethical standard to determine what is the good, and what is evil. The theory cannot stand on its own. No one would know what is evil without knowing what is good. In contemporary parlance this could be something like a community standard, which is used to say what pornography is and what is not pornography for that community. The moral ethical standard for Augustine was scripture, as Augustine interpreted and understood it. In no case is the objective of the privation theory of evil used to determine the nature of evil itself, but to identify what is evil by means of knowing what is good. Evil, from this perspective, can only be understood in terms of not what is evil, but what evil is not. That is why I have called St. Augustine’s theodicy negative, which is the foundation of his doctrine of original sin. The underlying presupposition of the privation theory of evil is that evil has no real substance and being. Evil becomes a reality, or is created, or is actuated at each instance of behavior when a sinful and or immoral person violates some universal ethical standard of the good laid down by some moral authority or by some community that says what is right and wrong. That moral authority would be, however, a false universalism, since even what is considered the good would be derived from a particular perspective. The logical fallacy and danger posed by the privation theory of evil is that there is no paramount system that can encompass the totality of what is absolute good and thereby cannot prescribe with clarity what is evil. For example, one faith community prescribes this or that as good, and thereby what is evil. In the same context another faith community permits what is thought to be evil by the other community and calls that thing or behavior good. The argument then that evil is merely the privation or the absence of the good begs the question of what is evil by defining evil merely as whatever is opposed to the good for a particular person, community, and/or society. This is the ground for all societal and human conflict over what is just and fair. Because St. Augustine’s privation theory refuses to say that evil is an entity, but on the contrary, has no objective reality, leads inevitably toward the establishment of absolute but false universal human standard of what is good and evil. Post-modern thought, grounded in cultural relativism, would suggest that such claims are themselves evil.

There are at least two prominent responses to the Augustinian privation theory that have impacted the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of human person in relationship to the question of what is evil? The first is nominalism. Nominalism tries to avoid the slippery slope of cultural relativism, where the community says what is good and evil. Nominalism also tries to avoid a moral ethical position that says “there are no objective universal moral standards that hold for all people in all cultures, only different cultural customs,” which, according to Judith A. Boss, professor of philosophy at Brown University, is ethical subjectivism.¹⁴⁶ Ethical subjectivism tries to defend the right of the individual to say what is good and evil. Good and evil are merely a matter of private choice. However, nominalism makes its claim using the divine command theory, which says that “something is moral

¹⁴⁶ Judith A. Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues* (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc, 2005), p. 6.

merely because God approves of it.”¹⁴⁷ Nominalism claims that “Evil is not the violation of some absolute standard but rather of the will of God, and he can make evil whatever he wants it to be.”¹⁴⁸ In moral philosophy the divine command theory puts forth the notion that something is good or moral because God says so. According to moral ethicist, Judith A. Boss:

The first position, that something is moral merely because God approves of it, is known as the *divine command theory*. Just as morality for the cultural relativist is relative to cultural norms, for the divine command theorist morality is relative to what God commands or wills. There are no independent, universal moral standards by which to judge God’s commands. No other justification is necessary for an action to be right other than God’s commanding it.¹⁴⁹

Professor Joseph F. Kelly gives the background to nominalism and its impact on the study of what is evil? Kelly states:

The earlier scholastics believed in universals, that there was such thing as humanity, which existed as an idea in God’s mind. Late Medieval scholastics claimed that there were no divine ideas, no archetype for God to follow. They were led by the English Franciscan, William of Ockham (d. 1349), who established the principle known as Ockham’s razor, that anything superfluous to an argument must be discarded. Ockham claimed that we do not know universals, which are thus superfluous; we actually know only individual person or things. We abstract from these individuals a concept to which we give universal names, such as humanity. This movement was called nominalism (name-ism), and it had both a long range and an immediate impact on the idea of evil. . . . The more immediate impact was to free God from having to follow his universalist ideas, thus making it possible for God to act differently in the world. Evil is not the violation of some absolute standards but rather of the will of God, and he can make evil whatever he wants it to be. . . . The nominalists distinguished between God’s absolute and ordained powers. The first meant that God could do as he wished, even sending good people to hell. God’s ordained power meant that God chooses to govern his creation according to a certain order (= ordained), and this is the world in which we live. We can trust God not to change the rules, but by just positing the existence of God’s absolute power, the nominalists had altered the notion of evil. . . . The nominalist then turned to another explanation for evil, the Augustinian synthesis. Augustine had explained evil in heaven by the sin of the devil and evil on earth as a consequence of original sin. The nominalist did not challenge original sin, but they did question whether all humanity had indeed been hopelessly corrupted by Adam and Eve. They worked with the Christian tradition, but they feared that Augustine’s theory had turned humans into helpless robots, ordered around by sin or by grace. Some nominalist suggested that although humans cannot be saved without divine grace, the free will on its own can cooperate with that grace. Augustine had insisted that we can do nothing good without divine grace. For the will to cooperate with that grace means that the will could do something good on its own. This challenged the prevailing orthodoxy, and so the nominalist looked to the Bible for support. The apostle Paul had said that the pagans by their own powers could know that God existed. The nominalist asked, if

¹⁴⁷ Boss, p.17.

¹⁴⁸ Kelly, p. 90.

¹⁴⁹ Boss, 17.

humans can know of the deity via natural knowledge, why could their wills not respond to that knowledge? Why could they not wish to cooperate with this deity in combating the evil they could see all around them?¹⁵⁰

The nominalist were, therefore, early antagonist to the Augustinian argument, the so-called Augustinian synthesis, that the human person could not, without the help of God, apprehend God's grace for themselves by means of free will. More importantly, they are the first to suggest that the human person is a co-belligerent with God against evil. With Augustine, the human person could not save himself or herself, nor could they combat evil in the world, because they could not even combat evil within them. Despite the nominalist assurances that God would not change the rules that God made, who could be sure of what those rules were without continued direct revelation from God. This doctrine of God, taken to its logical conclusion, grounded in the absolute power of God to do whatever God wished, at any time God wished, would make it all but impossible for any absolute ethical or moral standard to stand except the will of God. This understanding would suggest that God's will is capricious. If that is true, God's will would inhibit the free will of the human person, who could not possibly know what God's will is at any moment in time, and so would not know what God sees as evil. *Ethical subjectivists* would denounce *nominalism*, and the moral philosophy of *divine command theory* on which it stands just for this reason. No human person could, apart from direct revelation, know what is good, and what is evil despite our ancestors having eaten from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. Whatever we understand about good and evil is limited and corrupt. With this understanding one can see how a pathological reaction would develop in opposition.

Such an opposition did come from Donatien Alphonse Francoise de Sade (1740-1814) author of *Philosophy in the Bedroom*. De Sade denied that what is good and evil is determined by the will of God. Rather, De Sade claimed that what is good and what is evil is determined by the freewill of the human person alone. However he proposed along with that (which he thought logical otherwise freewill is not freewill) was that there was no consequences or should be no consequences for acting on the *moral neutral power* we claim in this project that is given to human persons by the grace of God no matter how objectionable to either God or man. According to De Sade the determination of what is good and evil also does not even reside in moral standards of the community or tradition, which one is apart, but in the individual who is able to enforce his or her will on another and, therefore, by those actions determine what is good or evil. Therefore, neither the will of God, nor the collective human persons can say what is good or evil for another person. De Sade's only standard was that the human person do what comes naturally and that the actions of that person (right in and of themselves) are not proscribed by God or human persons and human institutions, such as the police, courts, or the church. You simply do what comes natural to you if you have the power. Evil in fact is not the privation of the good. The only evil is the privation, or proscription against doing what a person naturally is inclined to do. Joseph Kelly explains De Sade's reaction to privation of the free human will to do whatever it wants, irrespective of who has determined those actions to be evil or good. Kelly states:

De Sade . . . merely advocated that we do what Nature allows. If men naturally have greater physical strength than women, then Nature clearly permits them to subject women, and women should act naturally and be subjected. . . . If we free ourselves of the imposed values

¹⁵⁰ Kelly, pp. 90-91.

of society . . . then no idea which such a free person has can be unnatural, including even murder. De Sade was a loathsome person, but he must be credited for seeing where Enlightenment thinking about good and evil could lead. If all values are human, what right does any human have to determine what another human should think or do? . . . He would recognize that people do what they want to do if they are strong enough to do it, and if someone can overpower him, then that is simply too bad for him. But suppose the majority rejects his values? So what.¹⁵¹

This is the reaction that St. Augustine's doctrine of original sin in conjunction with Clement's privation theory of evil has had. In summary, the first reaction is nominalism, which contains the idea that evil has no substance, but is only what God says it is. This view denies there are some ideal divine or human moral standards that determine what is good or evil. Evil, again, is what God decides it is at the moment. The other reaction is summed up in the attitude of a person like De Sade, who denied that there is any paramount standard, human or divine, that can or should proscribe the human will in its natural inclinations and power to serve those inclinations. The reaction to the privation theory of evil reveals in the one case that evil is anything God says it is and the other reaction says that the only evil is the prohibition against doing what is natural. In either case the Augustinian view that evil is the absence of the good still stands. Evil is not an entity. No suggestion by either perspective says that evil has ontological being. In the first case God makes evil what He wants it to be, and in the second case the human person is allowed to determine naturally what he/she wants evil to be, or not be. Therefore, we say that all so-called paramount moral ethical systems that seek to determine the good, and thereby identify what is evil are limited, and so cannot by this approach say what is evil or give answer to what is the nature of evil. For St. Augustine, the origin of evil is in the free choice of the human person, who creates at each moment a decision to be disobedient to the will of God. This is true, even though the human will cannot help but do what it does, without the transformative help of the grace of God. Evil has no substance and no other origin than what is in the thoughts and actions of sentient human beings driven by their own lusts. Evil begins with these desires, so that evil is the result of original sin. St. Augustine calls sin a "defection" coming out of a deficiency in the nature of the human person that makes them inclined to do evil things. Our sin is not that we are sinful by nature, but that we give into that sin and commit moral evils. St. Augustine states:

I likewise know that when an evil choice happens in any being, then what happens is dependent on the will of that being; the failure is voluntary, not necessary, and the punishment that follows is just. For this failure does not consist in defection to things, which are evil in themselves; it is the defection in itself that is evil. That is, it is not a falling away to evil natures; the defection is evil in itself, as a defection from him who supremely exists to something of a lower degree of reality; and this is contrary to the order of nature. Greed, for example, is not something wrong with gold; the fault is in a man who perversely loves gold and for its sake abandons justice, . . . Lust is not something wrong in a beautiful and attractive body; the fault is in a soul, which perversely delights in sensual pleasures, to the neglect of that self-control by which we are made fit for spiritual realities far more beautiful, with a loveliness which cannot fade. . . . Pride is not something wrong in the one who loves power, or in the power itself; the fault is in the soul which perversely loves its power, and has no thought for the justice of the Omnipotent.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Kelly, p. 148.

¹⁵² St. Augustine, *City of God*, pp. 480-481.

Moral evil then turns out to be an act of the will of the human person caused by a defect in human nature. The deficiency itself is not evil but the acts that result from it. Evil therefore is not some supra-natural phenomenon. Evil is not an entity that brings about moral evil, but it is found in the human person. Satan himself was declared to be the model of perfection and blameless in his ways until evil was found in him (Ezekiel 28:11-15). Moral evil is therefore a result of some prior deficiency, which is undetectable even in a being that is the model of perfection. I would tend to agree that the human person and even Satan, Adam and Eve had the capacity to do evil. But nowhere in Augustine's theory of defect in the human person is this proof that evil does not in fact live outside the person and thereby uses this human defect and propensity to sin by the human person as the entry way onto *God's superhighway of unified human experience*. Evil merely seeks to make these experiences demonic, while God seeks to make them Christological or Christocentric. The only being by nature that has no deficiency in the Augustinian view is God. He states: "This I do know; that the nature of God cannot be deficient, at anytime, anywhere, in any respect, while things which were made from nothing are capable of deficiency."¹⁵³ There are good beings or very good beings but no perfect created beings no matter how blameless. If they were actually perfect then they would be God, and not a mere creation. The deficiency that sets up the possibility of evil in the human person is by default a condition of being a part of the created order, which by definition lacks perfection. The human creation that God made was declared by Him to be very good but not perfect (Genesis 1:31), that is, not perfected (not complete, not finished) therefore deficient. In St. Augustine's view, there is no cosmic evil. Original sin brought evil into the world as a free will choice of the first human, Adam, so that, "sin caused evil and not the other way around. . . . individual sin did not derive from a cosmic evil, but the decision of two people infected the entire world. . . . evil resulted from one historical act and not from multiple, numerous acts of the will."¹⁵⁴ With this statement St. Augustine gave birth to the doctrine of original sin. The development of this important doctrine in the history of Western Christianity was the result of Augustine's struggle to understand the origin and nature of evil and to defend God's righteousness as a good and just God.

¹⁵³ St. Augustine, p. 480.

¹⁵⁴ Kelly, p. 54.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ON "WHAT IS EVIL?"

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), an Italian scholastic, and a doctor of the Church, spotted a flaw in the Augustinian notion that evil is merely the privation of good so he formulated a modification of that view in *De malo* (On Evil). In the whole of Aquinas' argument in the "First Article, the question is asked, "Is Evil an Entity?"¹⁵⁵ St. Thomas Aquinas was really asking the question: Is evil *really real*? Is evil genuine? Does evil have substance? Does evil have autonomous being? St. Thomas took the view that the question "Does evil exist?" and "What is it?" are two different questions. Classical theodicy has only dealt with the first question. Aquinas dealt with the second. St. Thomas Aquinas sets up an argument for or against the proposition that evil is an Entity using the following syllogism: "Every created thing is an entity. But evil is something created . . . Therefore, evil is an entity."¹⁵⁶ Aquinas formulates the correct syllogism to begin to answer the question what is evil. Implicit in this logical argument is the necessary conclusion that God created evil. However, we will see that Aquinas side-steps this consequence and puts the origin and creation of evil within the mind of the human person. St. Thomas Aquinas wants to argue against the conclusions of Dionysius the Areopagite (c. A. D. 500), an unknown Greek mystical and speculative theologian, who wrote the *Celestial Hierarchy* and *The Divine Names*. It is the argument in the latter work that Aquinas opposes. Dionysius argues that evil is like darkness because it is contrary to light. Evil is not merely a privation.¹⁵⁷ Dionysius, according to St. Thomas, makes six or seven major arguments in support of the logical syllogism cited above by Aquinas. Dionysius concludes that evil is an entity. Dionysius argues the following:

- (a) Because good and evil are contrary to one another there must be something real and intermediate between the two that is neither good nor evil, therefore, evil is just as real as the good, and that which is intermediate to both, and not merely a privation. And so evil is an entity.
- (b) "Everything that corrupts acts. But evil as such corrupts, Therefore, evil as such acts. But nothing acts except insofar as it is an entity. Therefore, evil as such is an entity."
- (c) "People have said that corruption is due to lack of activity rather than activity. But corruption involves movement or change. Therefore, corruption causes change. But causing change is activity. Therefore, corruption is activity."
- (d) "There is passing away and coming to be in the things of nature, But every natural change involves something that the cause of change intrinsically strives for. . . . But corruption belongs to evil Therefore, evil has a nature that strives for an end."

¹⁵⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *On Evil*, translated by Richard Regan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 55.

¹⁵⁶ St. Thomas Aquinas, p. 55.

¹⁵⁷ St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Evil*, p. 56.

- (e) "A genus cannot be a nonentity, since species belong to being. . . But evil is a genus, for he says . . . that good and evil are the genera of other things and do not belong to a genus. Therefore, evil is an entity."
- (f) "Everything existing in a place is an entity. But evil exists in a place . . . Therefore, evil as such is an entity."¹⁵⁸

Dionysius argues that evil is an entity for six major reasons: (1) good, evil and its intermediary have real being. Something cannot be intermediate between nothing, (2) the nature of evil is to corrupt and so corruption is an action that supports the notion that evil is a real entity that acts and so (3) evil has movement, and brings about change in a real thing or object; so evil is a real object, (4) this leads to the notion that evil has design and purpose, strives for an end which is the corruption of the good, (5) evil is a genus of other things that are *really real*, so that evil like good causes other thing to be, and something that causes other things to be has to be an entity, and last (6) evil exists in place and time (e.g. at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*, etc.), and so is a real entity. For St. Thomas Aquinas, evil does exist, but not as a real being in the sense of being *out there* or *beyond here* contrary to the position of Dionysius. While Aquinas disagrees with Dionysius that evil is an entity, he ends up agreeing with Dionysius that "there is no evil in good," and later "that good does not cause evil."¹⁵⁹ Aquinas will hold with St. Augustine that evil is the privation of the good, *but it is more than this*. Aquinas' position ends up being somewhere between that of Dionysius and St. Augustine, which is that of *Evil actually has real being or is really real but only within the interiority the human person's mind*.

The logical syllogism presented by Dionysius, which is a dualist theology, is necessary to the defend God's righteousness, the aim and purpose of all theodicy. However, for Aquinas to accept the total logical syllogism that Dionysius uses to establish that evil is an entity would make God responsible for creating evil, since God made all things. We will see below that Karl Barth, a Swedish theologian, recognized this problem and found the solution to the problem of evil in a reformulated thesis, called by Barth, *the problem of nothingness*. Barth will say that nothingness is a negative being that stands outside the created order of God. God did not create it. *Evil* or *Nothingness* just is has somehow always been. What is evil then and its origins or location in the mind of St. Thomas Aquinas? According to Aquinas, evil is a conceptual intellectual being and so does not exist as an autonomous being apart from things God creatively made. This is like saying that evil is a mental construct of the mind. *However, evil has real being. It is not merely privation, but is actually in things, people, or circumstances*. Evil is real being in the mind of human person, a position that comes close to saying that people have the capacity to become possessed by evil. St. Thomas Aquinas plugs up the holes in St. Augustine's Swiss cheese, but Barth will do a better job of it. For Aquinas, evil cannot, therefore, exist apart from the action of really real things. There is no supra-natural force or phenomenon beyond the accidents of nature and the actions of human beings. Evil's being that is real enough within the mind of the human person only takes form when actuated by the human person. These acts could be murder, war, rape, genocide, or a host of other evils that service the needs of *demonic experience* on God's superhighway of unified human experience. Evil therefore exists as a potentiality that is brought into actuality by the human person or rational intellectual being. The Apostle James said something

¹⁵⁸ Aquinas, p. 56.

¹⁵⁹ Aquinas, pp. 62, 68.

similar in his theodicy to defend God's righteousness and that it is the human person that misuses their moral neutral power to indulge in demonic experiences that led ultimately to death: *"When temptations come, let no one say, 'I am tempted by God,' because God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. But a person is tempted when drawn away and enticed by his own lust. Then the lust, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, results in death"* (James 1:13-15, EOB). James does not define or describe the nature of Evil but **ITs** phenomenological impact on the life of the human person. St. Thomas Aquinas wants to say more and therefore states:

We speak of being in two ways. We speak of being in one way as is signifies the nature of the ten genera, and then neither evil nor any privation is a being or an entity. We speak of being in the second way as a response to the question "Does evil exist?" and then evil, just like blindness, exists. Nonetheless, evil is not an entity, since being an entity signifies both the response to the question "Does it exist?" and the response to the question "What is it?" Evil is indeed in things, although as a privation and not as an entity, and in concept as something understood, and so we can say that evil is a conceptual being and not a real being, since evil is something in the intellect and not an entity.¹⁶⁰

St. Thomas Aquinas concludes, therefore, that evil has a pseudo-ontological being, meaning that evil exists as potentiality and is only given form and substance through the thoughts, and actions of really real beings. The one advance ahead of the theology of St. Augustine, however slight, is the notion that evil is not a mere absence of the good. St. Thomas Aquinas carefully maintains the Augustinian synthesis that requires that evil has its origin in the human person so that God is held innocent of creating evil, but evil is not really real. Evil is still not an entity. Evil becomes merely the creature of the rational mind of the human person. This was Aquinas' way of defending the righteousness of God. This was Aquinas' theodicy and resolution to the problem of evil. It was a subtle modification of the privation theory of evil first developed by Clement of Alexandria, but later included in St. Augustine's systematic theology and doctrine of original sin. Both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas agree that evil does not have positive substance. Both are doing so to defend the righteousness of God and establish that the origins of evil are human. However, St. Augustine's theory is merely a black hole, a void without substance that has a negative existence, an absence of good. Evil is not really real. In Augustine's conception the human person is guilty of failing to do good, and so the concrescence of evil becomes a privation, or absence of the good. On the other hand, Aquinas' conception gives form and substance to evil by saying that it is potentiality in the mind of the human person who can make evil's desires concrete and real. From this position there is no use in saying that evil is not real, since actions such as murder are real enough, as proof that evil even in its potentiality is deadly. In Augustine, evil comes into existence by sins of omission, and in Thomas, evil comes into existence by sins of commission. St. Thomas is willing to say evil has some kind of ontological being, but is not an autonomous entity *out there* or *beyond here*. It is a conceptual reality in the mind of the human person. Evil is brought into being by real being. When we discuss *Powers Theology* advanced by Dr. Walter Wink, he will present a theological notion that is similar to that of St. Thomas Aquinas. Walter Wink will suggest that evil has its being in the life of surrogate negative beings, that is, real unseen spiritual autonomous entities the Bible calls the dark principalities and powers. These

¹⁶⁰ Aquinas, p. 62.

powers in turn have their life and being in positive being that is *really real*, the human person and human institutions. We will see that, according to Wink, these powers must live and die as surrogates, acolytes, and devotees in and through human persons and human institutions that give them life within the created material order of God's good creation. God did create them, as John 1:3-5 declares, but they are fallen creatures and can have no independent life except through positive beings that have life inherent to them, such as the human person and human institutions that are really real. Wink will say that when human institutions are born, for instance, the negative spirituality inherent in the interiority of its being is brought to life. However, when the human institution dies then the spiritual entity born with it also dies or is rendered inactive. It becomes a void and emptiness. It becomes a *No-thing*, needing permission by the Godhead to enter again into the corporate life of being that has life. Without life these principalities roam starving in arid places. It would be better to live in a legion of pigs (Matthew 8:31), rather not live at all. Wink, therefore, adopts St. Thomas' approach to defending the righteousness of God and so locates evil within the human person. In all of these theodicy's, God is vindicated because if evil does not have real being then God, who created everything, is not responsible for the existence of *Evil*. Rather the origin and conceptual being of evil lies with the human person, who either has the power or access to the power to choose good over evil using their God-given *moral neutral power*. All of this gives supports a defense of the righteousness of God, but still does not answer satisfactory "what is the nature of evil?" Dionysius presents a view of evil, preserved by Aquinas that is in harmony with what the modern theologian Karl Barth says evil is. Dionysius' wants to prove that there is no evil in good. Dionysius makes the proposition, stated in the words of St. Thomas Aquinas: "Nonbeings are not in anything. But evil is a nonbeing. Therefore, evil is not in good."¹⁶¹ Karl Barth will make a similar argument that evil is *Nothingness*, that is, a *No-thing* that is a *Some-thing*, but which stands outside the created order of God's *Good Creation*. I can now turn to Barth for a fuller explanation of his views on the *problem of evil* that he calls the *problem of Nothingness*.

¹⁶¹ Aquinas, p. 64.

CHAPTER EIGHT

KARL BARTH ON “WHAT IS EVIL?”

Karl Barth (1886-1968), a modern theologian from Basel, Switzerland, is called by biographer, David L. Mueller “the great Church Father of Evangelical Christendom, the one genuine Doctor of the Evangelical Church the modern era has known,”¹⁶² Barth presents a number of astonishing notions, about the nature of evil, in relationship to the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the human person. In chapter fifty of volume III.3 in *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation*, Barth outlines in detail his understanding of “God and Nothingness” and “The Problem of Nothingness.” Barth begins his discussion on the problem of nothingness by framing it as a problem for God and God’s providential care over God’s *Good Creation*. Classical theodicy discusses evil in relationship to its impact on the assertion that God is both omni-benevolent and omnipotent. Barth concentrates rather on the moral nature of God, where evil becomes an offense to God’s holiness, and challenges God’s sovereignty, providence, and power over God’s *Good Creation*. In Barth it is presupposed that God is *really real* so in respect to Evil he will assert that God is the primary victim of nothingness so that God is the true object and aim of its negation.¹⁶³ This is opposed to the theological doctrine that make the human person the primary victim of evil and/or the primary source of Evil since this desire to negate the life that is in God is a cosmic battle that has been ongoing *well before* the creation of Man a supposition that demonstrates that the human person cannot be the source of *Evil* as in the privation theory of Evil advanced by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Upon the creation of Man the human person merely becomes the new frontier for this ancient and eternal battle between *All Good* and *Absolute Evil*. With Barth we move beyond the childish notions of naming Satan evil incarnate and justifications by the human person that “the Devil made me do it” when both of these kinds of spiritual beings are mere acolytes and devotees of Evil but not Evil in and of themselves. They are mere surrogates of Evil so that IT may hide itself from the light of truth that it is really real and so has to be fought on a much more sophisticated and higher cosmic divine/human level that the human person has yet known or understood. The doctrine of the human person (concerned with the phenomenological impact on the life world and lived-experience of the human person) concentrates solely on “Why do bad things happen to good people?” From Barth’s horizon of thought and theology no one asks how God is victimized by Evil and/or how God is the true object and aim of Evil’s attempt to negate God the source of all life and not necessarily the human person. The negation of life in the human person by Evil would only make sense if the human person had life within themselves. On the contrary the human person is a mere contingent being whose breath of life comes from the Author of Life.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² David L. Mueller, *Karl Barth* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1972), p. 48.

¹⁶³ Barth, p. 360.

¹⁶⁴ Even Jesus *did not* initially have autonomous life within himself until God granted it. Jesus says “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in himself.” (John 5:26, NIV). This grant of life within Jesus is what the IT wants to snuff out. This passage explains the meaning of the story of Herod trying to locate and kill the baby boy Jesus, Herod as the acolyte of the Evil mandated by the IT had all of the male children two years old and under killed in Bethlehem (celebrated by us as glorious birth of the Christ child) which celebration muffles out the tragic story of lamentation where “Rachel weeps for her children, because they are no more” (Matthew 2:16-18). Here the IT was trying to find the Christ child and destroy the Holy One who would one day be granted “life in himself” by the Father. That same *eternal life* is promised to the followers of Christ so that the IT seeks to go to war with then with in this Earth of Time seeking to snuff it out within the Christiform human person. Clearly, this war is symbolically described in the Book of

Genesis clearly affirms that *“the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being”* (Genesis 2:7, NIV) and Job states: *“If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath all mankind would perish together and man would return to the dust”* (Job 34:14-15, NIV). It is not to be passes over that even Jesus recognized that the life that is in God, the Father alone is the source of all living being including his life as a incarnate composite divine/human being while here upon this Earth. Jesus states: *“Amen, amen, I tell you: the hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will come to life. For the Father has life in himself, so has he given to the Son to have life in himself”* (John 5:25-26, EOB) and because of the grant of eternal life within Jesus given to him by God, the Father he, that is, Jesus Christ is now able to grant that eternal life in all other living being although they will remain contingent being but nevertheless because of God the Father and Jesus Christ the Lord will now life forever and ever. Jesus states clearly: *“Father, the time has come! Glorify your Son, so that your Son may also glorify you, even as you gave him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him”* (John 17:1-2, EOB). From humanocentric horizon of thought and doctrine of the human person sees mankind as the victim and object of negation (i.e. non-being, death, etc.) when in fact it is God, the Author of All Life who is the real victim and object of this attempt at negation by *Nothingness* (i.e. *Evil* as just ones aspect of Trinitarian ontological being of Nothingness, according to Barth). What happened to Jesus Christ at the cross is one hint that God could very well be the victim and object of Evil and its first intended casualty in the struggle between good and evil. Again the focus on the human person only in terms of salvation is actually idolatry, suggesting again that the human person is the *whole show* in this cosmic struggle. God suffers with us in this struggle. This view is in harmony with *cruciform theology*. The main outlines why bad

Revelation so that we see **As Below, so Above**, meaning the Herod story of genocide and the following description given in Revelation:

A war took place in heaven: Michael and his angels made war on the dragon, and the dragon and his angels made war. But they did not prevail, and there was no longer any place found for him in heaven. The dragon was hurled down, the great old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. . . . Therefore, rejoice, heavens, and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he only has a short time.” When the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to earth, he began to persecute the woman who had given birth to the male child. Two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly from the face of the serpent [and escape] into the wilderness, to the place where she might be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river after the woman, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing up the river which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. The dragon became enraged with the woman and departed to make war with the rest of her seed, those who keep God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (12:1-17, EOB).

I can just hear the scholars sitting on their theological thrones saying **“NO, NO, NO!!!”** to this exposition. But it is clear from Biblical theology that the goal of the IT is to snuff out absolute life within Deity and deiform being, wherever it can be found, knowing its source is God the Father, the Creator of Heaven and Earth and All that there is, and also knowing that it is His plan to grant this eternal life to all of Christ’s disciples, to whom it was first granted by the Father. The only distinction that I must make clear is that between a grant of *eternal life* to humans and Autonomous Life *within* Christ granted by God, the source of our immortality and deiform (i.e. divine/human) existence. We must be cautious here to state that human persons will be granted eternal life but not autonomous *life within* themselves as is the case with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

things keep happening to good people are provided by Holmes Rolston, III, Professor of Philosophy at Colorado State University. Rolston believes that God is not sitting on the sidelines in this struggle and with Barth suggests the possibility that the human person is not the only being that is under attack by Evil. Rolston is working from the same doctrinal horizon as is Barth on the question of human suffering in respect to God's providence over God's *Good Creation*. Why would the human person and the creation need God's providential care if it were not in imminent danger from an unremitting dark power like *Evil*? Satan is viewed as the very incarnation of sinister dark power that Barth calls *Nothingness*. But that becomes a joke, when you consider that Satan is depicted as being thrown out of heaven by a mere archangel, called Michael (Revelation 12:7-9). There is something more sinister and God ultimately has to deal with IT within God's good creation even though human persons may be considered God's cobelligerent in this epic struggle. Rolston states in an essay, "Naturalizing and Systematizing Evil," that:

These experiences of the power of survival, or new life rising out of the old, of the transformative character of suffering, or good resurrected out of evil, experiences of the harshness of nature invite us systematically toward a natural theology, and one congenial with Christian theology. Christianity seeks by a doctrine of providence to draw all affliction into the divine will. This requires penetrating backward from a climaxing cross and resurrection to see how this is so. Nature is intelligible. Life forms are logical systems. But nature is also *cruciform*. The world is not a paradise of hedonistic ease, but a theatre where life is learned and earned by labour. Life is advanced not only by thought and action, but also by suffering, not only by logic but also by pathos. The Greek word is 'pathos,' suffering, . . . "This pathetic element in nature is seen in faith to be the deepest logical level of pathos in God. God is not in a simple way the Benevolent Architect, but rather the Suffering Redeemer. The whole of the earthen metabolism needs to be understood as having this character. The God met in physics as the divine wellspring from which matter-energy bubbles up, as the upslope epistemic force, is in biology the suffering and resurrecting power that redeems life out of chaos. All have 'borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.' . . . The abundant life that Jesus exemplifies and offers to his disciples is that of sacrificial suffering through to something higher. There is something divine about the power to suffer through to something higher. The Spirit of God is the genius that makes alive, that redeems life from its evils. The cruciform creation is, in the end, deiform, godly, just because of this element of struggle, not in spite of it. There is a great divine 'yes' hidden behind and within every 'no' of crushing nature. Redemptive suffering is a model that makes sense of nature and history."¹⁶⁵

The argument contrary to Rolston's cruciform theological view is whether all suffering is redemptive. A lot of suffering appears to be unnecessary and gratuitous, that is, done without cause or justification, or having no redeeming qualities or purpose whatever. Is Christian theology to subsume this kind of suffering under God's will as Rolston suggests? I would claim that suffering is not gratuitous because *Evil* is behind IT and not God. The human person has a penchant for blaming God for tragic events that happens to come their way by saying "It must be within God's will" or "why did God allow this to happen to me?" These kinds of statements and feelings are given expression when there appears to be no other explanation or rhyme or reason for the tragic event(s) or circumstances so that they appear unnecessary and gratuitous. The story of Job in Chapter 1 and 2

¹⁶⁵ Holmes Rolston, III, "Naturalizing and Systematizing Evil," in *Is Nature Ever Evil? Religion, Science and Value*, edited by Willem B. Drees (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 84.

presents a rather typical example of the human response to the phenomenon of suffering. Job has a series of four tragic events that happened to him in quick succession: (1) A group of Sabeans attacked Job's servants and carried off all of the oxen and donkey's; (2) Job's servants and sheep were burned alive; (3) A Chaldean raiding party came and took all of Job's camels and put his servants to the sword; and finally (4) Job's children were killed when a mighty wind came and caused the house to collapse on top of them. These events both rapid and tragic seemed to have no rhyme or reason within Job's **life-world** (as a rich man) and his **lived-experience** (as a good and righteous man that deserved better) but the back story shows these events were at a higher cosmic level grounded in a contest between God and Satan. Job's response to his circumstances is usually considered atypical and heroic when he states: *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised"* (Job 1:21, NIV). Yet he still blames God by suggesting that all that happened to him must be within God's will. His all too human attitude (though considered admirable) is manifested when his wife suggested that he "Curse God and die" when he himself was struck by illness by Satan. Job tells her: *"You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?"* (Job 2:10, NIV). Although Job's answer is considered an admirable response which preachers often use as an example of how Christians ought to respond to suffering; yet we still cannot help but note that Job still blames God as the source of these evil events and circumstances in his life.

The human response to fire burning up his servants and sheep is more typical of the human person by *directly blaming* God. The servants reporting this tragic events state: *"The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"* (Job 1:16, NIV). It is clear from the back story (i.e. the heavenly scene where Satan challenges God's assessment of Job's righteousness and blamelessness) that although what happened to Job was within God's permissive will it was not *"the fire of God"* from heaven that caused this tragedy but it was Satan's homicidal use of his power as the *Prince of the Air* (e.g. elements) to bring down fire from heaven to strike a blow at Job and other living beings (human and animal) belonging to God's *Good Creation*. No one blames Satan for these acts of evil except when we non-seriously claim that "The Devil made me do it!" Rather God (seriously) is typically blamed (either directly or indirectly) because Christian theology has asserted that God is both *All-Powerful* and *All-Good* and from a human perspective where such evil should not happened when there is a such God who is declared to love the world so much that He gave is only begotten Son so that any human that believes in him will be saved and experience eternal life (John 3:16). I would submit that the reason suffering appears inexplicably to come from God is that people deny that *Evil* is a *really real* ontological being and so there is no other cosmic, spiritual or Supra-natural source that can be blamed other than God. If we affirm that God is not responsible and also that Evil is not *really real* then the onslaught of suffering on humanity certainly appears random and without purpose. At least in Job we know the cosmic back story that gives the reason for Job's evil circumstances even though some may find God's role in it objectionable. The apparent gratuitous nature of suffering, in fact, points to the homicidal character of *Evil* that increases the level of terrorism on humanity by the apparent randomness and purposed attacks on God's *Good Creation*. In this attack it must satisfy Evil that humans blame God for whatever occurs because much of IT's power lies in being *incognito* and by using *surrogates* to carry out IT's programmatic aims against God's *Good Creation*. I maintain that human suffering certainly appears to be random and gratuitous principally because we do not know the **cosmic back story** and so we must provide the reason by pointing to a human or divine scapegoat as the culprit to make sense of it all.

Rolston provides a perspective that may be one of the keys to understanding the problem of evil and how he got to this view by beginning with the doctrine of the providence of God as does Barth. Precisely, because of God's love for His *Good Creation*, God becomes the primary foe of *Nothingness*. In this struggle Barth will claim, like Dionysius, that the human person is God's "co-belligerent" against *Nothingness* in its triune nature of *evil*, *sin*, and *death*.¹⁶⁶ Like Rolston, Barth sees God as an object of attack and a possible first casualty of *Evil*, because God represents the divine 'Yes' against the deafening "No" of *Evil*. Rolston believes that this divine 'Yes' is innate within nature opposed to suffering and put there by God. The implication is that God has done this anticipating the vicious attack on God's *Good Creation*, so that the material creation, including the human person can recover time and time again from the attacks of *Evil* or *Nothingness*. This is part of God's providential care and possibly why bad things *necessarily* happen time and time again to good people. At this point in human/divine history this apparent incessant struggle between good and evil (in which the whole of God's Good Creation is caught in the middle) cannot be helped. It must continue until our cruciform existence is swallowed up by the fulfillment of our deiform existence within God's promised new creation, a new heaven and new earth, where the old cruciform existence is passed away, and where mortality is swallowed up by immortality. Only God can bring this about as men fail time and time again to overcome *Evil* (i.e. the IT) by doing good, depending and defending defective and cruciform human institutions, while putting forth a feigned outrage and pathetic and limp moral stand against a rude, lewd, and crude society, which nevertheless benefits and even celebrates their drive for MONEY, POWER, and SEX that are the *trinitarian root* of all Evil. The writer of Jude (by tradition the brother of Jesus) expressed his own disgust at a similar and pathetic hypocrisy of human institutions and persons in his own day. Jude states:

Woe to them! They have followed the path of Cain, they have thrown themselves after the error of Balaam for the sake of money, and they have perished in Korah's rebellion. These people are like hidden and rocky reefs in your agape meals, when they feast with you. They are shepherds who feed themselves without fear, clouds without water carried along by winds, autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness has been reserved unto the age. About these people, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, also prophesied, saying:

Behold, the Lord is coming with ten thousand of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly among them of all their works of ungodliness which they have done in an ungodly way, and all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

These [people] are grumblers and complainers who pursue their [own] lusts, and their mouth speaks proud things. [They only] show respect to people in order to gain an advantage.

(Jude 1:11-16, EOB)

Rolston claims that this struggle between good and evil is a necessary part of the process of redemption of God's *Good Creation* a cosmic and painful struggle little understood by the human person and one which each one (if they could) would and do try to escape through various indulgences, entertainments, and demonic experiences, etc. The claims I make in my project affirms the same thing. God is using the fact that *Evil* is *necessarily* present within the cosmic order to bring God's *Good*

¹⁶⁶ Barth, pp. 310-311.

Creation to full maturity. I can accept with Rolston that this temporary *cruciform condition* of the God's *Good Creation* is leading ultimately to a *deiform creation*. Rolston's cruciform link to Barth is the doctrine of God's providence and is the key to understanding the problem of evil. Barth actually admits the reality of the cruciform nature of the struggle between good and evil, but hardly thinks suffering of humanity because of IT is *necessary*. From Barth's perspective suffering caused by Evil *just is*. There is no redemptive element to be found in a struggle with a deadly alien power (i.e. anti-human, anti-God) that stands at the frontiers of God's Good Creation to destroy it and anything (including God if that were possible) that gets in ITs way. This is Barth's overall view of the cruciform nature of the struggle. Barth talks about it in relationship to the doctrine of sin because Barth believes that sin is the part of the triune character of *Nothingness*. Sin, Death and Evil are three aspects of the *Trinitarian nature of Nothingness* that work together in consort to destroy God's *Good Creation*. Humanity has a part to play and to pay in its own suffering. God is not the guilty party in Barth view; yet God is humanities defender against these triune aspects of *Nothingness*. Barth states:

We have called sin the concrete form of nothingness because in sin it becomes man's own act, achievement and guilt. Yet nothingness is not exhausted by sin. It is also something under which we suffer in a connexion with sin which is sometimes palpable but sometimes we can only sense and sometimes is closely hidden. In Holy Scripture, while man's full responsibility for its commission is maintained, even sin itself is described as his surrender to the alien power of an adversary. Contrary to his will and expectation, the sin of man is not beneficial to him but detrimental. . . . It is not merely attended and followed by the ills which are inseparably bound up with creative existence in virtue of the negative aspect of creation, but by the suffering of evil as something wholly anomalous which threatens and imperils this existence and is no less inconsistent with it than sin itself, as the preliminary experience of an absolutely alien factor which is radically opposed to the sense and purpose of creation and therefore to the Creator Himself. Nor is it a mere matter of dying as the natural termination of life, but of death itself as the intolerable, life-destroying thing to which all suffering hastens as its goal, as the ultimate irruption and triumph of that alien power which annihilates creaturely existence and thus discredits and disclaims the Creator.¹⁶⁷

Humanity is not the only one suffering in this struggle between good and evil. God's person is also under attack, as can be seen in the form of the second person of the Trinity. Jesus Christ is depicted in Revelation as a "*Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders*" (Revelation 5:6a, NIV). The marks of this attack are a permanent condition of the Trinity that suffers with humanity. Christ *will always carry this mark of suffering and victory* within and on His person (for us) throughout the Earth of Eternity. These marks of battle testify to the power of Evil to mount an attack directly against God, in the person of God's Son, and therefore is an attack on God's moral character, majesty, sovereignty and the *Living Word* through which God's *Good Creation* was made. God's moral character is maligned and offended by the very presence and activity of Evil, which in Barth's thought, is only one aspect of the triune nature of Nothingness. Therefore the struggle may well be a necessary one (which humans do not understand at the moment) yet it has no redemptive qualities, as Rolston proposes in his cruciform or deiform theology. As Barth said above "the sin of man is not beneficial to him but detrimental." For

¹⁶⁷ Barth, p. 310.

Barth the struggle *just is* and there is no need to presuppose that the reality of the struggle is necessary merely because of the presence of *Nothingness* in its triune forms of sin, death, and evil. This cosmic struggle is not part of the necessary growth of God's *Good Creation*, but alien and contrary to it. In fact the presence and activity of Evil is a mortal threat that is only held at bay by the power of God. Barth says from this perspective that:

It is also true that in the form of sin nothingness is the work and guilt, and in the form of evil and death the affliction and misery, of the creature. Yet in all these forms it is first and foremost the problem of God Himself. Even the man who submits to nothingness and becomes its victim is still His creature. His care for His creature takes substance as its work and guilt and affliction and misery engender such rebellion and ruin, such disturbance and destruction. It is true, again, that God does not contend with nothingness with allowing His creature a share in the contention, without summoning His creature to His side as His co-belligerent. Yet the contention remains His own.¹⁶⁸

From this horizon of thought, Barth makes the claim that, (1) evil has a triune nature, that (2) it is God's holiness that is being offended by nothingness in God's own triune nature, and that (3) it is God's sovereign power over God's good created order that is being challenged. Barth, therefore, reformulates the logical syllogism of the problem of evil and makes it into a theological statement that presents the whole question as a problem for God and not for the human person alone. If the human person never existed God would still have to contend with Nothingness and the triune force of darkness attempting to overthrow the life that is within God that He shares with all aspects of His Good Creation. With this it is clear that the human person (while important in this struggle because they in fact do exist) is not all that and a bag of chips. The battle between good and evil has likely existed well before God said "Let us make man." Mankind therefore cannot be the original source of Evil as is the privation theory of evil. The human person to some is merely a *cosmic accident* and to others a creature brought into existence as a living soul by God and therefore no accident. However the case, the human person does exist and lives within and as an important aspect of God's *Good Creation*. This fact allows *Evil* or *Nothingness* to act contrary to God's will that this human creation lives free from both sin and death and so God engages Evil and Nothingness (in defense His sovereign will for the human person) along *God's Superhighway* of unified human experience. Barth states:

How can justice be done both to the holiness and to the omnipotence of God when we are faced by the problem of nothingness? How can the simple recognition that God is Lord over all be applied to this sphere? . . . the claim that God's holiness and omnipotence should be equally respected. . . . the claim that the power of nothingness should be rated as low as possible in relation to God and as high as possible in relation to ourselves. . . . This is the general and formal answer to the question how the simple recognition of God's universal lordship is rightly to be applied in view of the presence of nothingness as opposition and resistance to that lordship. But what is the nature of this opposition and resistance? What exactly is nothingness? It is to this question that we must now address ourselves.¹⁶⁹

In Barth's thought Evil is merely one aspect of the triune nature of *Nothingness*. IT is a negative dark power that has its abode outside the created order of things and a triune ontological

¹⁶⁸ Barth, pp. 354-355.

¹⁶⁹ Barth, pp. 292, 295.

reality made up of the Trinity of *evil*, *sin*, and *death* that is able somehow to oppose the very sovereignty of God. This ontological being is certainly not Satan. According to Barth, *Nothingness* (in its triune nature) is just as real as is the Devil, angels, and hell itself. Barth states:

There is real evil and real death as well as real sin. In another connexion it will fall to be indicated that there is also a real devil and his legions, and a real hell. But here it will suffice to recognize real evil and real death. "Real" again means in opposition to the totality of God's creation. That nothingness has the form of evil and death as well as sin shows us that *it is what it is not only morally but physically and totally*. [my *Italics*] It is the comprehensive negation of the creature and its nature. And as such it is a power, which, though unsolicited and uninvited, is superior, like evil and death, to all the forces, which the creature can oppose to it.¹⁷⁰

The Devil, the legion of demons, death, and evil are all *really real* because *Nothingness*, as Barth continues to say is itself "genuine nothingness" and so "Nothingness is thus the 'reality' which opposes and resists God which is itself subjected to and overcome by His opposition and resistance, and which in this twofold determination as the reality that negates and is negated by Him, is totally distinct from Him."¹⁷¹ To be absolutely clear, *Nothingness in its triune nature of evil, sin, and death is real being*, that is, an *objective dark power*, and a reality that is *really real*. Barth states: "We can and must ask and say what real evil is, real death, the real devil and real hell. . ."¹⁷² Barth later asks this question in a more substantive way as to what real evil is as an aspect of the nature of *Nothingness*. Barth makes a distinction being uncreated negative being which evil is, and created positive being that is really real. Barth asks the question:

What is real nothingness? 1. In this question objection may well be taken to the word "is." Only God and His creature really and properly are. But nothingness is neither God nor His creature. Thus it can have nothing in common with God and His creatures. But it would be foolhardy to rush to the conclusion that it is therefore nothing, i.e. that it does not exist. God takes it into account. He is concerned with [IT]. He strives against [IT], resists and overcomes [IT]. If God's reality and revelation are known in His presence and action in Jesus Christ, He is also known as the God who is confronted by nothingness, for whom it constitutes a problem, who takes it seriously, who does not deal with it incidentally or immediately but with His whole being, involving Himself to the utmost. If we accept this, we cannot argue that because it has nothing in common with God and His creature nothingness is nothing, i.e. it does not exist. In the light of God's relationship to it we must accept the fact that in a third way of its own nothingness "is." All conceptions or doctrine which would deny or diminish or minimize this "is" are untenable from the Christian standpoint. Nothingness is not nothing. . . . Its nature and being are those which can be assigned to it within this definition. But because it stands before God as such they must be assigned to it. They cannot be controverted without misapprehending God Himself.¹⁷³ [my brackets]

¹⁷⁰ Barth, p. 310.

¹⁷¹ Barth, pp. 303, 305.

¹⁷² Barth, p. 305.

¹⁷³ Barth, p. 349.

Nothingness is real for Barth. It is that negative power standing outside the creation of God in total opposition to God's *Good Creation*. Yet this nothingness is able to radically oppose the physical, and moral sovereignty of God over God's *Good Creation*. For Barth, God will be misunderstood if Nothingness, in its triune nature of evil, death, and sin, are not understood to be *really real*. Nothingness "is" a some-*thing* meaning it is an ontological reality. It is an actual power great enough to oppose God and God's *Good Creation*, powerful enough to disrupt and disfigure God's plan of salvation for the human person and God's *Good Creation*. According to Barth, the very understanding of the doctrine of God is tied up inextricably with our understanding of what is the triune nature of *Nothingness*. To say that Evil, as a triune aspect of Nothingness, is not real, a void, a privation resulting from human defect (St. Augustine), or an intellectual being, or mere construct of the mind, or potentiality (St. Thomas Aquinas) is untenable from Barth's theological perspective. In the theologies of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, *Evil* is either *in the human person* (as a privation of the good) or the intellectual creation of the human person. Barth says no to both of these theological views. Rather, the human person is a participant in evil and invites evil into God's *Good Creation* through the negative side of the created order. In this way Barth manages to protect the righteousness of God, but also at the same time annuls the wrongful indictment that the human person *creates* Evil.

The human person does not create evil. Of course this is no excuse for the human person acting as an acolyte in consort with *Evil* at all. By means of the power of *Evil* the human person does what is evil by participating in *demonic experience* offered by *IT* in exchange for acts of sin against God's holiness and His sovereignty; and/or a direct appeal to consciously worship Evil itself as one of *IT's* acolytes and devotees. *Evil* sits on the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* and exits onto God's superhighway of unified experience, by means of the human person's desire to participate in demonic experiences. Barth suggests that the indictment against God's righteousness and against the human person result from confusing the negative side of God's created order with *Nothingness* or *Evil*. First, in regard to confusing the negative side of God's good creation with Nothingness, Barth states:

We must indicate and remove a serious confusion which has been of far reaching effect in the history of theology. Light exists as well as shadow; there is a positive as well as a negative aspect of creation and creaturely occurrence When the first biblical account of creation distinguishes and opposes day and night, and land and water, it unmistakably indicates this twofold character and aspect of creaturely existence. Viewed from its negative aspect, creation is as it were on the frontier of nothingness and orientated towards it. Creation is continually confronted by this menace. It is continually reminded that as God's creation it has not only a positive but also a negative side. Yet this negative side is not to be identified with nothingness, nor must it be postulated that the latter belongs to the essence of creaturely nature and may somehow be understood and interpreted as a mark of its character.¹⁷⁴

According to Barth, three misconceptions occur when this confusion is paramount in theology. First, God is insulted in His righteousness, that is, blamed and blasphemed as responsible for the evil in the world and maybe, even its creation. Secondly, the human person is wrongfully indicted as the originator of evil in God's *Good Creation*, rather than being merely *IT's* acolyte and or devotee. Thirdly, *Nothingness* or in *IT's* triune aspect of *Evil*, as a *really real* being, is not taken seriously as an ontological reality. It can be dismissed along with the devil, hell and the lake of fire as not real or really real. Barth believes that the theological mind has been duped by *Nothingness*, which uses the negative side of

¹⁷⁴ Barth, p. 295-296.

God's *Good Creation* as its alibi, a way of pointing the finger at God and the human person for the evil that is in the world. It is in fact a fifth column activity of *Nothingness* to foster this confusion. It is analogous to Satan posing as an angel of light, calling light darkness, and darkness light. Deception becomes a way *Nothingness* operates along or on God's superhighway of unified human experience, in order to cover its true design against God's created order, which is toprehend the concrescence of demonic experience in the forms of sin, death, blight, and other outrages of moral evils in the world.¹⁷⁵ Barth states:

The confusion itself and as such is a masterpiece and even a triumph of nothingness. This is so not merely because it entails a slander on creation, and an act of stupidity and ingratitude towards the Creator who seeks His own likeness, but also because it implies a most subtle concealment of genuine nothingness, because in this confusion with what is not null but perfect the latter fabricated a kind of alibi under cover of which it cannot be recognized and can thus pursue its dangerous and disruptive ways the more unfeared and unhampered. For what happens when we wrongfully indict the Creator and the creature? . . . What obviously happens is that we neither perceive nor evaluate it as true nothingness, but accept it, incorporate it into our philosophical outlook, validate and exculpate it . . . finally justify it, not regarding and treating it as null, but as essential and necessary part of existence. . . . Though we may err and deceive ourselves and others by seeking nothingness in the negative side of creation, this does not alter the fact that this negative side also belongs to God's good and perfect creation. . . we do not really come to grips with true nothingness, with the real adversary which menaces and corrupts us so long as we look in this direction.¹⁷⁶

Barth warns in this statement about accepting Evil or Nothingness as a "necessary part of existence." This position militates against cruciform theology that suggests that the presence of Evil is necessary, because the suffering it brings helps God's purpose to transform God's *Good Creation* into a *deiform creation*. Barth does not see its incorporation as necessary at all, but rather it is a dangerous incorporation of a dangerous alien force that the human person and human institutions cannot handle. *Nothingness* or *Evil* must not be incorporated into human institutions and or philosophical world-view. I call this incorporation of *Evil* into unified human experience, *demonic experience*. According to Barth, not taking Nothingness or Evil seriously as a real threat, allows the theological or philosophical mind to say it is not real. If it is not real then one can laugh at or poke fun at this dark reality, like the fun people poke at the Devil, that is, the man in a red suit, with pitch fork and pointed tail. We do this ostensibly to protect the minds of our children from awful fairytales and horrors like turning "Old St. Nick" (i.e. Ole St. Nicholas, the "Devil") into our beloved "Santa Claus" who wants to know have our children been "**naughty or nice**" coming to them without the scary tail and pitchfork,

¹⁷⁵This "darkside" of God's *Good Creation* cannot be fully dealt with here but we suggest that it exists within and is part of the nature of the Creation because it has not as yet been perfected or fully transform from cruciform to deiform. Once this transformation is complete then this dark blemish will be erased. In the meantime Nothingness is taking full advantage of this blemish or cruciform character of God's *Good Creation*, and point to this blemish as the source of the blight that seems to be the norm of human existence.

¹⁷⁶Barth, p. 299.

but still wearing the red suit, none-the-less.¹⁷⁷In fact the devolution of evil characters into harmless, beloved, or good beings of light is really for our own peace of mind and not for our children. This non-serious attitude of mind is just what *Nothingness* or *Evil* wants so that it can do its work hidden within the cosmos and the interiority of the human person in order to lead them to commit the most awful kinds of atrocities against one the other and blaspheme the holy name of God. Worst still, *Nothingness* or *Evil* becomes a necessary part of God's Good *Creation*. Being necessary *IT* takes on a natural and sometimes deceives the human person by taking on a non-threatening persona before *IT* is recognized for what *IT* really is, but all too late. Thereafter, all kinds of evils that were once considered immoral are now acceptable under the guise of tolerance advanced by social engineering proponents of Progressive idealism in high places. The moral maxim to *do no harm* is especially enforced in favor of acolytes and devotees of Evil. Good people seeking a just and upright society are ashamed with empathic narratives from social media pundits (influenced by the *Prince of the Power*



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'Old Christmas' shown riding a yule goat illustrated by Englishman Robert Seymour in 1836. In some European Yuletide festival traditions St. Nicholas (Old Saint Nick) riding or leading the yule goat by a rope represented the notion of St. Nicholas' control over the Devil. "The original illustration is entitled "Old Christmas' and is accompanied by the verse "In furry pall yclad,/His brows enwreathed with holly never sere,/Old Christmas come to close the wained year: Bampfyde". Robert Seymour (1798 -1836) – "The Book of Christmas" by Thomas Kibble Hervey.



According to Ian Chambers from his essay about these traditions "The Old Devil Saint Nick" (December 1, 2019):

Most recently, neopagan and witchcraft sub-cultures have enjoyed the rise in popularity of the Krampus, the Central European folkloric counter figure to the benevolent Saint Nicholas, born of the underworld. More closely related is the Devil's sobriquet 'Old Nick', which is surprisingly similar to 'Old St. Nick'. Literary records suggest that the term Old Nick for the devil is first reported in the mid 17th Century, however it is likely that the scholarly appearance in literature is preceded by colloquial use The etymology of the term Nick for the Devil is obscure and there is no agreement or certainty as to its origin prior to the 1600s according to historical record. Attempted theories include the origin in Middle English "nycher, niker "water demon, water sprite, mermaid," from Old English nicor" (Source: Etymonline.com). Of course, in another meaning of "notch, grove or slit", it is perhaps easier to identify a similarity with another nickname for the Devil, Old Scratch.

(Ian Chambers, "The Old Devil Saint Nick", In *Patheos*, December 1, 2019)

of the Air-waves, Ephesians 2:2) demanding that they use politically correct (PC) language and/or are silenced by judicial threats should they stand up for their constitutionally protected freedom of speech and religion, *or else*. This demonic circle of social and legal proscription is encouraged and advanced by *Nothingness/Evil* with a *Gag Order from Hell* should any person dare speak up for what is right in the eyes of God that is marked out clearly in His Word. Preachers and the church no longer dare preach openly against sin and moral evils without peppering their messages with all kinds of apologies and disclaimers affirming in the minds of many that the universal love of God extends to rubber stamping as right the immoral and lewd behavior of acolytes and devotees of Evil who are trying to turn God's *Good Creation* into a mere *playground, circus* and *carnival* in their quest for *demonic experiences* making it "a dwelling place of demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, . . ." (Revelation 18:2, EOB). No prophet of God ever took such a compromising stance before *Evil* or the *Powers of darkness* in our world, and Barth has suggested the reason why. *Nothingness* or in *IT's* triune aspect of *Evil* is an alien power that will stop at nothing short of the annihilation of God's *Good Creation* and God Himself, *if that were possible*. This alien power must not be accepted as a *necessary part* of God's *Good Creation* in any form, as *necessary for cruciform transformation* or as a joke that can be dismissed at will. Evil is *really real* and cannot be summarily dismissed just because we don't like to talk about *IT* out of fear or out of *humanocentric arrogance* that we are all that and a bag of chips.

The postmodern age has done exactly this, because of the successful surrogate belligerency of the acolytes and devotees of *Evil*, that is, the *children of darkness* (no matter how high their position in society) posing as *children of light*. It is likely that this attitude of tolerance or acceptance of the presence of *Evil* on the *superhighway of unified human experience* will lead to the resignation or the abdication of human responsibility to do something about *Evil* in terms of first recognizing *IT* for what *IT* is and then confronting *IT* as *cobelligerents of God* in this *Christological struggle* between good and evil. Any attitude contra to this will lead people to continue being deceived and as a result continue to participate in *demonic experience* that advances *Evil* on and along the *Superhighway of God* to negatively affect God's *Good Creation*. This is especially true where injustice is allowed to reign, and the moral authority or moral agency for right doing is denied or suppressed. Under these conditions *Nothingness* or *Evil* will have a field day and a wide-open road to operate on *God's superhighway of unified human/divine experience* to promote its agenda for the concrescence of *demonic experience* and the defeat of *Christological experience* that advances or lures God's *Good Creation* toward its *deiform* cosmic destiny at the *Omega Point* of a New Heaven and a New Earth. Barth continues the attack on the contrary human attitude of mind that accepts *Evil* as a *necessary part* of God's *Good Creation* and continues to sound the alarm (like a watchman for God) standing at the frontiers of *Nothingness*, heralding this insight for all those who will listen. Barth says our tolerance and acceptance of this dark alien presence is because we view it as a genuine part of God's *Good Creation*. From this misguided horizon of understanding even undeserved suffering becomes acceptable if we can just say it is God's will and of course unwittingly blame God for our misfortune(s). Barth sees this attitude as blasphemy against the moral nature and person of God and His Word that states "that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5, EOB). Only *Nothingness* or *Evil* could engender such an attitude in the human person, who keeps asking the question, *why do bad things happen to good people?* With no other explanation, God is blamed by saying this evil was somehow God's will, a favorite response of preachers, who do not know what else to say to victims. The worst thing to say in conjunction with this claim is that maybe out of this evil good will come, because this allows *Nothingness* or *Evil* a rational basis for participation in the good. Barth is going to say even here *Nothingness* or *Evil* does not belong. *Nothing good* can come from *Nothingness*,

because nothing from Nothingness leaves nothing. IT does not intend to leave anything positive behind in the human person's *life-world* or *lived-experience*. The IT will not, and by nature IT cannot do otherwise. *Nothingness* or *Evil* seeks the complete destruction of the good. Barth continues:

On the wrong assumption that it is genuine nothingness, we shall then be able to ascribe to it a certain goodness, a certain participation in good. In short, nothingness suddenly becomes something which is ultimately innocuous, and even salutary. Real sin can then be regarded as a venial error and mistake, a temporary retardation, . . . Real evil can then be interpreted as transitory and not intolerable imperfection, and real death as "rest in God." The devil can then be denied or described as the last candidate for salvation which is due to him too by reason of a general *apokatastasis*. Nothingness can then be tidily "demythologized," although in actual fact what is in question is not real nothingness, but only the misconceived negative side of creation, which is not null *in re*.¹⁷⁸

To say *Evil* or *Nothingness* [i.e. the **No-thing**] is part of the created order of things is to say God, who is *omni-benevolent* (All-good) and *omnipotent* (All-powerful), either condones Evil's intrusion or cannot prevent its intrusion into God's *Good Creation* or the interiority of human person. In the first case God would not be *All-good* and in the second God cannot be *All-powerful*. This is true even if *Evil* is thought of as mere potentiality or intellectual being, as St. Thomas Aquinas held, or as a void and absence of the good, as St. Augustine held. Their view becomes a wrongful indictment of both God and the human person and is a denial that Nothingness or evil has real being or is an ontological reality if the claims made by classical Christian theology are true. Barth rejects both of these classical pseudo-ontological explanations of what *Evil* is and that it resides and has its origins or being in the human person. In fact, Barth says that the reality of *Evil*, expressed as sin in the human person, which gave rise to St. Augustine's notion of original sin, is mistaken. Original sin is not the culprit. Sin is a real ontological reality, as a triune being encapsulated and subsumed in the nature of *Nothingness*. It was not born in the human person and has no part in God's *Good Creation*. Otherwise, God who made the created order and the human person and who is *All-good* and *All-powerful* must be responsible for Evil within the created order. On the contrary (according to Barth) what is viewed as evil and sin in the human person is merely the negative aspect of God's own creation (inexplicably a byproduct of God's *Good Creation*).

Without mentioning St. Thomas Aquinas by name, Barth makes a devastating attack on the notion that evil becomes real as an intellectual being in the mind of the human person. Barth says no to this, because Aquinas's view denies that Evil, as a triune aspect of Nothingness, has objective reality, not only outside the creation, but also outside the human person. On the contrary, the human person cannot even assess knowledge of Evil or Nothingness, because Evil, as a triune aspect of Nothingness, is on the frontiers of human existence, not in it. The being and nature of Nothingness is not determined by the being and nature of the human person, because Nothingness and therefore Evil stands outside the person as a real ontological being, reality, or power. Barth says that Nothingness, and therefore Evil has no objective reality within the creation itself as a necessary part of it, because God has said "yes" to God's *Good Creation*, and "no" to that which would negate it. Nothingness operates as the antithesis to all that is good in the created order, but nevertheless its home is outside that order, outside the interiority of the human mind, and so can only be fully comprehended, contained, and

¹⁷⁸ Barth, p. 300.

defeated by God in that realm. The human person did not create it, cannot control it, or understand its nature, without revelation from God. Barth makes this conception clear. Barth states:

This antithesis has no substantive existence within creation, i.e. it is not a creaturely element confronted by others as elements of good. It is the antithesis which can be present and active within creation only as an absolute alien opposing and contradicting all its elements, whether positive or negative. It is the antithesis which the creature . . . cannot possibly envisage, comprehend and explain within creation, even though it is present and active within it. It is antithesis which cannot be synoptically viewed, or reduced to a common denominator, or reconciled, with what is opposed to it. It is the antithesis whose relationship to creation is real but absolutely negative, offering only menace, corruption and death, . . . It is the antithesis which is only comprehensible in correlation with creation not as an equilibrating but an absolute and uncompromising No. . . . Yet God Himself comprehends, envisages and controls it. . . . God, but He alone, can deal with it and has already done so, in accordance with the fact that He transcends it from all eternity in His essence as God. But it must be clearly understood that He has treated it as His adversary, as the No which is primarily and supremely addressed to Himself, as the nothingness which is the true nothingness in opposition to Himself and His will and work. But if this is the relationship between God and nothingness, we cannot and must not include it in the creaturely world, in the divine creation, or in any way relativise or subtly minimise it. Any theoretical synthesis we contemplate between creaturely existence and genuine nothingness can only be a description of its triumph over creaturely existence, and therefore blasphemy.¹⁷⁹

Evil therefore is not the intellectual creature of the human imagination, nor is it given birth in the mind of the human person, as St. Thomas would have it. Evil has ontological existence outside and existed before the creation of the human person. It had ontological existence at the beginning of the creation itself, establishing itself as the “No!” to God’s “Yes!”. “Hence,” as Barth says “nothingness cannot be an object of the creature’s natural knowledge. Certainly it is an objective reality for the creature. The latter exists objectively in encounter with it. But it is disclosed to the creature only as God is revealed to the latter in His critical relationship. The creature knows it only as it knows God in His being and attitude against it.”¹⁸⁰ This can be understood Biblically if we change the words “God” to “Nothingness” and “hate” for “love” in 1 John 4:12. It would read: *No one hath seen [Nothingness] at any time. If we [hate] one another, [Nothingness] dwelleth in us and his [hate] is perfect in us.* Barth next destroys the notion implanted by St. Augustine that evil is merely the absence of the good, the classical privation theory of evil or is some defect in the human person. The doctrine of original sin says that the human persons is defective and, therefore, incapable of saving themselves, as a result of their fall from God’s grace and disobedience to God’s will. Barth would agree that human persons are incapable of saving themselves, but it is not because of some defect in human nature. Human nature is what it is. It is what God made it and as such is the perfection of imperfection due to its finite nature. First, Barth says that there is no defect either in the moral character of God, or the moral character of the human person. Such a defect would imply a necessary absence of the good, which is an immediate negation of God’s **yes** to God’s *Good Creation*, and a denial of the sovereign decree that all God has made is good, and even *very good*. There is no void or absence of

¹⁷⁹ Barth, pp. 302-303.

¹⁸⁰ Barth, p. 350.

the good in God, because in God's perfection, as the creator, God does not have the imperfections of that which God created. There is no darkness in God. On the other hand, the creature God made is good and perfect in its own right, because this is how God made it. The "not" of the human person is subsumed in their perfection and God's vision of what the human was made to be. The "not" is the divinity that God did not immediately share with the human person God made. For that moment of creation the human person was perfect as could be and situated in (for the moment) *the best of all possible* worlds. Implicit in this understanding, which is not Barthian, is that the divinity that the human person is promised is cruciform, aimed toward a future deiform. Nevertheless, what is Barthian is the fact that there is no "not" in that perfection, since it is the will of God. To say that the human person is imperfect would be to say that God made a mistake somewhere, which would be a contradiction of the doctrine of God's omnipotence. Barth applies this reasoning to the conception of Nothingness. Barth states:

Again, nothingness is not simply to be equated with what is *not*, i.e. not God and not the creature. God is God and not the creature, but this does not mean that there is nothingness in God. On the contrary, this "not" belongs to His perfection. Again, the creature is creature and not God, yet this does not mean that as such it is null or nothingness. If in the relationship between God and creature a "not" is involved, the "not" which characterizes the creature belongs to its perfection. Hence it would be blasphemy against God and His work if nothingness were to be sought in this "not," in the non-divinity of the creature.¹⁸¹

It is in the non-divinity of the creature, that is, human imperfection that St. Augustine suggests that evil has its origins as a privation of the good. Original sin is also the necessary result of this defect or imperfection in human nature. Yet Barth holds that this very imperfection is the perfection God gave to the human person, and so cannot be sin in the human person. To say such a thing is to say that God created sin, as well as evil. So, if human persons do not experience evil as a void or as a privation of the good, because of their imperfection, and they do not create evil as an ontological intellectual being of the mind, then, how does Barth suggest that human persons encounter Nothingness, as an ontological reality, whose nature, in one triune aspect, is Evil? How does the human person deal with Nothingness or Evil, as a reality, if it stands outside the human person? Evil is limited by God's "no" but it is still a menace, can do harm, and can even possess the person, or infuse human institutions with its demonic spirituality, and rationality for evil (e.g. Nazism, Jim Crow, genocide, ethnic cleansing, sexual immorality, demonic experiences, etc.). According to Barth, the human person cannot even know evil or nothingness apart from the revelation of God's "No!" to Nothingness, and apart from the human participation in demonic experiences, that, is participation (as Jesus, the Christ said) in the so-called "*deep things of Satan*" (Revelation 2:24, ASV). How does the human person experience Nothingness as Evil, Sin, and as demonic experience, if God has said "No!" to IT? In order for that to happen the human person has to say "no" to God, and "yes" to Nothingness, which operates and enters the world through the negative aspects of the imperfection of human perfection. The imperfection of perfection (that finished deiform not yet supplied to the human person) is a lack of divinity in God's grace that would give the human person the capacity to say "no!" at the beginning of time and to say "no!" to *Nothingness* and *Evil* now. If the human person does not have this perfection that only a deiform being has, then how can the human persons "no!" to God be disobedience?

¹⁸¹ Barth, 349.

Romans Chapter 3 suggests a similar conundrum, where the creatures “no” to God is a choice and even in its imperfection of perfection yet may be judged and condemned by God as Sin:

But what if some were without faith? Will their lack of faith nullify the faithfulness of God? May it never be! Yes, let God be found true, but every man a liar. As it is written, *That you might be justified in your words and might prevail when you come into judgment.* But if our righteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous if he inflicts wrath? (I speak as people do!). May it never be! For then, how will God judge the world? For if through my lie the truth of God overflowed to his [own] glory, why am I still judged as a sinner? Why not (as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say), “Let us do evil, so that good may come?” Those who say so are justly condemned. What then? Are we better than they? No, by no means! For we previously warned both Jews and Greeks that they are under sin. As it is written,

There is no one righteous; no not one, There is no one who understands. There is no one who seeks God. They have all turned aside. They have together become worthless. There is no one who does good, no, not so much as one. Their throat is an open grave, With their tongues they have used deceit, The poison of vipers is under their lips; Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their paths. The way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.(Romans 3:3 – 18, EOB)

Barth says that the human person encounters *Nothingness* on the frontiers of God’s positive will for the human person, that is, “When the creature crosses the frontier from the one side, and is invaded from the other, nothingness achieves actuality in the creaturely world.”¹⁸² This is how evil enters the world, according to Barth. The human person can only encounter Evil, or Nothingness when they themselves by their own choice cross beyond God’s “No!” to *Nothingness* into territory where IT is limited on the frontiers of the created order, and in the interiority of the human person. God’s “No!” is symbolically represented by God’s command to Adam not to eat from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. Surely this is the meaning behind God’s prohibition or “No!” to Adam and Eve to not eat from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. Mankind in their innocence and nativity could not have true knowledge of good or evil apart from the revelation of God. Mankind had no knowledge of good or evil until they said “yes!” to nothingness on the frontiers of God’s Good Creation and said “no!” to God command given by direct revelation. In response to the human “no!” to God, God has to ask the question, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from” (Genesis 3:11, NIV)? In other words, “Who informed you about the imperfection of your perfection? Have you sought the knowledge of good and evil without my permission (i.e. gone beyond the frontier of my revelation and command to you) before you were ready?” This divine interrogation reveals that God’s mortal enemy on the frontier of God’s *Good Creation* has somehow entered paradise (the gateway onto the *Superhighway of God*) with its “No!” to God’s *Good Creation*. Once that “no!” to God or negative frontier we call sin is crossed, the human person meets *Nothingness* as *demonic experience* (biting into the forbidden fruit). Barth believed that the human person could not know that it has crossed this negative frontier until it encounters it as

¹⁸² Barth, 350.

revelation from God's Word. Barth states: "through the Word of God, the encounter of the creature with true nothingness is also realized and recognized. Of itself, the creature cannot recognize this encounter and what it encounters. It experiences and endures it."¹⁸³ In Paul's exposition of the law of sin working within the flesh of the human person he says something similar:

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? May it never be! However, I would not have recognized sin, except through the law. Indeed, I would not have known coveting, unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." But sin [Nothingness], finding an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of coveting! For apart from the law, sin is dead. I was alive apart from the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. The commandment which was [meant] for life, I found to be for death, because sin [Nothingness], finding an opportunity through the commandment deceived me, and through it, killed me. Therefore, the law indeed is holy, and the commandment is [also] holy, and righteous, and good. (Romans 7:7-10, EOB).

I have inserted the [*Nothingness*] for sin in Paul's statement to note that **Sin** is one *triune aspect* of *Nothingness* along with **Evil** and **Death** all mentioned in nearly one breath by Paul. More importantly I have done so in order to show how *Nothingness* uses what is good, righteous, and holy in God's *Good Creation* (in this case the Law) to enter onto the *Superhighway of God* (or God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*) through *Sin* in the human person. In order for this to happen the human person has to cooperate with *Nothingness* even though this cooperation is obtained through deceit by *Nothingness* using the human person's desires for *demonic experiences*. Apparently, the disobedience that the human person has inherited as part of their *imperfect perfection* (i.e. being as complete as God intended for the moment) is the inability to recognize without revelation from God the true nature and aim of *Nothingness* or in its *Trinitarian nature* **Evil**, **Sin**, and **Death**. The human person certainly has the freedom of will to say no to Evil as God would have it (so there is no excuse for sin from that perspective); but, according to Barth the human person has no innate capacity to recognize *Nothingness* or Evil at the frontiers of unified human experience. We may insert here that this is chiefly because the human person in their *imperfect perfection* have not yet experienced Christological *regeneration* (i.e. being *born again* baptized in the water and the blood, spiritual regeneration that comes as a result of repenting of one's sins and accepting Jesus Christ as ones Savior from Sin and Death). Until the human person is *born again* their eyes are not open and therefore they do not have the capacity to see the nature of Evil and Sin as it really is, and how they have been enslaved *thereto*. As the Negro Spiritual song says: "**You must be, you have to be born again**" becoming a new Creature in Christ. In this *all too human* situation the darkness that is *Nothingness* manifests itself as light to the human person. That is why *Nothingness* or Evil uses deception and poses as light, because it knows humans (Once regenerated, born again) have the capacity to say "no!" to *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death* like God says "**No!**" to *IT*. However, under those conditions (lacking innate capacity) the human person does not know to say no without God's direct intervention by commanding them (via God's holy law) to say "**No!**" like God says "**No!**" to *IT* and therefore achieve one aspect of *human deiform transformation* to "*be holy as God is holy*", that is, setting oneself separate and apart from *Nothingness* in all of its *triune aspects* of **Evil**, **Sin**, and **Death**.

¹⁸³ Barth, 350.

However, once the human person through deception or consciously says “Yes!” to *Nothingness* or *Evil* then the desire for participation in *demonic experiences* takes the ascendancy over God’s prehended aim of *Christological experience* for the human person that is meant to lure them toward *deiform transformation as new creatures in Christ*. Another question arises however. If Nothingness has real being, then how does it come into existence? According to Barth, Nothingness is placed outside the creation and not made a necessary part of it. This works to defend God from the charge of creating Evil? Barth’s analysis and arguments as to the purpose, nature, and location of *Nothingness* and, therefore, *Evil* still begs the question as to how *Nothingness* or *Evil* came to be. How is it possible for something to exist outside the purview of a sovereign and eternal God, who exists by God’s self alone in God’s triune nature of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Does Barth’s attempt to defend the righteousness of God, grounded in the notion that *Nothingness* or *Evil* has ontological being outside the created order of God’s *Good Creation*, become a denial of God’s sovereign power over all things, something that Barth in his project is trying to defend? Is *Nothingness* an autonomous ontological being like God that existed eternally or somehow brought itself into existence since God did not create it? How would Barth’s theology reconcile the following two scriptures (related to this question) juxtaposed? First John says that “God is light; in him there is no darkness at all,” (1 John 1:5b, NIV), and the scripture which states:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it (John 1:1-5, NIV).

Barth is unwilling to say that God created Nothingness or evil, but affirms nothingness existed before the creative word of God brought light into existence. Barth sees *Its* manifestation as *chaos* in Genesis 1:1-2. Nevertheless, God’s own sovereignty is maintained over *Nothingness* by its banishment to the outer frontiers of God’s good creation. This happened when God said, “Let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness,” (Genesis 1:3-4, NIV).¹⁸⁴ When God created the light, *darkness* or *Nothingness* was already present. God separated the two and consigned *Nothingness* to the frontiers of God’s *Good Creation* that was made in the light. The full passage reads:

In the beginning God made heaven and earth. The earth was invisible and unfinished: and darkness was over the deep. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water. *Then God said*, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw the light; it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day; the darkness He called Night; and there was evening and morning one day. (*The Orthodox Study Bible*, Genesis 1:1-5).

¹⁸⁴Later in this project we will introduce the Egyptian cosmological explanation of creation that has God Himself emerging from the brooding black celestial waters of the Nun, which should shed additional light on the nature, essence and character of Nothingness in relation to the Sovereign power of God. Here the black celestial waters or the Nun just is and proceeds creation. The Nun is coeval with God for God is within the Nun as non-created being (i.e. Deity). From this dark celestial essence God emerges to say “Let there be light!” as an emphatic “Yes” to light and “No” to darkness. Somehow from the Egyptian cosmology the celestial black waters is some kind of divine energy out of which God emerges *in the beginning* to create things out of this dark void. Here we must be careful not to conclude that this celestial void is that same thing as Barth’s Nothingness or “No-thing” because clearly God’s essence is closely related to this black celestial water that the Egyptians claim to be an entity. To the Egyptians the Nun is the Nile God and is *really real*.

Barth states in reference to this Genesis passage:

The first and most impressive mention of nothingness in the Bible is to be found at the very beginning in Gen. 1 . . . in which there is a reference to the chaos which the Creator has already rejected, negated, passed over and abandoned even before He utters His first creative Word, which He has already consigned to the past and to oblivion even before the beginning of time at His command. Chaos is the unwilled and uncreated reality which constitutes as it were the periphery of His creation and creature. It is that which, later depicted in very suitable mythological terms and conceptions, is antithetical both to God Himself and to the world of heaven and earth which He selected, willed and created. It is a mere travesty of the universe. It is the horrible perversion which opposes God and tempts and threatens His creature. It is that which, though it is succeeded and overcome by light, can never itself be light but must always remain darkness . . . chaos is not night, or the waters above the firmament, or the earthly sea. It still remains not merely distinct from the works of God, but excluded by the operation of God, a fleeting shadow and a receding frontier. Only in this way can we say that it "is" But in this way it undoubtedly "is," and is thus subject to the divine sovereignty. In this way it is present from the very outset with God and His creature.¹⁸⁵

By saying that the IT as Nothingness in ITs nature as darkness was "present from the very outset with God and His creature" Barth is not saying that *Nothingness* is **co-eternal** with God (i.e. existing eternally together) for that cannot be true. But he appears to be saying that *Nothingness* as *darkness* is **coeval** with God *before* or *at* the beginning of the creation (i.e. contemporary or present at the beginning). The existence of Nothingness or Evil does not present a problem for God's sovereignty for Barth, because God's "Yes!" to the goodness of the cosmic order was at one and the same time a "No!" to the chaos and darkness of *Nothingness*. God demonstrated that "No!" by consigning it to frontiers of God's *Good Creation*, so that ITs menace to the created order could be controlled and even nullified. *Nothingness* or *Evil* "is" and always was, and so Barth provides no explanation for its existence, besides the notion that it is the "No!" to God's eternal "Yes!"

Nothingness is, by definition, negated, nullified, and kept at bay by God's eternal "No!" and it is real, but has no reality outside God's sovereign and divine non-willing. Barth comes close to saying that *Nothingness* or *Evil* is the anti-thesis to God's thesis, which could lead to the proposition that *Nothingness* or *Evil* is a necessary by-product of God's creative activity. We will see later that the black Egyptian theologians and cosmologists actually do say this. That proposition would look something like this, "When God creates the good He necessarily creates evil that opposes the good" as a by-product of His own being and essence. *Nothingness* or *Evil* for Barth comes to existence as a result of God's creative activity on *His left hand*, and so constitutes the "*problem of Nothingness*" (i.e. problem of Evil). Barth says in this respect that "The problem of Nothingness primarily arises in a consideration of the relationship between Creator and creature, and therefore of general world-occurrence under the rule of God."¹⁸⁶ After defending God's sovereignty as part of the problem of Nothingness it remains a problem because it exists on the "left hand of God." How do you account for something that is "not a second God, nor self-created" having being if God did not create IT?

¹⁸⁵ Barth, "The Reality of Nothingness", *Church Dogmatics*, III.3, *The Doctrine of Creation*, p. 352.

¹⁸⁶ Barth, p. 365.

Nothingness has no existence and cannot be known except as the object of God's activity as always a holy activity. . . . He is Lord both on the right hand and on the left. It is only on this basis that nothingness "is," but on this basis it really "is." As God is Lord on the left hand as well, He is the basis and Lord of nothingness too. . . . It is not a second God, nor self-created. It has no power save that which it is allowed by God. It, too, belongs to God. It "is" problematically because it is only on the left hand of God, under His No, the object of His jealousy, wrath and judgment. It "is," not as God and His creation are, but only in its own improper way, as inherent contradiction, as impossible possibility. Yet because it is on the left hand of God, it really "is" in this paradoxical manner.¹⁸⁷

For Barth both God's *Yes* and *No* created that which is real. Good is created when God says Yes, and paradoxically Nothingness is either activated or comes into existence on the frontier of God's good creation, as real being, when God says "No!" to IT. According to Barth, *Nothingness*, in its triune nature "has essence only of non-essence, and only as such can it exist."¹⁸⁸ Yet the *Nothingness*, as negative being (i.e. darkness that can be felt and so is *really real*, has "its own being", has "real correspondence to God's eternal and emphatic deafening "No!" and is in fact "it is Evil") but nevertheless is not created by God; it just "is." It is necessarily grounded in the non-willing or "No!" from God. God is not responsible for *Nothingness* or *Evil*, but paradoxically is responsible for its activation outside the created order of things. Barth continues:

That which God renounces and abandons in virtue of His decision is not merely nothing. It is nothingness, and has as such its own being, albeit malignant and perverse. A real dimension is disclosed, and existence and form are given to a reality *sui generis*, in the fact that God is wholly and utterly not the Creator in this respect. Nothingness is that which God does not will. It lives only by the fact that it is that which God does not will. But it does live by this fact. For not only what God wills, but what He does not will, is potent, and must have a real correspondence. What really corresponds to that which God does not will is nothingness. . . . Nothingness "is," therefore, in its connexion with the activity of God. It "is" because and as and so long as God is against it. It "is" only in virtue of the fact that God is against it in jealousy, wrath and judgment. It "is" only within the limits thus ordained. But within these limits it "is" from the Christian standpoint, therefore, any conception must be regarded as untenable if it ascribes to nothingness any other existence than in confrontation with God's non-willing. It would be untenable from a Christian point of view to ascribe autonomous existence independent of God or willed by Him like that of His creature. Only the divine non-willing can be accepted as the ground of its existence. Within this limit nothingness is no semblance but a reality, just as God's non-willing in relation to it, and the whole *opus alienum* of the divine jealousy, wrath and judgment, is no semblance but a reality. The character of nothingness from its ontic peculiarity. It is evil.¹⁸⁹

Can humankind destroy Nothingness or IT's trinitarian aspect Evil in its misplaced attitude of technological triumphalism? Is this the attitude that led the President Bush to say *we* will destroy the

¹⁸⁷ Barth, p. 351.

¹⁸⁸ Barth, p. 352.

¹⁸⁹ Barth, pp. 352-353.

Axis of Evil? This is likely but mistaken because he thought of the so-called Axis of Evil as “evil” state authorities promoting terrorism but could not really see beyond these evil structures to the see the dark power behind them and other states including democratic ones that are acolytes of this *sui generis* dark power. With such a view of course technological triumphalism seems tenable as a way of telling these states “we have the power to defeat and even destroy you!” The problem of Nothingness cannot be solved through technological triumphalism which is short sighted and does not understand the dark principalities in high places that influence *Evil* within societal and state structures of power. We submit that only a Christological solution can resolve the problem of Nothingness. Only God can destroy Nothingness (held at bay by His left hand, that is, His eternal “No!” and negate the negation by the power at *God’s right hand*, which is Jesus Christ as the Word of God triumphant, where the Word of God says: *Therefore, God says, “When he [Jesus Christ] ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” Now what does “he ascended” mean, if not that he first descended into the lower parts of the earth?* [i.e. into Hell Itself, my insertion]. *He who descended is the [same] one who also ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.* (Ephesians 4:8-10, EOB).¹⁹⁰

Barth states:

As God performs this work, espousing the cause of the creature, He engages in controversy with nothingness, and deals with it, as is fitting . . . He exercises the non-willing by which it can have existence, and His jealousy, wrath and judgment achieve their purpose and therefore their end, which is also the end and destruction of nothingness. It is God’s *opus proprium*, the work of His right hand, which alone renders pointless and superfluous His *opus alienum*, the work of His left. This penetration and victory of His free grace as the achievement of the separation already recognizable in creation, and therefore the destruction of chaos, is the meaning of the history of the relationship between God and His creature. He alone, His activity grounded in His election, can master nothingness and guide the course of history towards this victory. God alone can defend His honour, ensure His creature’s salvation, and maintain His own and His creature’s right in such a way that every assault is warded off and the assailant himself is removed. God alone can summon, empower and arm the creature to resist and even to conquer this adversary. This is what has taken place in Jesus Christ. But it has taken place in Him as the work of the creature only in the strength of the work of the Creator. The creature as such would be no match for nothingness and certainly unable to overcome it.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰This triumphal imagery of Christ “taking captivity captive” that is Hell Itself is taken by Paul from the tradition of Roman generals returning to Rome victorious and leading and parading Rome’s enemies in defeat through the streets. Here Christ in complete victory takes Hell [captivity] with its demons, and unrepentant human acolytes captive and parades them in triumph before God, his Holy Angels and the Saints of God.

¹⁹¹ Barth, p. 355.

CHAPTER NINE

WILLIAM STRINGFELLOW ON “WHAT IS EVIL?”

- (1) *Let every human being be in subjection to the higher authorities because there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God.*
- (2) *Therefore, whoever opposes the authority opposes the ordinance of God, and rebel's will receive judgment upon themselves.*
- (3) *Certainly, rulers are not a terror to good deeds, but to the evil [deed]! Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will have praise [from the authority],*
- (4) *because IT is for you a minister of God for good. But if you do what is evil, then be afraid, because IT does not bear the sword in vain; IT is a servant of God for wrath, an avenger to anyone who does evil.*
- (5) *Therefore, you need to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for the sake of conscience.*
- (6) *For this reason, you also pay taxes, because the authorities are ministers of God's service, always taking care of this purpose.*
- (7) *And so, give to everyone as you owe; taxes to whom taxes are due; revenues to whom revenues are due; respect to whom respect is due; honor to whom honor is due!*

Romans 13:1-7, EOB

Here we begin our exposition of William Stringfellow on his understanding of what is Evil based on his reading of Romans 13. However, before diving into his thoughts on this subject and his understanding of Romans 13 there are some preliminary statements and observation that must be made. As a Nu African Christian from my youth I had been brought up to revere the Bible, confessing Jesus as my Savior, revering God's church whose head is Christ Jesus, and believing in the absolute truth of God's Word. But I have to admit Romans 13, verses 1 through 4 has both astonished and offended me, so rarely read it is hardly ever taught or preached. It has always been akin (for me) to the Scripture the white slavers in the South used to keep their black slaves in line and in their place with the biblical statement in Ephesians 6:5 *"Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear and sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ."* (NIV). I was offended because both black history and my own black experience with white folk and their brutality and outrages directed toward us made it impossible to reconcile any biblical statement that would demand that we (in good conscience) obey and even revere such an oppressive and brutal authority. After my conversion to Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodoxy and becoming a member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (2013) nothing in my new faith and biblical understanding from the bridge of Ethiopian orthodoxy changed my attitude toward this Scripture. Yet through my continued orthodox biblical studies and my study of *powers theology* the light gradually began to dawn as to what God is saying in Romans 13. I had already described the *dark powers and principalities* that are spoken of in the Bible as the **IT** so for me the **IT** was a euphemism (i.e. short form) for what I understood the dark powers and principalities to be. So when I looked at Romans 13 again reading it this time in the Ethiopian Amharic Bible *verse one* jumped out at me giving me the final key to understanding this verse. **The Ethiopic or Ge'ez text** (liturgical language of the EOTC) reads:

፩ለኩሉ ነፍስ መኩንን ተኩነት እስመ ኢይሠየም መኩንን ዘእንበለ እምነበ
 እግዚአብሔርወእምከመ እምነበ እግዚአብሔር ውእቱ ኩሉ ብውሕ ሎቱ።
 ፪ወዘሰ እበየ ተኩንኖ ለመኩንን ትእዛዘ እግዚአብሔር አበየ።
 ወእለሰ አበየ ተኩንኖ ኩነኔ ያመጽኡ ለርእሶሙ።
 ፫ወመኳንንትሰ ኢኮነ ግሩማነ ለዘይገበር ሠናየ ዘእንበለ ለዘእኩይ ምግባሩ።
 ወእመሰ ትፈቅድ ኢትፍርሆሙ ለመኳንንት ግበር ሠናየ ወዓዲ እሙንቱ ያእኩቱከ።
 ፬ እስመ ላእካነ እግዚአብሔር እሙንቱ ከመ አንተ ታሠኒ ምግባሪከ ወእመሰ ፈቀድከ ኢትፍራህ ግበር
 ሠናየ።ወዘእኮ ለከንቱ አኩንንዎሙ መጥባሕተ እስመ ላእካነ እሙንቱ ከመ ይትበቀልዎ
 ለገባሬ እኪት።ወይእዜኒ በግብር ተኩነኩ።
 ፭ ወእኮ ዳእሙ ዘእኩይ ዓዲ ዘሠናይኒ ምግባሩ።
 ፮ ወበእንተዝ ታገቡ ሎሙ ጸባሕተ።እስመ ላእካነ እግዚአብሔር እሙንቱ ወለዝ ግብት ተሠይሙ።
 ፯ወለኩሉ በዘይረእዕ ግበሩ። ወለዘሂ ጸባሕት ጸብሑ ወለዘሂ ብነተ በንቱ።
 ወለዘሂ ፍርሃተ ፍርሁ። ወለዘሂ ክብረ እክብሩ።

ኅበ ሰብእ ሮሜ (መዕራፍ ፲፫ : ፩-፯)

English Translation Romans 13: 1-7 (Ge'ez Text)

- 1)Let all souls be subject to the ruling power since no ruler is ordained apart from God and since from God **IT** receives all authority.
- 2)But whoever disobeysthe authority of the ruler disobeys God's ordinances.And whoever disobeys **IT**(s) authority will bring judgment on their head.
- 3)But rulers are not a terror to those who practice goodapart from those who protect evil.But ifyou desire no fear of **IT**(s) judgment do good[then] **IT** will praise you.Because**IT** is a minister to you subject to their high office.And the ruler by no means is a terror to you who do good by keeping ordinances apart from those whose conduct is evil.And if [it] be necessary for rulers not to judge them [or] to compel [force] the good and where truth is **IT** will sing your praises.
- 4)Because **IT** is a servant of God just as your good conduct and if your desire not judgement do good. And that by no means does **IT**exercise power for nothingwearing the sword because they are servants also to punish you for doing evil. And**IT** now will exercize **IT**(s) authority.
- 5)And not only that which is a evil thingbuta good thing **IT** is a guardian.
- 6)And concerning this **IT** will return to them anguish. Because they are God's servantto this take unwaresthem in office (authority).
- 7) But for all them that manifest good. And also to whom taxes [owed] pay taxes and to whom tribute **IT**(s) tribute. And to whom be afraid (fear). And to whom honor pay **IT** honor.

Romans 13: 1-7, DSMV

The biblical texts from the EOB Greek text and the Ethiopic Ge'ez that we have presented so far on Romans 13:1-7 consistently speak about obeying the principalities and powers (i.e. authorities, rulers, and/or dominions [i.e. the **IT**, as in the Nu African plural collective for their human agents and acolytes, the **MAN**] as autonomous beings ordained by God for the purpose of advancing that which is good in society and punishing that which is evil, which are the reasons God is demanding our obedience to them (i.e. because they are ministers put in place of authority for our good). So as long as they are operating within the will and purpose for which God made them then to resist them for no good reason is resisting God Himself and destructive of His *Good Creation*. So what are these *principalities and powers*? It is clear from a close reading of these biblical passage Romans 13: 1-7

(EOB and Ethiopian *Ge'ez* texts) that **they** (and sometimes describes as “ministers,” “servants,” and/or “rulers”) are not mere human persons somehow graced with divine authority to rule over lesser men but fallen creatures themselves (e.g. police, judges, magistrates, political leaders, etc.) in service to these principalities and powers which can only be described as *autonomous institutional creatures* that operate independently and of their own purposes on God’s *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. In this work the whole complex of these spiritual creatures [**they**] are described as **IT** in the plural, like when Jesus asked the demon that possessed the maniac man **IT**(s) name (in the singular) **IT** answered with a plural name “*my name is Legion and we are many*” (Mark 5:9, EOB), which turned out to be “two thousand of them possessing and tormenting one man.” In our translation of the *Ge'ez* text of Romans 13: 1-7 (DSMV) the **IT** is plural and stands for “they”, “them”, “many”, “principalities and powers,” “dominions,” “powers”, “thrones”, and “rulers”, etc., with their “servants,” “ministers,” and/or “acolytes” that do their bidding presumably ordained by God as long as they operated according to the good will of purpose and do not become **dark** demanding not only **obedience** (grounded in law and Christian conscience) but **obeisance** [of them], when we are compelled by that same Christian conscience to worship *God alone*!

The biblical passages under consideration strongly imply that as long as these powers are operating according to God’s purposes for the good of society then they are due our obedience but when they are not then we can *Speak Truth to Power* and resist their demands for obedience and even worship. What or who are they then. As I have contended throughout this work they are now *dark principalities and powers* and are rightly called **IT** (plural) because they are doing *the ITs* commands being opposed to God’s purpose that justify their existence and calls for our obedience to *them*. However, because they are demanding that we worship them *alone* instead of the only Eternal God our Creator and Redeemer through Jesus Christ the Lord *they* have become *fallen dark powers* and thus acolytes of *the IT*. The Biblical record in Luke affirms that this is the overall strategy of the **IT** and *its dark powers and principalities*. In the second temptation of Jesus in the desert the Luke passage reads:

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; *for it has been given over to me*, and I give it to anyone I please. *If you, then, will worship me*, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ (Luke 4:5-8, NRSV, *my Italics*).

This idolatry is demanded of humans (the ones working directly for them, benefiting from them, and doing evil for them) in order to preserve and protect their own creaturely existence which feels threatened when challenged by mere mortals demanding accountability and/or transparency in carrying out the governing authority granted by God as indicated in Romans 13. We know this authority is not inherently theirs and is given to them by God because in the Luke text Satan affirms that his authority “*has been given over to [him]*” and that he in turn can “*give it to anyone*” he pleases on one condition that they fall down and worship him. How do we know that these texts are not talking about mere human persons serving these institutional creatures (who grant them protection, license to abuse, maim, threaten other lesser humans in return for various demonic pleasures)? The EOB text (i.e. The Eastern/Greek Orthodox New Testament) makes this clear and supports calling these dark powers and principalities **IT** as seen in the following verses carefully read:

Certainly, rulers are not a terror to good deeds, but to the evil [deed]! Do you desire to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will have praise [from the authority], because IT is for you a minister of God for good. But if you do what is evil, then be afraid, because IT does not bear the sword in vain; IT is a servant of God for wrath, an avenger to anyone who does evil. (Romans 13:3-4, EOB).

The EOB and Ge'ez biblical texts clearly names the principalities and powers, rulers, dominions, the IT and there makes it clear that it not talking about mere human beings or persons in authority but speaks of them as collective spiritual unseen creatures of God in God's service for the good of humanity and human society. Satan was in the Garden of God for the same purpose (to defend and protect Adam) but then he subverted God's purpose by deceiving Adam and Eve (i.e. **Ish** and **Isha** = the youthful "Wild-man" and "Wild-woman" who in their human infancy needed God's knowledge and wisdom to grow to higher levels of civilization; but attempted to acquire it illicitly through disobedience to the will of God by eating from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*).

Those translations of this text that use **he** or **him** have missed the idea that the whole passage is trying to convey. Some translations from the Amharic suffer from this mistranslation influenced by Western *Ferengi* (used by Ethiopians to denote *foreign, alien*, etc. coming from the word **Frank** to describe European travelers to the country, that is, their habits, ways, and modes of living) biblical interpretations (not taking the whole biblical pericope into consideration and other valid aspects of interpretation like observation and common sense). Fortunately, the Ge'ez texts has preserved the sense of the text that permits the translation of the passage to be **IT** rather than **HE** or **HIM**. On this score Nu Africans have missed the boat as well and do not understand that the translation of **HE/HIM** rather than **IT** makes our struggle to be against the agents and acolytes (e.g. the police, the "rent man", the "repo man", etc.) of the oppressive institutions that sent them and so our battle turns deadly because it becomes person to person (they against us, human against human) instead of us realizing that the dark principalities and powers that sent *them* (i.e. the **HE**) to do their bidding is the real enemy when they are operating outside the will of God, and say for instance killing us *under the color of law*.

The oppressive institutions that inculcate racist ideals and discriminatory practices, and suppressive measures to keep Nu Africans in their well defined places is not any different than the Slavocracy and Jim Crow and Zip Coon that sent various agents and acolytes (i.e. worshippers of these institutions) we called "He" or "The Man" or the Overseer that meet out *extra-legal* punishments and other outrages on behalf the principalities and powers that both sends them and protects them when they do wrong. From this bridge of understanding we know that it is the **IT** and not the **HE** that is our true enemy "*for our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*" (Ephesians 6:12, NRSV).

It's the *fallen institutional creature* that is oppressing us through their agents and acolytes so that Nu Africans have never needed **BLACK POWER** but **INSTITUTIONAL POWER** guided by divine principles and fighting on an institutional level where the real struggle should be waged, so that the Bible is true in saying in another translation that "*Truly, our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness and against the evil spiritual forces of the supernatural realms*" (Ephesians 6:12, EOB). Our struggle and who we are really fighting against should be clear as a bell based on the insights given to us by the Bible but

it is not and one wonders if it shall ever be clear. The only hope we muster here is from Isaiah 25:7-9 that says:

On this mountain he [God] will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.

And also hope from Revelation 20:3 that says:

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and locked and sealed over it over him, so that he would deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be let out for a little while. (Revelation 20:3, NRSV).

So, yes, there is hope that one day the shroud of death that covers over our understanding will be lifted by God and we will be able to see reality and truth as it is and get a reprieve from being deceived by Satan the primary acolyte and devotee of the IT and therefore the enemy of God and man. Until then we look through a glass darkly living within the fog of our own sin, evil and lack of faith in God, our Redeemer through Jesus Christ our Lord. One day we will be able to clearly understand who our true and most deadly enemy is. Yet even so we are not completely left without knowledge (and dying from a lack thereof) or lacking some wisdom that could lead us closer to the truth. Even by observation one can surmise that God was not asking us to obey mere mortals although basic respect is due to such as they rightly and faithfully try to carry out the will of the institutional powers that sent them. However, no such high divine prerogative of rulership or dominion over men to carry out God's purpose to advance and conserve His *Good Creation* has ever been given to one person and when such persons have deemed to seize such divine prerogative it has always turned out badly and tragic in one way or another for humankind. Just think about the seizure of power by such men as Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Mao Zedong, Hitler, Mussolini, or Shaka Zulu, etc. And no matter how admired or vilified they are; thousands upon thousands of humans have died under their regimes because they seized the divine prerogative into their own hands and for lack of wisdom, compassion and sheer right to do so they brought untold sorrow and misery upon humanity.

So by historical observation alone the above Scripture is not talking about obeying mere men even at their best but about *autonomous institutional creatures* (e.g. ideals, nations, etc.) and even more described by the Bible as *dark spiritual principalities in high places* trying to influence and drive humankind along God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* in ways and along paths with a promise of unlimited and unwarranted *demonic pleasures*. It is here we have to be careful in recognizing the divine prerogative of these institutional creatures to know that this prerogative is not absolute in that we worship God our Creator alone. Even though God appears to have given over the divine prerogative to such powers in a limited way (whether they are seen or unseen) they are all created being and as such just as fallen as any human persons or collective group of human persons and because of pride and other evils in their heart they have and will seize more of the divine prerogative than God has permitted and lead the world by tyranny.

When they do so they become *dark principalities and powers* who stand outside God's will and purpose and are by nature and character the outward expression of *what is Evil* and a guide to the source of *whence IT is!!!* The IT as I have dubbed the *dark principalities and powers* in this work and affirmed by the biblical texts of Romans 13 are no more deserving of *absolute obedience* than any other fallen human creature claiming such authority who have abandoned God's purpose for bringing about good order and moral foundations within society for the greater good of society and maintenance and advancement of God's *Good Creation*; especially when they demand that we fall down and worship them. At such times we must *Speak Truth to Power* and tell them like Our Lord Jesus Christ told Satan, when he offered Jesus a gate way to demonic pleasures if Jesus would "fall down and worship me" "Then Jesus said to him, Get *behind* me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall express adoration to the Lord your God, and to him only shall you offer divine service.' " (Matthew 4:8-10, EOB).

William Stringfellow: Father of Powers Theology

Understanding these aspects of powers theology from a biblical theological perspective are essential to understanding the nature of evil, that is, *what is evil and whence it is?* The early theological advocate of powers theology, who might be called the father of powers theology is the late William Stringfellow (1928-1985). Stringfellow by profession was a lawyer who through his legal work in fighting against the grand-domestication schemes of institutional powers on behalf of lesser human beings oppressed by them, came to understand the spiritual and creaturely nature of these powers and their need to both dominate and require worship and obedience by lesser human beings in order to ensure ITs survival and to have exclusive rights to enjoy the demonic pleasure of SEX, MONEY & POWER. Stringfellow was a prolific writer on this subject and as a popular theologian (with no formal training in this profession) and a Christian his confessional outlook and apologetic vocation on behalf of God's Kingdom is akin to that of C.S. Lewis. Infact he may be called the "American C. S. Lewis" with the same passion for truth even if his style of writing did not have the literary flare that C.S. Lewis invoke in his writing; but nonetheless William Stringfellow's clarity of thought is no less profound as that found in the works of C. S. Lewis. Nevertheless, on our current topic William Stringfellow affirms support in much that we already have said in respect to the *principalities and powers* being *autonomous creatures* made by God for His own purposes and our good and yet declaring at the same time they are *fallen autonomous creatures* who are seeking their own survival, access to demonic pleasures and to be worshipped by humans. In his book *Conscience & Obedience: The Politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in the Light of the Second Coming* (1977) he states:

The fallenness of the nations and powers in conjunctive with the fallenness of humanity, but is not dependent or derivative. The principalities are autonomous beings or realities in their own right, not simply projections of collective human life, and their demonic character as fallen powers is no mere consequence of human sin either personal or corporate So the Bible treats them, and so, I observe they are as common experience confronts them. It is misleading, hence, to speak of an institution or nation or political regime becoming demonic, as if its fallen character were somehow, contingent upon human action or omission which precipitates the corruption or decadence of a principality. Furthermore, such a view, which has had great vogue in moral theology in American Christendom, not only denies the creaturely status of the principalities and powers but also denies [that] the whole creation

originates in the Word of God. It denigrates God as Creator by exaggerating the potency and scope of human sin.¹⁹²

In his work *An Ethic for Christians & Other Aliens in a Strange Land* (1973) Stringfellow provides an astonishing analysis of three important aspects of these *fallen autonomous creatures* that take their character, being, purpose and orders from the IT that sets just outside the frontier of God's *Good Creation*. With IT's promises of various demonic pleasures (e.g. SEX, MONEY & POWER, etc.) the IT influences them to act and move in ways within and along God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* contrary to God's will and purpose for all men, and other sentient creatures and therefore deserving of His divine wrath. The four important aspects that Stringfellow lays out are (1) *the principalities as creatures*; (2) *the fallenness of the principalities*; (3) *an inverse dominion of the principalities*, and (4) *acolytes of the demonic powers*. With these four aspects explained (among other that we cannot touch on here) we can begin to understand the nature, character and purpose of the IT that *threatens God's Good Creation from the Frontiers of Darkness* by using human and spiritual surrogates, acolytes, and minstrel dancers to do IT's work within and along God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. Stringfellow states the following:

THE PRINCIPALITIES AS CREATURES

With these creatures, as with human beings, it is never quite possible to express either the whole personality or the multiple attributes and abilities of a principality in a name, much less that of the legion of principalities and powers. The biblical practice of invoking many names or of interchanging various names, when speaking of principalities, is a help in grasping the many-faceted character and versatility of these powers. After all, what is being described and designated is a form of life, a creatureliness, which is potent and mobile and diverse, not static or neat or simply defined by what it may now or then be called. So such names as are used for the principalities, either in biblical witness or in common talk, are necessarily suggestive, intuitive, emphatic. A recurrent stumbling block to comprehending the principalities exists, for many people, at just this point. Human beings are reluctant to acknowledge institutions—or any of the other principalities—as creatures having their own existence, personality, and mode of life. Yet the Bible consistently speaks of the principalities as creatures. For another instance, the law (itself a principality) contains a similar recognition when it deals with various attributes of corporation, including corporate personality or existence in perpetuity or separate liability (i.e., Rev. 13). The typical version of human reluctance to accord the principalities their due integrity as creatures is the illusion of human beings that they make or create and, hence, control institutions and that institutions are no more than groups of human beings duly organized The creaturely status of the principalities—on the contrary—comes not from men, but from God. If that leaves, still, a large mystery, it nevertheless emphasizes that all creatures are God's creatures, that the creaturehood of principalities is essentially similar to that of human beings and is no more the handiwork of men than human life is. And, moreover, an understanding of the life of principalities as a part of God's work of creation, and not man's doing, is the biblical view

¹⁹² William Stringfellow. *Conscience & Obedience: The Politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in the Light of the Second Coming*. (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1977), pp. 30-31.

confirmed empirically by the most widespread redundant and cumulative evidence that human beings do not control institutions or any other principalities.¹⁹³

THE FALLENNESS OF THE PRINCIPALITIES

The principalities are numbered among God's creature's yet they suffer the Fall as truly as human beings, as fully as the rest of Creation. It is not that there are no perfect or perfectible [*sic*] institutions (though there are none), but rather that all institutions exist, in time, in a moral state which is the equivalent of death or which has the meaning of death. Every principality in its fallenness exists in remarkable confusion as to its own origins, identity, and office. The fallen principalities falsely—and futilely—claim autonomy from God and dominion over human beings and the rest of creation, thus disrupting their own vocation. This is apparent in every principality, but it is especially manifest in great ideologies like Marxism or capitalism, or in rich and powerful nation or empires, as in the Babylon parable, which often are quite literal in their preemption of God by their demands for obeisance, service, and glorification from human beings (Rev. 13:1-6). The hostility of the fallen principalities and powers toward God and the profound confusion as to their own creatureliness which that rejection of God betrays issue in relentless aggression against all of life and, since the concern here is for ethics, especially aggression against human life in society. The principality, insinuating itself in the place of God, deceives humans into thinking and acting as if the moral worth or justification of human beings is defined and determined by commitment or surrender—literally, sacrifice—of human life to the survival interest, grandeur, and vanity of the principality.¹⁹⁴

AN INVERSE DOMINION OF THE PRINCIPALITIES

Pretending autonomy from God, these creatures are autonomous from human control. In reality they dominate human beings. Relying upon the biblical description, I have come to think of the relationship of the principalities and persons as if the Fall means that there has been not only a loss of dominion by human beings over the rest of Creation but, more precisely than that, an inversion or a reversal of dominion. So, now, those very realities of Creation—traditions, institutions, nations—over which humans are said in the Genesis Creation story to receive dominion and the very creatures which are called thus into the service and enhancement of human life in society exercise, in the era of the Fall, dominion over human beings (Gen. 1:26). The work of the demonic powers in the Fall is the undoing of Creation (Gen. 6:11-13). The gravest effort of the principalities is the capture of humans, which is to say, in idolatry of death, whatever external appearance or particular form that may assume. Dehumanization is one term of current jargon for the reversal of dominion between persons and principalities.¹⁹⁵

ACOLYTES OF THE DEMONIC POWERS

If there be knowing victims of the principalities, if there indeed be saints and prophets, there are many victims who do not realize it, and there are persons who are eager slaves to these

¹⁹³ William Stringfellow. *An Ethic for Christian & Other Aliens in a Strange Land*. (Waco, Texas: Word Books Publisher, 1973), pp. 79-80.

¹⁹⁴ Stringfellow. *An Ethic for Christians & Other Aliens in a Strange Land*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁹⁵ Stringfellow, p. 82.

idols. Often these acolytes of the demonic seem oblivious to how the principalities tyrannize and corrupt their humanness. In Revelation, the kings and merchants and traders seem startled and bewildered at Babylon's doom (Rev. 18:9-17). There are those who actually define their humanity as nonhuman or subhuman loyalty and diligence to the interest and appetites of the principalities. There are many who are dumb and complacent in their captivity by institutions, traditions, and similar powers. There are persons who have become automatons. There are humans who know of no alternative to an existence in vassalage to the principalities. There are people who are programed and propagandized, conditioned and conformed, intimidated and manipulated, fabricated and consigned to role-playing. There are human beings who are demonically possessed. There are spectacular or extreme examples of dehumanized obeisance to the demonic—such as the Emperor Domitian or, perhaps, King George III or Hitler or Stalin. But what may be of greater significance in the present American situation are more ordinary persons whose humanity is jeopardized or humiliated by the routines of technocracy—like assembly-line workers or salespeople or consumers or promoters or bureaucrats or suburbanites. The servility to ideological, racial, class, or institutional powers of victims such as these is so numerous and commonplace in mass society that it is seldom challenged, or, for that matter, much noticed. Beyond those who are rendered virtual robots are those called leaders. The unrelenting, manifold, versatile, ingenious aggressions of the principalities against human life in society, the victimization of human beings—sometimes brutally, sometimes subtly; sometimes meeting resistance, sometime with ready assent—by the demonic powers exposes a crucial aspect of the contemporary American social crisis. The American problem is not so simple that it can be attributed to a few—even many—evil men in high places, any more than it can be blamed on long-haired youth or on a handful of black revolutionaries. Besides, our men in high places are not exceptionally immoral; they are, on the contrary, quite ordinarily moral. In truth, the conspicuous moral fact about our generals, our industrialists, our scientists, our commercial and political leaders is that they are the most obvious and pathetic prisoners in American society. There is unleashed among the principalities in this society a ruthless, self-proliferating, all-consuming institutional process which assaults, dispirits, defeats, and destroys human life even among, and *primarily* among, those persons in positions of institutional leadership. They are left with titles but without effectual authority; with the trappings of power, but without control over the institutions they head; in nominal command, but bereft of dominion. These same principalities, as has been mentioned, threaten and defy and enslave human beings of other status in diverse ways, but the most poignant victim of the demonic in America today is the so-called leader. It is not surprising, thus, to find—in addition to the ranks of those whose conformity to and idolatry of the principalities means that they are automatons or puppets—some person, reputed leaders attended by the trappings of high office, who are enthralled by their own enslavement and consider themselves rewarded for it, and who conceived of their own dehumanization as justification or moral superiority.¹⁹⁶

This whole idolatrous scheme of the *dark principalities and powers* and *ITs* self-serving purpose is briefly summarized by Stringfellow in his book *Free in Obedience* (1964). Stringfellow developing his thought along these lines earlier in a section called “Principalities as Institutions” states:

The institutional principalities also make claims upon men for idolatrous commitment in that the moral principle which governs any institution—a great corporation, a government agency,

¹⁹⁶ Stringfellow, pp. 87-89.

an ecclesiastical organization, a union, utility, or university---is its own survival. Everything else must finally be sacrificed to the cause of preserving the institution, and it is demanded of everyone who lives within its sphere of influence---officers, executives, employees, members, customers, and students---that they commit themselves to the service of that end, the survival of the institution. This relentless demand of the institutional power is often presented in benign forms to a person under the guise that the bondage to the institution benefits the person in some way, but that does not make the demand any less dehumanizing. . . . In the end, the claim for service which an institution makes upon a man is an invitation to surrender his life in order that the institution be preserved and prosper. It is an invitation to bondage.¹⁹⁷

Nu African Christians who understand the cosmic spiritual struggle we are engaged for freedom and emancipation from all kinds of bondage especially that engaged in by institutional creatures influenced by the dark principalities and powers in the spiritual realms in the United States stand indebted to the work of William Stringfellow. It is not that black scholars and writers had no idea that the enemy of God and man are institutions of oppression (even though they hardly thought of them as “creatures”) and so have created and sustained ideologies in support of these, such a Jim Crow segregation and Zip Coon urban ghettoization and other forms of systematic racial policies. One such black scholar comes to mind is the work of Don Lee (aka Haki Madhubuti) in his book *From Plan to Planet* (1973) where he makes clear that the black struggle for freedom from oppression must be waged at the institutional level of struggle and that black people themselves must counter these institutions built by Euro-Americans with what he calls *life-giving, life-saving institutions* in order to counter the *institutions of death* that have more or less defined our existence since we were captured and forced to come to these shores. Haki Madhubuti (Don Lee) begins his book with this statement that shows the paramount institutional organization and character of American life that *seems to have a life of its own* and its meant to produce goods and services and solve problems that sustain and effect that life made in their own image and mainly for the benefit of their *kith and kin*, and as such concluding that Nu Africans need to counter these institutional powers with their own institutions giving them the institutional power to organize their own thoughts and actions in their own image and for their own posterity and *kith and kin*:

THERE ARE INSTITUTIONS IN THIS COUNTRY THAT DO nothing but create, study and solve problems. It doesn't matter what the problem is. These institutions tackle everything from “the necessity of nuclear warfare in the 21st century” to “the urbanization of the rural Negro” or better yet “the containment of the Negro in urban centers.” These institutions exist at Harvard, M.I.T., the University of Michigan, U.C.L.A., etc. There are also “independent” branches of these institutions such as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Hudson Institute, the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions and the all-powerful [sic] RAND Corporation, notoriously known for producing “The Pentagon Papers.” These study groups are generally referred to as “think tanks” and work in conjunction with and in many cases exclusively for the federal government. For example, the Asian Studies Department at the University of Michigan and U.C.L.A., were of critical importance in the briefing of Nixon and his army of coat tails before they ventured into China. These institutions in places like the “Situation Room” at RAND have fought simulated wars for the next fifty years with a projected eye on how to come out on top (they’ve rewritten Sun Tzu’ *The Art of War* and people like Herman Kahn are the new theoreticians---see *On Thermonuclear War* and *Thinking About*

¹⁹⁷ William Stringfellow. *Free in Obedience*. (New York: The Seabury Press, 1967), pp. 55-57.

the Unthinkable. We tell you this because it seems to us that two qualities in our struggle are absolutely needed: 1) a new sophistication of struggle and 2) a new automatic association (comradeship) among Afrikan people This is why we call for a new sophistication in our struggle based on all the available knowledge of modern struggle and warfare that we can get our hands on. This is to say that, with a new sophistication, we only call the plays but understand the game we are playing In our new wisdom it is fundamental that we begin to institutionalize our thoughts and actions and we need institutions for that.¹⁹⁸

Haki Madhubuti goes on to state the reasons why Europeans and Euro-Americans are so successful is their ability and aim to build and sustain *life-giving, life-saving* institutions for their benefit and for the benefit of their posterity often to the detriment of other groups and peoples if that become necessary. He states:

People occupy space. Whether you control the space you occupy depends in part on 1) consciousness, 2) commitment, 3) action, and in some cases, *geography*. Some of the main reasons the European countries are able to function so well are: their ability to communicate with each other; their ability to define their problem and organize around it; their ability to produce essential goods and services for their people (at the expense of other people), and their ability to distribute such goods and services while stabilizing their culture and society by building life-giving and life-saving institutions such as schools, hospitals, places of worship, etc., which are based on [a] common value system that instills in their people European *identity, purpose* and *direction*. And this European value system functions in this world because of 1) *consciousness*, 2) *commitment*, and 3) *actions*.¹⁹⁹

Madhubuti essentially holds that the Nu African People need to do the same, that is, creat African *life-giving, life-saving* institutions of power that will develop and sustain African minds. Without these kinds of institutions the Nu African cannot sustain himself, his family, his community, nor guarantee the same life to his posterity and *kith and kin*. He states:

African institutions are necessary so as to help deliver Afrikan man into a higher state of peoplehood into a higher state of completeness. Afrikan institutions are not to misuse the world but to complement its positive aspects. African institutions are to help in the completion of the world in its purest form by instilling in our people identity, purpose and direction. If we see value in this we see value in Afrika and the institutions of Afrika.²⁰⁰

No European can create an African mind. Only an African can do that. Yet, Africans cannot be created out of a vacuum. We need structure. Before you can institutionalize *thoughts* and *actions*, you need institutions and as we say at IPE institutions are built around a plan of action and we need to act in concert in a working plan in order to take the planet. You cannot re-order one mind without a plan; you cannot take a block without a plan; you cannot re-shape a school system without a plan; and to nationalize, organize, and mobilize a people you need---a plan. You need institutions that are based upon sound and practical reality, based upon a sound ideology.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Don L. Lee, *From Plan to Planet: Life-Studies: The Need for Afrikan Minds and Institutions*. (Detroit, Michigan: Broadside Press, 1973), pp. 21-23.

¹⁹⁹ Don Lee, *From Plan to Planet*, p. 44.

²⁰⁰ Don Lee, *From Plan to Planet*, p. 42.

²⁰¹ *From Plan to Planet*, p. 45.

Madhubuti explains what he means by “Afrikan Institutions” and he intuitively seems to recognize that African institutions as well as any institution of power can “misuse the world” and abandon the lofty goals for which they are founded and instead of promoting “it’s positive aspects” and so begin to demand that IT[self] be obeyed and worshipped. We need look no further than the lofty claims of the *United States Constitution* and the realities of slavery during and after the very time it was being written; or the lofty heights of civilization from which Germany fell, that is, from being the center of the so-called Holy Roman Empire; the home of the Protestant Reformation to becoming the Nazi Third Reich, the first two being the Holy Roman Empire (800-1806), the German Empire (1871-1918) down to the Third Reich, the shortest and most terrible of all in terms of human destruction and demonic human dehumanization. Madhubuti therefore cautions Nu Africans that what we are building are *life-giving* and *life-saving* institutions and not *institutions of death* that seek absolute obedience ostensibly for ITs own survival irrespective of the destruction of rights and needs of others.

When we begin to re-order life in our image for our future, when we stop acting dead and take control of the vital *life-giving* and *life-saving* institutions in our community, then and only then will we be taken seriously by our brothers and the world-runners.²⁰²

The problem is that this lofty project can be lost because of necessity that these institutions must be *made in our own image* (instead of the image of God) in order for it to survive and sustain itself. Sustaining IT(self) by demanding not only legitimate obedience but unwarranted *obeisance* that is *absolute*. It seems that mankind does falls into these errors even when they attempt to build institutions (they say and/or believe) in the *image of God*. Examples of this in the world are not hard to find. Take for example the now defunct *Caliphate* promulgated by ISIS that brought so much death and human misery in its wake. Even the unwarranted destruction of ancient monuments showed their aim was to replace old (and even dead ideologies) that created these with their own ideas and the massive Islamic institution to advance the ideological image of the ideal Islamic State they were trying to bring back to life. They are not the only ones to be condemned for such accesses, because such thinking and mood has swept through the United States as well with the demand that old Confederate statues either be taken down or destroyed (irrationally trying to white out or black out history) because these images do not represent ideals, images and sentiments currently held. It seems that the most ludicrous scene that one can come upon is a young adult kicking the head of a downed statue of a long dead Confederate general as if they are kicking the person himself, instead of leaving the statue alone and going into the classroom to learn how American history could produce such a person and what dark principalities and powers lay behind an entire culture that could justify and go to war to protect a life (slaveocracy) based on human slavery. But such is the irrational mood that we condemn others for but do not see in ourselves.

A good reading of the *Book of Revelation* will demonstrate how the dark principalities and powers used surrogate images to advance worship of themselves and how human persons are fooled (i.e. deceived) into such worship as we marvel that the awesome images that are just that and are not *really real* but merely represent ideological notions sustained and advanced by *fallen institutional creatures*. So again we emphasize that it is not that Nu Africans did not have some understanding of

²⁰² Don Lee. *From Plan to Planet*, p. 46.

the institutional nature and character of the demonic principalities and powers that sought to continue our oppression and exploitation but we failed to see dark spiritual forces within them that moved them in the direction to promote and put in place policies that would achieve their goals; including their need to receive demonic pleasure in seeing it done without much of a struggle from us. How this notion escaped us is beyond me, because Africans and Nu African have always understood and knew that there are *more living sentient actors in God's universe than just humans*. Nevertheless, we have fooled ourselves by concentrating our energies on pointing out the racism and outrages of individual agents and acolytes of the institutions that oppress us rather than the institutions themselves and so begin to see that these institutions are the advance armies of the dark principalities and powers that spawn them. We have (until late) spent most of our time directing our anger and energies toward the horrid acts and outrages of their agents and acolytes whom they gave as much license and protection as possible without having to admit that is just what these institutional agents and acolytes were sent out to do.

What William Stringfellow did (since he was well aware of the black struggle and at some level involved in actions on behalf of the community as a lawyer) was to demonstrate that the *fallen institutional creatures* ordained by God were in fact in violation of this divine mandate by seizing the *divine prerogative* for themselves demanding both obedience and obeisance (the latter of which was the prerogative of God alone. If you don't do either of these things you are likely to be subject to persecution of some sort and even the Word of God you profess will be used against you to give legitimacy to their rationale for persecuting you and as Jesus prophesied in John 16:1-2 that "*I have told you these things, so that you would not be made to stumble. They will expel you from the synagogues! Yes, the time is coming when whoever kills you will think that he is offering [divine] service to God!*" (EOB). This actually became in part a fulfillment for William Stringfellow explaining how he came to write his book *Conscience & Obedience* (1977). In his preface to this book (signed on *Epiphany, 1976*) he notes the following remarkable occurrence by *agent provocateurs* (i.e. the FBI in this instance) brought about by his public opposition to the Viet Nam War (1961-1975) and other policies leading to the death of millions in Southeast Asia:

Furthermore, one must keep in mind that the ruling authorities, as well as biblical people, are active in trying to determine these issues. I have mentioned earlier that I became persuaded to do this book while engaged in writing *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*. That was no conclusion abstractly reached. It was mainly occasioned by the actual political situation in which *An Ethic* was written. On the very day that Daniel Berrigan, S.J. [i.e. American Jesuit priest (b.1921-dec'd2016), anti-war activist, Christian pacifist, protester against the Vietnam War, my insertion], then a political fugitive because of his resistance to the war in Southeast Asia and his resistance to the war regime, was seized at the home of Anthony Towne and myself on Block Island by the federal police, I was typing the manuscript of that book. Subsequent to Berrigan's capture, Towne and I were subject to harassment, official defamation and surveillance by the authorities, including the remarkable incident in which a government agent, once again intruding upon my work on *An Ethic*, sought to interrogate me about theology and politics. He began the interview this way: "Dr. Stringfellow, you're a theologian." (I thought his intonation faintly sarcastic.) "Doesn't the Bible say you must obey the Emperor?" [a reference to Romans 13:1-7, my insertion] His query startled me, I admit, not so much for its thrust as for the evidence it gave of how minutely the ruling powers scrutinize citizens. I could not concede the simplistic premise about the Bible which his question assumed, and I rebuked him about this, taking perhaps forty-five minutes to do so. During

the discourse, he wilted visibly, and, when I paused momentarily, he abruptly excused himself and departed. This was some disappointment to me, for I had only just begun to respond to the multifarious implication of the issue he had raised. The episode contributed to my conviction to write this book.²⁰³

We have to be forever grateful then to Stringfellow for his struggle to survive these persecutions by *fallen institutional* creatures and their agents and acolytes by persevering and perennially pointing out in his works that human institutions in some way or another in some degree or another actually are actually *fallen institutional creatures* under the influence and control of *dark principalities and powers* in heavenly realms so that when Nu Africans or any Christian are confronted with their *agent provocateurs* we don't respond in an expected automatic way to their provocation(s) that often lead to either our death and/or arrest followed by incarceration say *for life for stealing an ice cream cone!* Or the more recent appeal case to the Louisiana State Supreme Court (2020) that upheld the conviction and life sentence (1997) of Nu African Fair Wayne Bryant, age 63 for *allegedly* stealing hedge clippers, that is, "one count or attempted simple burglary." His subsequent parole has done little to restore him his human rights and dignity as a human person; or exonerate him of this petty "attempted" crime. As Alanah Odoms, Executive Director of the ACLU of Louisiana states: "While nothing can make up for the years Mr. Bryant lost to this extreme and unjust sentence [23 years] today's decision by the parole board is long overdue victory for Mr. Bryant, his family, and the cause of equal justice for all." Nu Africans properly understand that behind the unjust conviction and sentence in 1997 and the State Supreme Court denial of his appeal to free him and clear his name lies a dark homicidal spiritual power. Now with parole Mr. Bryant must walk around with *Damocles' Sword* dangling menacingly over his head less he make some mistake and is returned to prison to finish his life sentence.

This is where both Setian human persons and Setian institutions of law become acolytes and devotees of Evil to carry out *ITs* will, which is the homicidal destruction of all divine life that is within all living creatures made in the image of God. And so with this new understanding of the dark spiritual power behind them when we see these agents and acolytes coming we know potential destruction is in their path. It calls for a lot of calm and wisdom to look beyond them to the darkness within them. On Stringfellow's shoulder other professional powers theologians stand, including the work of Walter Wink that follows this chapter. However, this new understanding is what Stringfellow calls out in respect to interpretations of Romans 13:1-4 that I said at the outset of this chapter that offends me, and perhaps many others. I am less offended now after my own grammatical exegesis and analysis of both the Greek and Ge'ez text above along with Stringfellow's own analysis that is congruent with the conclusions of my brief grammatical analysis of these two ancient biblical texts. Stringfellow wants to show how such passages have been misinterpreted to give biblical support to the institutional dominion we suffer (where we note that the Devil in the temptations of Jesus was not above quoting Scripture twisting its truth in order to achieve its objective of obeisance). Stringfellow writes in his book *Conscience & Obedience: The Politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in Light of the Second Coming* (1977):

What I write, here, I realize departs from that which has come to be taught as traditional exegesis of ROMANS, where ROMANS has been treated in a void and, specifically where

²⁰³ William Stringfellow. *Conscience & Obedience: The Politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in Light of the Second Coming*. (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1977), pp. 15-16.

Romans 13:1-7 has been examined separated Romans has been interpreted in conformance with supposed necessities to sanction incumbent political regimes, whether of the fourth century or of the twentieth Still, if my comprehension of Romans in relation to Revelation varies from more prevalent or customary interpretations of either passage, I do not conceive that to be a matter of blunt opposition but of distinctions which I count significant as between my own understanding and the traditional view. (p. 37). Prominent among such distinctions is the way in which the vocational issue for political authority is narrowed—sometimes to the degree that it amounts to omission—to the problem of political legitimacy. By that rubric, the obedience of Christians to political authority is conditioned upon its so-called legitimacy. But when is political authority legitimate? When does a nation have a status which may be affirmed as instituted or ordained of God? Or when does a state have a function which can be considered as servanthood to God? And when are those who rule—emperors or presidents—parliaments or police—due honor alone because of fear, because they wield the sword, because they command means to intimidate, dominate and coerce human beings, but as a matter of conscience? ²⁰⁴

Stringfellow then goes into his analysis of both the false and true meaning of Romans 13:1-7 and the ambiguity surrounding what commentaries have suggested it means in respect to *just government* that Christians are biblically commanded to obey but never bow in obeisance which is always beyond the pale whether the government is deemed just or not just. Such a demand by government, persons, or any other authority [even angelic] however presented and in whatever form is idolatry and therefore demonic and does not come from any divine source less alone the Bible. St. Paul was adamant that such perverted thinking (contrary to the true Gospel of Christ that affirms that we worship God alone) was accursed and apart from the Gospel of Christ, and he says:

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in grace of Christ in order to embrace a different "Good News" --- and there is no other "Good News!" yet, there are some who disturb you and want to pervert the Good News of Christ. Now even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you any "Good News" that is not what we preached to you, let such a one be accursed! We have said it before and now I say again: If anyone preaches to you any other "Good News" than what you received, let such a one be accursed!" (Galatians 1:6-9, EOB)

Stringfellow saw that the interpretation of Romans 13 especially in conjunction of his current analysis of Revelation 13 by government agents and others (including some in the church) was misguided in favor of justifying government actions that were clearly oppressive and in his view demonic; and as such they were preaching *another* "Gospel" than the *once and for all given to the saints*. So he states the following:

The construction of obedience to political authority in terms of legitimacy is familiar enough in the American context in the origins of the nation and up to the present time, and there is some support for it in the biblical texts at hand. The Romans passage furnishes a basis in its reference to political authority as a "terror" to "bad" conduct, a statement which would be nonsensical if it did not apply to the conduct of political authority as such. If Romans may be said to designate legitimate political authority, Revelation may be said to describe illegitimate

²⁰⁴ William Stringfellow. *Conscience & Obedience: The Politics of Roman 13 and Revelation 13 in Light of the Second Coming*. (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1977), p. 38.

political authority. Commentators who must be respected as venerable and influential have concentrated upon how legitimacy can be determined so as to set forth the parameters of political obedience for Christians. Grotius, whose view coincides with the simple association of Romans with legitimacy and Revelation with illegitimacy, writes: "The Apostle throughout refers only to power justly exercised. He does not enter into the subject of tyranny and oppression." The classical statement concerning obedience as contingent upon the legitimacy of political authority comes from John Calvin's *Commentary on Romans*. This was a work completed, it may be significant to notice, before Calvin himself became a magistrate in Geneva. Of Romans 13:1-7, he said:

Understand further, that powers are from God . . . because he has appointed them for the legitimate and just government of the world. For though tyrannies and unjust exercise of power, as they are full of disorder, are not an ordained government; yet the right of government is ordained by God for the wellbeing of mankind. As it is lawful to repel wars and to seek remedies for other evils, hence the Apostle commands us willingly and cheerfully to respect and honour the right and authority of magistrates, as useful to men . . .

To require obedience to political authority where there is legitimacy, and to relate legitimacy to just government seems straightforward enough, until it is realized that the ambiguity associated with determining legitimacy has been transmitted to the word "just".²⁰⁵

Stringfellow is rightfully cautious by citing the ambiguity of determining the legitimacy of government by admitting or implying Romans 13:1-7 is referring to just government. The ambiguity arises because this exegesis brings up the question then "*What is just government?*" Once asked then it becomes obvious that there are as many answers to this question as there are those commentators supplying a definition of what it is. Everyone is not going to agree what just government is and when each definition is applied to Romans 13:1-7 then a different biblical interpretation of what it means to say is more than possible. Such an ambiguity becomes even more of a problem if one proposes as Stringfellow does that institutions like government are *fallen living creatures* moved and influenced by *dark principalities and powers in heavenly realms* with a life of their own from the humans that are in service to them. If this position is true then how are human standards of just government (not to mention moral ethics) applied to the life and actions of *fallen institutional creatures* that are operating on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* within God's *Good Creation* by a different set of cosmic rules that human ethics, law, and policy cannot control or address. Stringfellow clarifies the problem in the following statement:

Inasmuch as ambiguity attends the identification of political authority so that the term carries many meanings and allusions which may, or may not, be able to be elucidated in context historically or linguistically or otherwise, that should caution both politicians and preachers against simplistic readings of the biblical passages pertinent to questions of conscience and obedience in the political realm. The propriety of such caution is underscored in an edifying monograph which Clinton D. Morrison published in 1960 on Romans 13:1-7 under the title *The Powers That Be*. The paper deals with the relation of "earthly rulers" and "demonic powers" and it establishes that the textual references to political authority in Romans 13:1-7 imply not one or the other of these, but *both* in association. Morrison shows that this multiple

²⁰⁵ Wm. Stringfellow. *Conscience & Obedience*, pp. 39-40.

or ambiguous meaning for political authority in Romans is verified, in part, in the time the text was composed in both Jewish cosmology as well as in pagan or nonbiblical cosmologies then prevalent. As a matter of popular understanding, allusion in Romans to political authority would not solely indicate rulers or regimes but also be taken to refer to the demons or elemental spirits of the universe or angelic powers associated with the nations and, in turn, with governments and rulers. Morrison emphasizes the belief in a realm in creation of political beings was not distinctive to Christians, at the time of Romans, but, in one version or another, was generally shared. That magnifies, it seems to me, its significance for understanding Romans 13:1-7. In any case, I believe, biblically people must retain today essentially the same comprehension—even though other, as if more sophisticated, may think it peculiar.²⁰⁶

It is here that we leave off further analysis and comment on the thought and work of Stringfellow. His chief contribution is awareness that *all* human institutions are in fact *fallen institutional creatures* who behind them are likely even darker principalities and powers guiding them and influencing in grand-domestication schemes of human domination and demanding worship and obeisance *or else*. The admonition in Romans 13:1-7 to obey these *fallen all to human institutional authorities* prone like we all are to sin and rebellion against God begs the question as to whether it can be shown in human history an example of one just government by which humans are bound by conscience to obey without reserve. But according to Stringfellow this is not the best read of Romans 13:1-7. The best read to recognize that these human institutions are fallen and that for them *just government* is merely an ideal to reach. No standard of justice that we are they set up can ever be achieved by human government. Knowing this we nevertheless are to accord them respect until they have step beyond their divine mandate from God to rule justly because as ancient Egyptian religious texts say “God hates oppression.” When this happens, we are duty bound by God to call them out and *Speak Truth to Power* no matter the consequences. We must take this view and recognize with Paul in Romans 3 the following understanding:

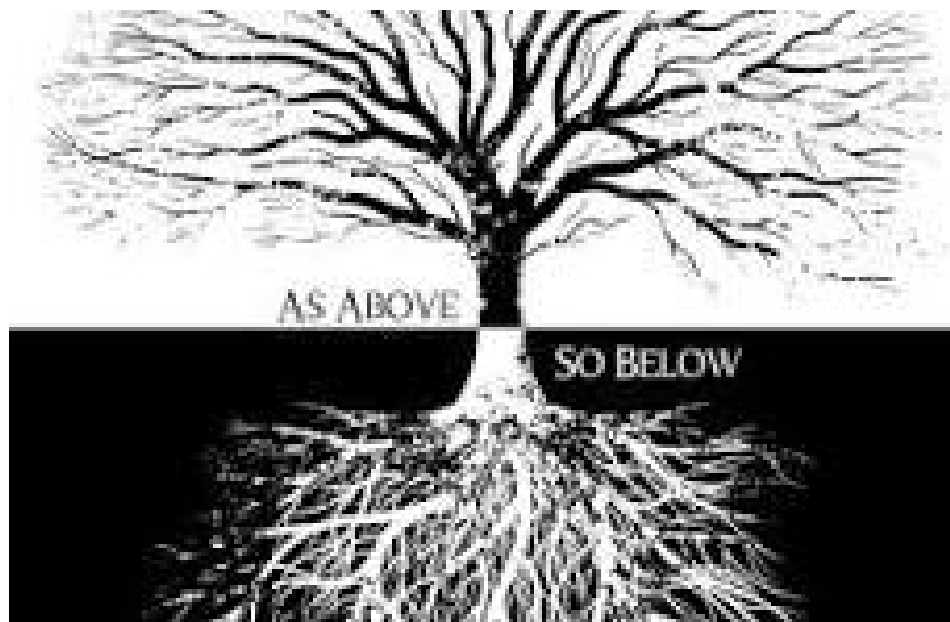
What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all; For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, as it is written:

There is no one who is righteous not even one; there is no one who has understanding, there is no one who seeks God. All have turned aside, together they have become worthless; there is no one who shows kindness, there is not even one. . . . Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery are in their paths, and the way of peace they have not known. There is not fear of God before their eyes.(Romans 3:9-18, NSRV).

Does Romans 13 apply to both human and divine powers in heavenly places? The Egyptian notion of “As Above, So Below” may hold the answer. If this passage does apply to these unseen powers shouldn’t we know who they are, their function, character and nature? How can we fight them or hold them to book if we do not understand who they are and understand the primary game they are playing to influence us to worship them? In surveying Stringfellow one wondered just who are these dark powers and principalities? Stringfellow very likely knew their names but rarely discussed their character based on these names and how they are ordered by rank in their war against God’s

²⁰⁶ Wm. Stringfellow. *Conscience & Obedience: The Politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in Light of the Second Coming*, p. 47.

Good Creations, especially humankind. In the next chapter we will try and provide an answer using the work of Dr. Walter Wink, who names the *Powers* and demonstrate the role they play on *God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*.



CHAPTER TEN

WALTER WINK ON "WHAT IS EVIL?"

Walter Wink gives us the *names of the Powers* and their meaning to help us understand the nature and character of these dark principalities in heavenly places. In this way Wink will help us objectify the spiritual enemies of God and man and show us more clearly how they operate within God's *Good Creation* and on God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. We begin this chapter discussion with a warning given in Revelation 12 to let us know definitely that there are unseen dark principalities and powers actively involved in warfare against God and mankind on Earth. This *real* war began in Heaven (with the Devil and his angels, whose original name as an Arch-Angel of God was **Satan-El**) and now this war continues on in the *Earth of Time*, where we (whether we like it or not) are God's co-belligerents fighting against Satan (that ancient Dragon) and his demonic acolytes and devotees (both spiritual and human) on *God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*.

*And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, **who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world** --- he was thrown down to earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades have been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God . . . Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea for the devil has come down with great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" (Revelation 12: 7-12, NSRV)*

Dr. Walter Wink, Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary, New York, is author of the trilogy on the fallen principalities and powers of evil, *Naming the Powers* (1984), *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Powers That Determine Human Existence* (1986), and *Engaging the Powers* (1992). According to Wink these actors have names by which we can understand who and what we are truly struggling against. Dr. Wink does not locate the operational boundaries of evil, represented by the fallen principalities outside the created order. Rather, Wink looks at operational levels of evil, understood as fallen principalities and powers, within the interiority of the human person and the human institutional order of things. After all, this is where evil does its work of alienation, devastation, separation, blight, death, and where *bad things happen to good people* with little or no apparent reason or justification. For Wink, evil, represented by the fallen powers, is the negative inner spirituality to which all material reality is subject. It is within the interiority of the human person, human institutions and the material cosmos that the battle is fought against evil, and not on its frontiers, although we beg to differ. We can say then that Wink focus' on how Evil operates **after the IT** enters onto *God's superhighway of human unified experience*. The nature of Evil then can be understood by observing how it operates on the *Superhighway of God*. Evil already occupies the earth as a colony of Heaven, if I may, under the control and influence of the dark principalities and powers. For Wink it does not matter its source or how **IT** got here. **IT** is here and **IT** is *really real* within the **life-world** and **lived-experience** of the human person, human institutions and society. Whatever evil is

or wherever evil is located, Wink is quite certain (based on his reading of the Old and New Testament and other extra-biblical sources) that **ITs** tentacles are inextricably intertwined with human and cosmic existence. Evil is a reality that appears to have movement and therefore purpose. And if movement and purpose then **IT** is *really real* having *rational mind and being*. For Wink this would mean that they are like St. Thomas Aquinas' *Intellectual Beings*. This movement and purpose can only be determined and the rational/irrational purpose for such by looking at the activities of the **ITs** acolytes, surrogates, and or devotees of *Evil*, such as, the activities of the demons, Satan, and the principalities and powers, as seen in the Biblical texts, especially that of the New Testament.

Dr. Wink relates the question of *what is evil* to **God's providential care of His creation** that is grounded in God's moral nature of love, rather than God's omnipotence and sovereignty as Barth would have it. Wink points out Jesus' statement in Matthew 5:45, that God makes "the sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous."²⁰⁷ Wink's horizon of thought on the all-inclusive love of God in respect to *Evil* will lead him to say that the fallen principalities and powers, like the fallen human person, *can be redeemed*. Wink's view is modification of theological universalism that says all created being (whether good or evil) *will be saved*, so that under God's providential care and because He loves all living being (whether good or evil) *can be saved* without the determination that all living being *will be saved*. Biblically Wink is on good ground here because one New Testament scripture says: "*The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*" (2 Peter 3:9, ESV).

This is the logical conclusion of Wink's theology if it is maintained (contra Barth) that *Evil* is part of the created order of things and if God's providence and love is all-inclusive, even extended toward *Evil's* acolytes, devotees, principalities and powers. In favor of Wink's view we must say that this view was held by some ancient writers like the author of the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch* written in Egypt around the beginning of the Christian era. In this work Enoch is led by heavenly beings from the second heavens to the tenth heavens. Both on the second heavens and fifth heavens Enoch was amazed to see Fallen Angels of God being punished for their trespasses and rebellion against them led by their Prince Satan-El. On the second heaven these Fallen Angels that were being tortured implored Enoch to pray for them and on the fifth heaven Enoch implores these Fallen Angels to give God the praise in song, repent and ask plaintively for God's forgiveness. It is apparent from these two passages that the writer believed that forgiveness (before the final judgment) was still possible for even Fallen Angels no matter what that had done. These *extra-biblical* passages follow because it is likely that the readers here will never see them anywhere else:

And those men took me and led me up on *the second heaven*, and showed me darkness, greater than earthly darkness, and there I saw prisoners hanging, watched, awaiting the great and boundless judgment, and these angels were dark-looking, and incessantly making weeping through all hours. And I said to the men who were with me: 'Wherefore are these incessantly tortured?' they answered me: "These are God's apostates, who obeyed not God's commands, but took counsel with their own will, and turned away with their prince, who also is fastened on the fifth heaven." And I felt great pity for them, and they saluted me, and said to me: 'Man of God, pray for us to the Lord'; and I answered to them 'Who am I, a mortal man, that I

²⁰⁷ Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: A Theology for a New Millennium* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), p. 162.

should pray for angels? Who knoweth whither I go, or what will befall me? Or who will pray for me?²⁰⁸

The men took me on to *the fifth heaven* and placed me, and there I saw many and countless soldiers, called Grigori, of human appearance, and their size *was* greater than that of great giants and their faces withered, and the silence of their mouths perpetual, and there was no service on the fifth heaven, and I said to the men who were with me: 'Wherefore are these very withered and their faces melancholy, and their mouths silent, and *wherefore* is there no service on this heaven?' And they said to me: 'These are the Grigori, who with their prince Satanail [Satan-El] rejected the Lord of light, and after them are those who are held in great darkness on the second heaven, and three of them went down on to earth from the Lord's throne, to the place Ermon, and broke through their vows on the shoulders of the hill Ermon and saw the daughters of men how good they are, and took to themselves wives, and befouled the earth with their deeds, who in all times of their age made lawlessness and mixing, and giants are born and marvelous big men and great enmity. And therefore God judged them with great judgment, and they weep for their brethren and they will be punished on the Lord's great day.' And I said to the Grigori: 'I saw your brethren and their works, and their great torments, and I prayed for them, but the Lord has condemned them *to be* under earth till heaven and earth shall end forever.' And I said: 'Wherefore do you wait, brethren, and do not serve before the Lord's face, and have not put your services before the Lord's face, lest you anger your Lord utterly?' And they listened to my admonition, and spoke to the four ranks in heaven, and lo! as I stood with those two men four trumpets trumpeted together with great voice, and the Grigori broke into song with one voice, and their voice went up before the Lord pitifully and affectingly.²⁰⁹

Here we need to take a closer look at theological universalism because Wink's theology butts up against it and also because even his lesser claim for classical theology is sensational and for some outrages! His view opens up the possibility that a repentant Satan-El could ultimately be forgiven by an *All Loving God*. Origen (185-254 AD), an Alexandrian theologian, proposed a scheme of salvation in which even the Devil incarnate could be saved. There was no limit on God's saving power for any sentient living being, even those devoted to *Evil*. Joseph F. Kelly says in *The Problem of Evil* that:

Origen's more radical idea about the devil was a belief in his salvation. . . . He cogently argued that God had created all beings to be good, and just because they sinned does not mean that he lost interest in them. God would try to win them back, and he was succeeding. . . . Why could the devil not see the error of his ways and be won over to God? Surely God's saving power could reach every intelligent being. . . . Origen believed that even fallen intelligences kept the potential for good.²¹⁰

It seems that Dr. Wink would subscribe to Origen's claims. However, other theologians like John Hicks, a modern philosopher of religion, have even more radical views grounded in theological universalism that was originally advanced by the ancient Greek theologian, Irenaeus of Lyons (130-200 AD). Hicks states that the human person is *in process of becoming*, a position that my project proposes

²⁰⁸ *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch in The Lost Books of the Bible and the Forgotten Books of Eden* (New York, A Meridian Book, 1974), VII, 1-3, p. 83

²⁰⁹ *The Book of Secrets of Enoch*, XVIII, 1-7, p. 87

²¹⁰ Kelly, p. 45.

as well. However, Hicks wants to take this concept further by holding the belief that this *process of becoming* continues on into a postmortem state of being (after death), which is something my project does not affirm without qualification based on the notion of the **Osirian Traveler** in their post mortem state of being found in the *Egyptian Original*. First, Hicks restates the idea of Irenaeus in an essay called “The Irenaean Theodicy”:

Instead of regarding man as having been created by God in a finished state, as finitely perfect being fulfilling the divine intention for our human level of existence, and then falling disastrously away from this, the minority report sees man as still in process of creation. . . . And so man, created as a personal being in the image of God, is only the raw material for a further and more difficult stage of God's creative work.²¹¹

Kelly says this about Hicks work and view, that:

John Hick's *Evil and the God of Love* . . . has dominated much thinking about theodicy, especially in the English speaking world. Hick (1922 -) argued that humans are not the finished moral products of Augustine's Eden but rather are always in the making, an idea he got from the Early Christian writer Irenaeus of Lyons (d. ca. 202). . . . Hick believes in universal salvation, so if God cannot attract individuals in this life, then the process will continue in a postmortem existence until God has won all intelligent creatures to the good. This is not a variation on purgatory. Hick argues not for a postmortem restitution for earthly sins but for a continuing process that was uncompleted in earthly life.²¹²

Dr. Wink, however, does not (like Origen and the modern philosopher of religion John Hick) take these two horizons of thought to their logical conclusion. Just because the dark or evil principalities and powers can be redeemed, does not mean that they will be. Wink will likewise make a distinction between the fallen powers that can be redeemed, and demons, sitting apart and opposed to God's *Good Creation*, which cannot be redeemed. There also is no hint of a postmortem process of salvation in Wink's theology, where all sentient beings will be saved, including all acolytes and devotees of *Evil*, such as Satan. The Biblical record does not speak of a necessary universal salvation of all beings, especially in Revelation. It states rather, that the acolytes and devotees of Evil and even hell and death itself will be cast eternally into the **Lake of Fire** (Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14-15). In *Egyptian Original* of its cosmology the Lake of Fire is a real place that the Egyptians referred to as

 , *Mer-en-ser-ser*, the *Lake of Fire* in the *Tuat*. I mention it here because the hieroglyphic element  a door-bolt to the stream or pool of fire and signifies that whoever is in it will not be able to get out (cannot be saved despite the claims of universalism) especially since this grammatical element is doubled (an African grammatical way of intensifyingreduplication, like in some Ba-Ntu languages the expression *ku-che-ka-che-ka*, means to “giggle” *again and again*, or “doing so progressively or continuously,” so that the doubled “ser-ser” could suggest that whoever was in this

²¹¹ John Hick, "The Irenaean Theodicy," in *Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Religion*, edited by John Hick, second edition (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 515.

²¹² Kelly, pp. 222-223.

Lake of Fire would “burn again and again” forever. Universal salvation is the view anticipated by Karl Barth when he said, if evil or nothingness is granted a location within the created order (as Wink does in his theology) then one must grant evil “a certain goodness, a certain participation in good . . . The devil can then be denied or described as the last candidate for salvation which is due to him too by reason of a general *apokatastasis*.”²¹³ Nevertheless, the battle ground with Evil (for Wink) is in the *here-and-now* on the earth, which place we have styled as the *Colony of Heaven* or the *Earth of Time and Eternity* invaded by the dark principalities and powers opposed to God’s *Good Creation*. This political metaphor will be used in this part of my project because it fits Wink’s concept of *Evil*, as an invasion of the interior spirituality of the human person, human intellect and human institutions, where *Evil*, through various human institutions impose a *Domination system* of injustice and evil in the world. Wink thinks the main problem of evil is the way it has been related to the doctrine of God. Wink says that the church, rather than relating the problem of evil to God’s providence, has instead related it more to God’s attribute of omnipotence. We have made note already that Barth began the study of the problem of Nothingness from the doctrine of creation or the providence of God, instead of starting with God’s attributes of omnipotence and omni-benevolence. Wink advances the analysis of this doctrine in a direction that Barth would notprehend, given Barth’s view on the intractable nature of *Evil* with God as ITs primary aim and victim. *Evil*, as one triune aspect of Nothingness, which in Barth’s view, cannot, under any circumstances, be considered a candidate for redemption, nor any ontological aspect of its being. Wink says the church sees God as the judge, and avenger that will destroy all evil by that same power in the end. The church does not see a God who loves everything that God created, including the fallen principalities and powers of evil. In his book *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (1998), Wink states:

Much of what passes as religion denies the existence of such a God. Is not God precisely that moral force in the universe that rewards the good and punishes the evil? This had been the message of John the Baptist, and it would later be the message of the church. In John’s preaching, God is depicted as verging on a massive and final counteroffensive against evil in which all evil will be exterminated. One whole side of reality will be wiped out.²¹⁴

Evil is certainly a reality for Wink. Wink just sees Evil not as wholly evil but another side of reality and therefore part of God’s *Good Creation*. For Dr. Wink *the problem of evils* a problem for God’s providential care over His *Good Creation* and not a problem in relationship to claims about God’s attributes of omni-benevolence or omnipotence. Wink is not concerned with what *Evil* is doing at the frontiers of God’s *Good Creation* or how it got there. Wink is not concerned (as Barth is) in how Evil as *Nothingness* became this reality. Wink goes back to a position that is close to that of St. Thomas Aquinas, in thinking of evil, not as an *ontological being*, but an *intellectual being*. However, for him Evil as an *intellectual being* is more than a potentiality within the interiority of the human person and human institutions; but rather is actively and negatively influencing the human person and human institutions ever *luring* them toward participation in *demonic experience* in order to increase the power of Evil in the Earth. In this sense Evil becomes a *living creature* within the human person and within human institutions. The IT possesses them. Wink infers that Evil is created the moment the principalities, powers, and the human person challenges God’s sovereignty and purpose

²¹³ Barth, p. 300.

²¹⁴ Wink, pp. 162-163.

for the creation with their own idolatry, that is, with their desire to be worshipped and their participation in *demonic experience*. Wink is more concerned to understand the nature of evil as expressed in the way the principalities and powers operate within the human persons and human institutions. He wants to say that Evil has both a material and spiritual dimension. As a student of powers theology, inherited from the late popular theologian William Stringfellow, acclaimed as the “American C. S. Lewis” and author of *Free in Obedience* (1964), and *An Ethic for Christian & Other Aliens in a Strange Land* (1973), Wink will uphold the idea that Evil is both material and spiritual, but has no embodiment outside the material order of things, actions of people, and actions of human institutions. Wink says the following:

What I propose is viewing the spiritual Powers not as separate heavenly or ethereal entities but as *the inner aspect of material or tangible manifestations of power*. I suggest that the “angels of nature” are the patterning of physical things — rocks, trees, plants, the whole God-glorifying, dancing, visible universe; that the “principalities and powers” are the inner or spiritual essence, or gestalt, of an institution or state or system; that the “demons” are the psychic or spiritual power emanate by organizations or individuals or subspects of individuals whose energies are bent on overpowering others; that “gods” are the very real archetypal or ideological structures that determine or govern reality and its mirror, the human brain . . . that “Satan” is the actual power that congeals around collective idolatry, injustice, or inhumanity, a power that increases or decreases according to the degree of collective refusal to choose higher values. . . .

These “Powers” do not, then, on this hypothesis, have a separate spiritual existence. *We encounter them primarily in reference to the material or “earthly” reality of which they are the innermost essence*. . . . None of these “spiritual” realities has an existence independent of its material counterpart. None persists through time without embodiment in cellulose or in a culture or a regime or a corporation or a megalomaniac. . . . As the inner aspect of material reality, the spiritual Powers are everywhere around us. Their presence is real and it is inescapable. . . . If the “spiritual” Powers are the inside or essence of physical or social entities or systems or structures, then the long and inconclusive debate over whether the Powers are human or divine can now be ended. Like most such debates, its very inconclusiveness was evidence that each party held a portion of the truth which it could not in all justice relinquish and that the issue could be resolved only in a higher synthesis encompassing the truth of both. This theory appears to do just that. It understands the spiritual and physical aspects of the Powers to be inseparable but distinguishable components of a single phenomenon — power in its concretions in this world.²¹⁵

Wink holds the view that evil is located in the human person, and by inference human institutions (wherever human beings are, so are good and evil). However, Wink widens that view to include the cosmic notion that evil resides in all material and physical reality as well, e.g. rocks, trees, plants. If this notion was applied to God it would be a kind of panentheism, or God in everything and everything in God theology. In fact such a view of evil being in everything would require a corresponding pan-en-theism in order to say that “God’s being is greater than and not exhausted by the universe,” so that evil is not seen as sovereign over God’s *Good Creation*. This pan-en-theism would also have the benefit of ensuring God had pathos, or concern about God’s *Good Creation*,

²¹⁵ Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 104-106.

because “God is affected by each event in the universe, and thus God’s knowledge must change and grow. However, God simultaneously retains personal integrity and complete reality.”²¹⁶ I am not sure if Wink has fully thought out the implications of the view that he holds on good and evil being in everything. For each doctrine of good and evil devised there is a corresponding impact on the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the human person. Wink agrees with St. Thomas Aquinas’ notion that evil is an intellectual being, or creature in the mind of the human person. However, Wink suggests, based on the biblical notion of possession, that evil has become such a part of the inner aspect of all living being that it can be thought of as one and the same as the person, institution and or material cosmic stuff. Wink is close to inferring that the real and inescapable presence of *Evil* has no embodiment or existence apart from the physical realities of which it is a part. *Evil* is, therefore, intertwined with creation in such a way that it has become the negative aspect of the very personality of the human person, human institutions, and the material order itself. If the location of evil is outside God’s *Good Creation*, as Barth contends, then for Wink its tentacles have intertwined themselves into the fabric and life of the cosmic and human order in such a way that only God can unravel the good from the evil embedded so deeply within the human person and human institutions. This is indeed the view that Jesus held in respect to Evil. **IT** will be separated from God’s Good Creation. Jesus says:

He also presented to them another parable in these words, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. While people slept, his enemy came and also sowed weed grass among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and brought forth fruit, the weeds also appeared. The slaves of the householder came [forward] and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did this darnel come from? The man said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves then asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and gather them up?’ But the man replied, ‘No, for fear that while you gather up the darnel weeds, you might also uproot the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at that time of the harvest I will tell the reapers, “First, gather up the darnel weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.”’ (Matthew 13:24-30, EOB)

In this passage two main ideas about Evil are present: (1) Like darnel weeds imitate and mimic the wheat so it is hard to tell them apart until the harvest. Evil imitates and mimics the good within human persons and human institutions. It comes as an angel of light; and (2) Like the wheat can only be distinguished from darnel weeds by its fruit manifest only at harvest time, Good can only be distinguished from Evil by the culmination of either their good or evil work revealed in the human person and human institutions. But how does Jesus suggest Evil will be destroyed? Remarkably since Evil has intertwined itself so deeply within the interior of the human person and human institutions, (that is from the frontiers of outer darkness on to *God’s Superhighway of Modified Human Experience*) it can only be rooted out by arresting and/or destroying the acolytes and devotees of Evil ending **ITs** dominion on Earth. Only the angels of God have the wisdom to separate the wheat from the darnel weeds (the *Children of darkness* from the *Children of Light*). This supports Wink’s view that Evil has no life outside the human person and human institutions so logically the only way of dealing with it on the *Superhighway of God* is to arrest and/or destroy the acolytes and devotees of Evil. Jesus says

²¹⁶ Grenz, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “panentheism.”

in explanation of this parable to his disciples who asked him “Explain to us the parable of the grass weeds of the field” that:

The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the children of the Kingdom, and the dandelion weeds are the children of the evil one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. As the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather out of his Kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and those who do evil, and he will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. (Matthew 13:37-43, EOB).

If Barth locates *Evil* outside the creation to defend the righteousness of God, Wink locates the very essence of *Evil* within the human person, human institutions, and the material universe itself. Barth shows how *Evil* (located outside at the frontiers of the created order) got in through the *negative aspect of God's human creation*, which dares to meet evil at the frontier of darkness, seeking to participate in demonic experience. In biblical terms this would be the human person disobeying God and eating *daily* from the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*. Barth would say that Wink is confusing the negative aspect of God's *Good Creation* with *Nothingness* that uses that negativity to actuate its triune aspects of Sin, Death and Evil in the human person, in human institutions, and in the world. Wink shows that the invasion of the world by *Evil* has been successful, to which history is in full testimony. Wink demonstrates that *Evil* is such a part of this created order that the spiritual unseen acolytes and devotees of *Evil*, called the *principalities and powers*, *lives and dies with their physical and material counterparts*. Jesus demonstrates that is true when the legion of demons were commanded to come out of a man they pleaded with Jesus not to be cast into outer darkness but be allowed to enter into hogs as their living host. They died with the hogs when they drowned themselves in the sea (Mark 5:1-14) or at the least suffered the fate they feared *being cast into outer darkness*.

However these suppositions Wink's theological focus on the provenance of God's care for His *Good Creation* still begs the question of how can *Evil* exist with an All-good and All-powerful God that cares. Despite God's care would not righteousness and sovereignty of God still be open to ridicule by locating *Evil* within human person, human institutions, and in the physical and material life of the God's *Good Creation*? Wink does not know how evil got into the interiority of persons and things and so God can still be blamed. Evil just appeared when the physical life of the material order appeared. As we have noted above Wink's position is comparable to the story that Jesus told of the man who sowed good seed in the ground, but while everyone was sleep an enemy came in and sowed weeds, which grew up secretly among the wheat (Matthew 13:24-28). The weeds have become inescapably intertwined in and among the wheat, imitating its likeness or essence, as Wink says evil does. Barth, on the other hand, knows that the enemy sowed the seeds from outside the physical order of God's *Good Creation*. Wink says in respect to human institutions that the “Powers can no more exist without concretion in an institution or system or officeholder than the self can exist without a body.”²¹⁷ Wink says further, that the “gospel is not a dualistic myth of good and evil forces vying for ascendancy, as in the myth of redemptive violence. It is a sublimely subtle drama about the intertwining of good and evil in all of historical reality.”²¹⁸ Wink discusses the nature of the principalities and power that operate

²¹⁷ Wink, *Naming the Powers*, p. 145.

in what he calls a spiritual and human domination system where death is the ultimate sanction for those who would resist and suffer under the banner of the cross. Wink describes the powers as (1) initially created by God as good, however, (2) fallen in their opposition to God, but (3) who can be redeemed. Wink uses Colossians 1:15-17 to show that because God created the principalities and powers they must have been initially good, because God, through the agency of Jesus Christ, did not create anything in the cosmic order that was not declared good as the story of Genesis indicates. The Colossians text reads:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together (NIV).

Despite Wink's supposition that demons are the only spiritual beings that are excluded from God's "constituent part of the universe and therefore are not subject to God's redemptive love, they in fact must be (as fallen angels) included in God's "constituent part of the universe" because they did not create themselves nor are they Deity or uncreated being. Clearly from what we have shown above (from religious traditions) demons are created good angels who had their places in various levels of the heavens but were cast out and cast down because of their rebellion against the will and command of God. To show the contrary Wink would have to demonstrate that demons are uncreated beings and therefore are not a constituent part of the God's created universe. According to Wink demons are "utterly sinful or basically wicked or incapable of good." *If demons (or fallen angels) had the essence of Nothingness as non-creation spiritual being* then Barth would agree with Wink in this aspect when he states:

Nothingness is intrinsically evil. It is both perverting and perverted. In this capacity it does not confront either God or the creature neutrally. It is not merely a third factor. It opposes both as an enemy, offending God and threatening His creature. From above as well as from below, it is the impossible and intolerable. By reason of this character, whether in the form of sin, evil or death, it is inexplicable It is simply aberration, transgression, evil.²¹⁹ If God Himself were not the primary victim and foe of nothingness, there would be no reason for the unyielding recognition . . . that nothingness is not nothing but exists in its own curious fashion, . . . that it is in no way to be understood as an essential attribute of divine or creaturely being but only as their frontier. . . . that nothingness has its being on the left hand of God and is grounded in His non-willing, and . . . that it is evil by nature and therefore we cannot regard or group it in any sense with God and His creature.²²⁰

Since demons were created by God as good angels that later fall from His grace by rebellion against His will Wink is simply wrong to say that "utterly sinful or basically wicked or incapable of good." While Wink may have come up short on this aspect of "What is Evil : Yet, he has provided biblical theological support for his own understanding (however we may disagree) of the nature of Evil through *naming the Powers* in the Heavens. The New Testament (as Wink demonstrates himself in

²¹⁸ Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1992), 65.

²¹⁹ Barth, p. 354.

²²⁰ Barth, p. 360.

Chapter two of his *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament*, 1984) insists on naming the Powers and giving them by these names different functions and purposes under the regime and sovereignty of God's *Good Creation* and do not suggest that by their life and being are inextricably tied to human persons and human institutions, so that, when they act then the Powers act and when humans person or human institutions die then the Powers die. In the New Testament as Wink will show himself these Powers do in fact have *separate existence from that of humans and human institutions*. Wink seems to have concluded that the Powers have no purpose, function, or purpose *apart from* humans and their *all too human* institutions. Here the New Testament stands as its own witness and thankfully Wink with scholarly integrity presents the New Testament passages as they can be read on the face of them with no intrinsic links suggesting their existence is necessarily and/or inextricably linked to human persons or human institutions in order for them to "live, and move, and have" their being in God's *Good Creation* as if they have no rational will of their own. God, Almighty would not create such an absolute dependency for any living being or creature (temporal or spiritual).

THE RANKS OF ANGELS:

(GOD is not an angel; He created angels so He is at the Highest peak of the hierarchy...)



- (**Seraphs**) Ministers to God Who sits on His Throne
- (**Cherubs**) Enforces God orders directly from the Throne
- (**Thrones/Rulers**) Ruling angels under whose command are companies of angels (like extension offices)
- (**Dominions/Principalities**) are like army detachments (of angels) in charge of areas
- (**Powers**) are angels with specific skills (ex., healing, worship, understanding, miracles, etc.

<https://discover.hubpages.com/religion-philosophy/angels-for-dummies>

We now turn to the specific names of these Powers and their purpose and function Wink derives from various the New Testament passages and other extra-biblical sources:

Arche and Archon

For the purposes for this discussion the two terms *arche* and *archon* may be taken together, since *arche* so often verges on the sense of *archon* in the New Testament. The normal use of both terms is for human power arrangements. Apart from four passages in Philo, in the LXX, Philo, and Josephus, *archon* is used exclusively for an incumbent-in-office and, with the sole exception of Daniel 10 and 12, for human agents. *Arche* is a more abstract term for power, the presociological word for the institutionalization and continuity of power through office, position, or role, although occasionally (as in the New Testament) it is used, like *archon*, of incumbents-in-office. And as the data in Appendix 1 shows, both terms were most certainly used of evil spiritual forces. . . . The fact that almost every extant pre-Christian use of *arche* and *archon* refers to the role played by some human agent in the exercise of office should

caution us against assuming too quickly that their use in the New Testament implies exclusively angelic or demonic powers.²²¹

Exousia

We find in the use of *exousia* the same general pattern that held for *arche* and *archon*. The vast majority of references are to human arrangements of power, with an occasional use to designate spiritual beings. In the LXX, Philo, and Josephus, *exousia* is never used of spiritual Powers, apart from a handful of references to the authority of God. The term usually bears the sense of the right or authorization to exercise power, or else refers to that body or person so authorized to exercise The New Testament used *exousia* 102 times, 87 of them for the impersonal capacity for action which is bestowed by an office. Most studies on the Powers simply bracket that impressive figure and rush on to hypostatized *exousiai*—those regarded as spiritual beings—as being more significant. But the single most significant fact about *exousia* as a term for Power is that 85 percent of its uses refer to a *structural dimension of existence*, that permission or authorization provided by some legitimate authorizing person or body. In other words, the *exousiai* in the New Testament are, in the vast majority of cases, not spiritual beings but ideological justifications, political or religious legitimations, and delegated permission. It is a modern bias to single out just the supernatural Powers as if they alone were of significance.²²²

Dynamis

In Jewish sources of the period, *dynamis* is most often used of military or political power or forces (a “host” or army, military might, or political clout). . . . By extension it was applied to the angelic “army” or “host” of God. God was “Lord of the Powers” (*dynameon*). As “heavenly hosts,” the Powers were identified in the LXX with angels (Ps. 103:21), stars (Isa. 34.4), and even gods (Ps. 29:1; 89:5-8). The term is often used by Philo of angels, a use probably also paralleled in at least some of our disputed texts (Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 1 Peter 3:22). In contrast to Philo, however, the Powers in at least some of these disputed texts would appear to be evil. With the exception of Rev. 13:2 and 17:12-13, the New Testament ignores the military, political, and economic uses of the term, so frequent in the LXX and Josephus, focusing instead on the spiritual dimension of power in its capacity to determine terrestrial existence for weal or for woe “from above.” Consequently we encounter the term as denoting evil spirits, the spirits of the dead, stars, spiritual powers, Godhead, and delegated authority In the New Testament, and increasingly in later Christian writers, both orthodox and gnostic, the “Powers” are no longer so much God’s agents as God’s enemies. The “Lord of the Powers” now is engaged in a cosmic struggle to assert lordship *over* the Powers.²²³

Thronos

In the LXX, “throne” is used 123 times of kings and dynasties, emphasizing the continuity and legitimacy of royal office. Here “throne” indicated not so much the actual seat but “a symbol of government . . . which transcends the present occupant of the throne.” By analogy, God has a throne (29 times), and Wisdom sits beside God (Sir. 24:4). This use is continued by Josephus (27 of the seat of kings, 2 of the high priest’s chair, 1 of God’s throne). In most of these cases the term “throne” is used structurally to represent all the paraphernalia and power resident in the “chair” and its incumbent. . . . Other than that, and the enigmatic reference to “thrones, dominions, principalities, and authorities” in Col. 1:16, the New Testament uses

²²¹ Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1984).

²²² Wink, pp. 15-16.

²²³ Wink, p. 17.

thronos of God's throne (42 times), of earthly rulers (3 times), of the disciple's future place in heaven (3 times), the throne of Satan or his agents (3 times), of the Son of man's throne in heaven (2 times), and once of Christ's throne in heaven. The use of "thrones" in Col. 1:16 is puzzling; are these spiritual, personalized beings, or are they impersonal structures of power? Perhaps Asc. Isa. 7-8 offers a clue. In each of the first five heavens, Isaiah is shown a "throne"; each time the text adds the qualifying phrase "he who sat on the throne" (7:19, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37). Isaiah is shown a "throne"; each time the text adds the qualifying phrase "he who sat on the throne" . . . Isaiah and other righteous persons have thrones laid up for them in heaven (7:22; 8:26). In short, *someone always occupies these thrones*. The term is simply metonymy for a "throne-prince" or "throne-angels," one of the highest of the heavenly orders.²²⁴

Kyriotes

There is no evidence of pre-Christian use of *kyriotes*. Its principal sense seems to be "dominion," "lordship," "ruler powers"; later it blurs to become synonymous with *exousia* in the sense of "authority." The image is that of the realm or expanse of territory over which a *kyrios* rules. There are pre-Christian sources that use "dominion," but it not clear whether the Greek terms used in *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees* were *kyriotes* or *exousia* (Col. 1:13) or *hegemonia* (Josephus *War* 6.330) or even *arche* (Deut. 17:20, LXX). *Kyriotes* appears in Jude 8 and 2 Pet. 2:10 meaning "authority" or possibly "limit." Col. 1:16 and Eph. 1:21 use it in series. Some later Christian exegetes tended to regard these series as heavenly beings (*Epist. Apost.* 13; *NHL. Treat. Res.* 44:35-38), but others used the term in the sense of human "ruling power" (Hermas, *Sim.* 5.6.1).²²⁵

Onoma

The "name" (*onoma*) is once more a case of metonymy, the part representing the whole. In the older sections of the Old Testament the "name of Yahweh" (*shem Yahweh*) stands for Yahweh as such. This gives way later to its being hypostatized as distinguishable though not separate agent of God's will and work. This Ps. 54:1 (LXX, 53:2) reads: "Save me, O God, by thy name (*onomati*), and vindicate me by thy might (*dynami*)." Here both "name" and "might" are virtually hypostatic forces acting on God's behalf. The name is thus a transcendent entity at work on Yahweh's behalf in the world. . . . As a term of power, *onoma* in the New Testament is used most often of Jesus as Lord or Christ (97 of 226 uses). It is also associated with God's name 44 times, always with the sense of the totality of God's power and being. In one place "name" designates the office, dignity, or rank of Christ as opposed to that of angels: "having become as much superior to angels as the name he has obtained is more excellent than theirs" (Heb. 1:4). Seven times "name" represents the essence of satanic evil, all in Revelation. Used of the beast or harlot (Rev. 13:1, 17; 14:11; 15:2, 17:3, 5) it crystalizes the inner reality, the moral degeneracy and political brutality of the Roman Empire; used of the king of the locusts, it encompasses etymologically his function: he is the "angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he is called Apollyon," that is, Destroyer (Rev. 9:11). The names of evil powers are sought by Jesus ("Legion," Mark 5:9) and by the "rulers (*archontes*) and elders and scribes," who ask Peter and John, "By what power (*dynami*) or by what name (*onomati*) did you do this?" In defense, Peter responds, "There is no other name under heaven given among [humanity] by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:7, 12). Before this name demons quail, as the disciples (Luke 10:17) and even outsiders (Mark 9:38; Acts 19:13-16) discover. Jesus' name, in short, has become the Name of names; "on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). . . . we

²²⁴ Wink, pp. 18-19.

²²⁵ Wink, p. 20.

cannot limit those names to heavenly authority or angelic powers. They must include every power with a title, every authority invested with an office, every incumbent with a role, whether divine, diabolical, or human. Like Col. 1:16, then, the term *onoma* points us toward the most expansive understanding of the Powers possible.²²⁶

Angels

Angels are, of course, the Powers in their “heavenly” form par excellence. But even this term is subject to the same imprecision we found with other terms for power. *Aggelos* can be used for human “messenger” or prophet even in books where heavenly angels are rife (Mal. 1:1; 3:1; Hag. 1:13; Isa. 44:26; Luke 7:24; 9:52; James 2:25); or “angel” can be substituted for “the Holy Spirit” or used where the Holy Spirit would have been expected (Mark 13:32; Luke 9:26; Matt. 24:36; Rev. 3:5). In the *Ascension of Isaiah* the expression “the angel of the Holy Spirit” is even used (3:16; 4:21; 7:23; 9:36, 39, 40; 11:33). We find angels spoken of as *archai*, *archontes*, *exousiai*, *dynameis*, *thronoi*, *onomata*, and possibly *kyriotetes*. But the most common synonym, especially in the Pseudepigrapha, is the word *pneumata*, “spirits.” The evidence for this is too extensive to list; but the title of Yahweh in *1 Enoch* (“Lord of Spirits”) is clue enough. Angels could be good or evil (“fallen”). By virtue of their exclusion from heaven, the latter become a category all their own.²²⁷

Fallen Angels, Evil Spirits, Demons

The problem of theodicy has obsessed Jewish writers from the time of the exile right down to the present. Israel’s misfortunes were too great to ascribe purely to human sin. Adam and Eve could not bear the weight of all human tragedy. The ancient myth of the fall of the “sons of God” in Gen. 6:1-4 was enlisted to explain the presence of an evil that emanates not from humanity alone but from something higher as well: not divine, but transcendent, suprahuman, that persists through time, is opposed to God and human faithfulness, and seeks our destruction, damnation, illness, and death. The fall, mischief, and judgment of the angels is one of the chief preoccupations of intertestamental Jewish literature, its most striking innovation and most lasting contribution to theodicy. . . . *First Enoch Jubilees* do not hold the franchise for the language of fallen angels and evil powers. One of the earliest allusions to the myth of fallen angels is Ps. 82:6-7: “I say, ‘You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like [human beings], and fall like any *prince*’” (LXX, *archonton*). The myth appears frequently in Jewish literature of the period. It is alluded to in the New Testament in 1 Cor. 6:3; 11:10; Jude 6; and 2 Pet. 2:4. In the early church, Christians were instructed in the art of discerning the good spirits from the evil spirits. The use of “demons” and “evil spirits” in the New Testament is too extensive to review here; it must suffice simply to note that Jesus regards his healings and exorcisms as an assault on the kingdom of Satan and an indication that the kingdom of God is breaking in. The gospel is very much a cosmic battle in which Jesus rescues humanity from the dominion of evil powers.²²⁸

Angels of the Nations

The fascinating notion of angels of the nations is quite ancient. Our first evidence for it is Deut. 32:8-9, but even there (v. 7b) it is described as a piece of primordial tradition. Verses 8-9 read: “When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the

²²⁶ Wink, pp. 21-22.

²²⁷ Wink, pp. 22-23.

²²⁸ Wink, pp. 23-26.

sons of men, he fixed the bounds of the peoples according to the number of *the sons of God*. For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage." The idea that God had appointed an angel or god over each of the pagan nations finds its most notable development in Daniel 10. According to the Book of Daniel, in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, an angel appears to Daniel, delayed for twenty-one days because "the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me." But Michael, "one of the chief princes (*archonton*)," came to the angel's aid. "So I left him there with the prince (*archon*) of the kingdom of Persia and came" Hastily he finishes his message, then: "But now I will return to fight (*polemesai*) against the prince (*archontos*) of Persia; and when I am through with him, lo, the prince (*archon*) of Greece will come There is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince (*archon*)" (Dan. 10:13, 20, 21). . . . God grants each empire a certain time and judges it for what it does within that time. Only tiny Israel's guardian, Michael, takes the part of the messenger sent from God to Daniel . . . No other angels in the heavenly council rust to their side. . . . *Jub.* 15:31-32 adds a surprising twist:

. . . For these are many nations and many peoples, and all are His, and over all hath He placed spirits in authority *to lead them astray from Him*. But over Israel He did not appoint any angel or spirit, for He alone is their ruler, and He will preserve them and require them at the hand of His angels and His spirits, and at the hand of all His powers in order that He may preserve them and bless them . . .

Why would God want the nations led astray? Is this merely hindsight that treats what happens in history as the determined plan of God? In any case, this inevitably casts the angels of the nations in a negative light. The step from this to their demonization is very short. In a most important passage, *1 Enoch* 89-90, we can watch that step being taken. Seventy shepherd-angels are appointed to punish Israel. They are not commissioned to protect Israel or defend its interests. Their sole task is to punish, either directly (through pestilence, plague, famine) or by means of the Gentile nations (through war, occupation, oppression) (89:63). The seventy-first angel is appointed to keep track of their overkill: "for they will destroy more than I have commanded them" (89:61). . . . Another thread from *1 Enoch* 89-90 leads to the full identification of the seventy shepherds with the seventy angels of the seventy nations. This identification may have already been intended by *1 Enoch*, since the idea of seventy nations was as old as Genesis 10. The Hebrew *Testament of Naphtali* 8, whose antiquity has now been confirmed by the discovery of fragments at Qumran, tells of them time when "the Lord . . . came down from His highest heavens, and brought down with Him seventy ministering angels, Michael at their head. He commanded them to teach the seventy families which sprang from the loins of Noah seventy languages." One last thread drawn out from the traditions in *1 Enoch* 89-90 is the idea that whatever happens on earth is the result of events in heaven which it simultaneously mirrors.²²⁹ In *1 Enoch*, the Gentile nations are able to ravage Israel only when their angelic shepherds permit them to do so. This connection is developed further in *3 Enoch* 17:8 (A), where the "seventy-two princes of the kingdoms on high corresponding to the 72 tongues of the world" who ride on royal horses holding royal scepters in their hands, with royal servants running before them, are precisely mirrored at that very moment on earth by human princes traveling in chariots with horsemen and great armies and in glory and greatness.²³⁰

²²⁹ The ancient Egyptian dictum "What is Above, is Below."

²³⁰ Wink pp. 26-32.

Wink argues (using the New Testament scripture and extra-biblical sources as support) that the powers are inherently good and not necessarily evil. Additionally, they are not autonomous, independent, eternal, nor utterly depraved. They have a purpose ordained by God, although they can err in judgment and like all living beings be influenced to do wrong and sin and be tempted by the offer of temporary pleasures found in demonic experiences. Scripture makes it clear that “to err is human” is not exclusively a human moral failing. Job 4:18 says “*God puts no trust or confidence, even in His [heavenly] servants. And He charges His angels with error.*” And Psalms 82 affirms this understanding:

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand; they “walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O [gods], judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations. (Psalms 82).

Yet while these Powers can err Wink wants to give them a wide berth of respect because they are ordained with authority by God to function within His *Good Creation* for the good. Wink says:

The Colossians hymn is the brash assertion, against the grain of human suffering, that the Principalities and Powers that visit the world with so much evil are not autonomous, not independent, not eternal, not utterly depraved. The social structures of reality are creations of God. Because they are creatures, they are mortal, limited, responsible to God, and made to serve the humanizing purposes of God in the world.²³¹

Wink defends the righteousness of God by saying that God created the powers good and that God is not responsible for the actions of the principalities and powers, which have free will just as the human person does. Wink makes the powers identical with human social systems. Wink says the following:

We must be careful here. To assert that God created the Powers does not imply that God endorses any particular Power at any given time. God did not create capitalism or socialism, but there must be some kind of economic system. The simultaneity of creation, fall, and redemption means that God at one and the same time *upholds* a given political or economic system, since some such system is required to support human life; *condemns* that system insofar as it is destructive of full human actualization; and *presses for its transformation* into a more humane order . . . The point of the Colossians hymn is not that anything goes, but that no matter how greedy or idolatrous an institution becomes, it cannot escape the encompassing care and judgment of the One in and through and for whom it was created. . . The Powers are inextricably locked into God’s system, whose human face is revealed in Christ. They are answerable to God. And that means that every subsystem in the world is, in principle, redeemable.²³²

²³¹ Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, p. 66.

²³² Wink, p. 67.

According to Wink, “Nothing is outside the redemptive care and transforming love of God. The Powers are not intrinsically evil, they are only fallen.”²³³ It is in the fallen nature of the powers that we discover something about the nature of Evil. Wink says that the powers are limited, not autonomous, and not eternal. They therefore share this nature and character with *Evil*. We learned from Barth that *Evil* or *Nothingness* is limited by God’s “No!” and confined to the eternal purposes of God for God’s *Good Creation* (i.e. “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose” Romans 8:28, EOB). Also as it appears from the work of Barth, *Evil* will eventually meet with its destruction in and through the work of Christ Jesus. However, the Colossians hymn becomes problematic when it asserts that God through Christ Jesus created all things. Is Evil then one of those things? Barth warns against this notion, because if *Evil* is a thing (a power of some kind) then it must be part of the created order, made by God, yet according to Wink is redeemable. However, in respect to *Evil* this would be a bizarre conclusion. Unlike the powers *Evil* is depraved and unredeemable, because *IT* by nature is the very antithesis of God. Evil is, nevertheless, still subject to the power of God, as both Barth and Wink admit. Nothingness, in Barth’s theology *IT* is beyond redemption, because *IT* is beyond the frontiers of God’s *Good Creation*. Barth states:

Here we can see what nothingness is. Here we can see its true nature and reality. Here we can see that it is an antithesis not only to God’s whole creation but to the Creator Himself. . . . Nothingness is thus the “reality” which opposes and resists God, which is itself subjected to and overcome by His opposition and resistance, and which in this twofold determination as the reality that negates and is negated by Him, is totally distinct from Him.²³⁴

Barth is dealing with *Evil* as it operates primarily outside the created order yet influencing (through fallen human persons and fallen human institutions) and threatening it with death and non-existence unless they bow down and worship *IT*. Wink (on the other hand) is dealing with the Evil as it manifests its influence in the spiritual interiority of the *Powers-that-be*, the human person, and human societal institutions. Supposedly, these fallen entities or living beings represent in Barth the negative side of creation. Barth, however, warns us not to confuse Evil itself with the negative side of creation, which includes the fallen powers. Evil, therefore, must not be included wholesale in the description of created things as suggested by the Colossian hymn. The theological error would be to accuse God of creating *Evil* as well as every other thing. Wink nevertheless upholds the notion with Barth that there are demonic beings that exist outside the created order and are not redeemable. Wink believes this while holding on to a modified universal salvation for all beings within God’s *Good Creation*. Not *that they will be redeemed* (especially in some postmortem state of being) *but that they can be redeemed*. In respect to universal salvation, Wink says the “Powers are good, fallen, and redeemable all at once; and they were good, they fell, and they will be redeemed in God’s domination-free order that is coming.”²³⁵ However, Wink does not hold that all created things are redeemable in that some have become totally depraved, and are likely not created as a constitutive part of God’s good creation. According to Wink there are the Powers that are redeemable and there are demonic

²³³ Wink, p. 68

²³⁴ Barth, pp. 304-305.

²³⁵ Wink, p. 70.

beings that are not redeemable, because they are given over totally to Evil and its enterprise of negating God's good creation. Wink states:

The gladsome doctrine of the Fall does not say that people and social order are utterly sinful or basically wicked or incapable of good. It teaches quite the opposite: people and the Powers are not evil by nature; evil is, on the contrary, unnatural, a disorder, a perversion. We, and the Powers, are the good creations of a good God. By contrast, there is in Scripture no account of the creation of the demons. Unlike the Powers, the demonic is not a constituent part of the universe. Its emergence is always an event in time, the consequence of wrong choices. An institution becomes demonic when it abandons its divine vocation for the pursuit of its own idolatrous goals. But what has become perverted in time can be redeemed in time.²³⁶

Wink has a problem and so has to place *dark demonic powers* (whatever IT is) outside God's good creation because IT "*is not a constituent part of the universe.*" Somehow Wink believes demons are not created beings because "*there is in Scripture no account of the creation of the demons*" therefore they are "*not constituent parts of*" God's *Good Creation*. Demons therefore may be said to be at the frontier of God's *Good Creation* and do have to be considered created beings that God has made. This notion is contrary to Biblical Theology that holds that demons are fallen angels that certainly were created by God. Genesis says "In the beginning God created *the heavens and the earth*. Of course Genesis 1:1 does not explain in any detail what He did in creating *the heavens* (not "heaven" but the "heavens") but goes on immediately to detail what He did to create the earth beginning in verse 2 "And the earth was formless, and void and darkness covered the face of the deep . . ." No one pays any attention to what verse 1 means by "God created the heavens . . .". The New Testament is clear that there are at least three heavens as indicated by Apostle Paul (speaking in the third person about himself) who says:

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows—was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. (2 Corinthians 12:2-4, NRSV).

The sacred text of the Qur'an in Islam asserts that there in fact *seven heavens*:



A Persian miniature depicting Seven Heavens from the History of Muhammad, *Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris*

The Quran and Hadith frequently mention the existence of seven *samawat* (سماوات), the plural of *sama'* (سما), meaning 'heaven, sky, celestial sphere', and cognate with Hebrew

²³⁶ Wink, p. 72.

shamayim (שמים). Some of the verses in the Quran mentioning the *samaawatare* Q41:12, Q65:12 and Q71:15. The seven heavens are not final destinations for the dead after the Day of Judgment, but regions distinct from the earth, guarded by angels and inhabited by souls whose abode depends on their good deeds (fasting, jihad, Hajj, charity), with the highest layer, the closest to God.

The Ethiopian tradition goes further than any other religious tradition within their sacred texts and commentaries both describing and naming the heavens. In some Ethiopian texts there are ten heavens and in other seven heavens. Ethiopian traditions describes seven heavens but admits of ten:

The World of Angels: A Homily

The world of angels occupies heavenly hosts whom are the seven archangels Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, Saint Raphael, Saint Suriel, Saint Zedekiel, Saint Serathiel and Saint Ananiel. They are the seven spirits of God. (Revelation 4:5) The Holy Scriptures also mentions the Seraphim with their six wings who filled the house with smoke (Isaiah 6:2) and the cherubim that provide the throne for the Lord. (Psalm 99:1) The angels represent the lowest category of the celestial hierarchy. They are also closest to mankind. Angels were created on the Sunday (Jubilee 2:6-8). As in scripted in the Holy Bible, Angels are made from fire and wind (3 Maccabees 2:10-11). They do not reproduce, but remain as they were originally created. They are powerful by nature and free from any kind of sickness. They do not die and unlimited in number. After God created the angels, He divided [them] into orders and chieftainship. They were divided in one hundred orders and into **ten heavenly places**. According to Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church **the seven heavens** are:

1. Tsiriha Ariyam

It is the last level within the seven heavens but when counted upper to bottom it takes the first place. This heaven represents Holy Mother Saint Mary as she is the home and country of God. Presets praise her in the midnight praise "Seatate"

2. Menibere Menigisit

It is the heaven where God reveals Himself, the Holy place for His Glory of Throne, angels bow and gratify in before Him and where the soul of dead people is judged. (Isaiah 6:1, Ezekiel 1:22-27, Revelation 4:2)

3. Semayi Widud

The four living creatures live in this heaven each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within stand on the four corners of carrying God's throne. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones are twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. (Ezekiel 1:4-75, Revelation 4:4)

4. EyerusalemSemayait

It is the heaven where at first Satan was living and also the inheritance of righteous. (Galatia 4:26. Hebrew 12:22, John 14:2) He was living with honor before he deceived God and lied saying he is the creator.

5. Iyor

God placed the hundred tribes of angels within the third city. Iyor is . . . one of City of Angels and is divided within four. There are forty tribes and four chief angels in this heaven. The first tribe is called "Agazete" and their chief was Satan but replaced by Saint Michael. He use to ascended the prayer of all the angels before his deception. The second tribe is known as "Cherubim" who carry the throne of Holy Trinity. Their chiefs are Face of human and Face of Lion. On the third level live Surafel and their chief are Face of cow and face of eagle. Within the fourth part lives "Haylat" carrying sword of fire who stand before Holy Trinity. Their Chief is Saint Michael. These angles support and motivate whose Christians who are exhausted in Christian life.

6. Ramah

This City of Angels is divided into thirty tribes and three chiefs. The first tribe is known as "Arebeb" who cover the throne of Holy Trinity with their wings. Their chief is Saint Gabriel. In the second level of Ramah, there tribes called "Menaberet" which are very close to God. They are armor of Holy Trinity standing in His presence carrying their lightening shields and fire spears. Their Chief is Saint Raphael. The third ones are known as "Seletanat" who have the authority of protecting all creatures and are those who announce judgment day. Their chief is Saint Surreal.

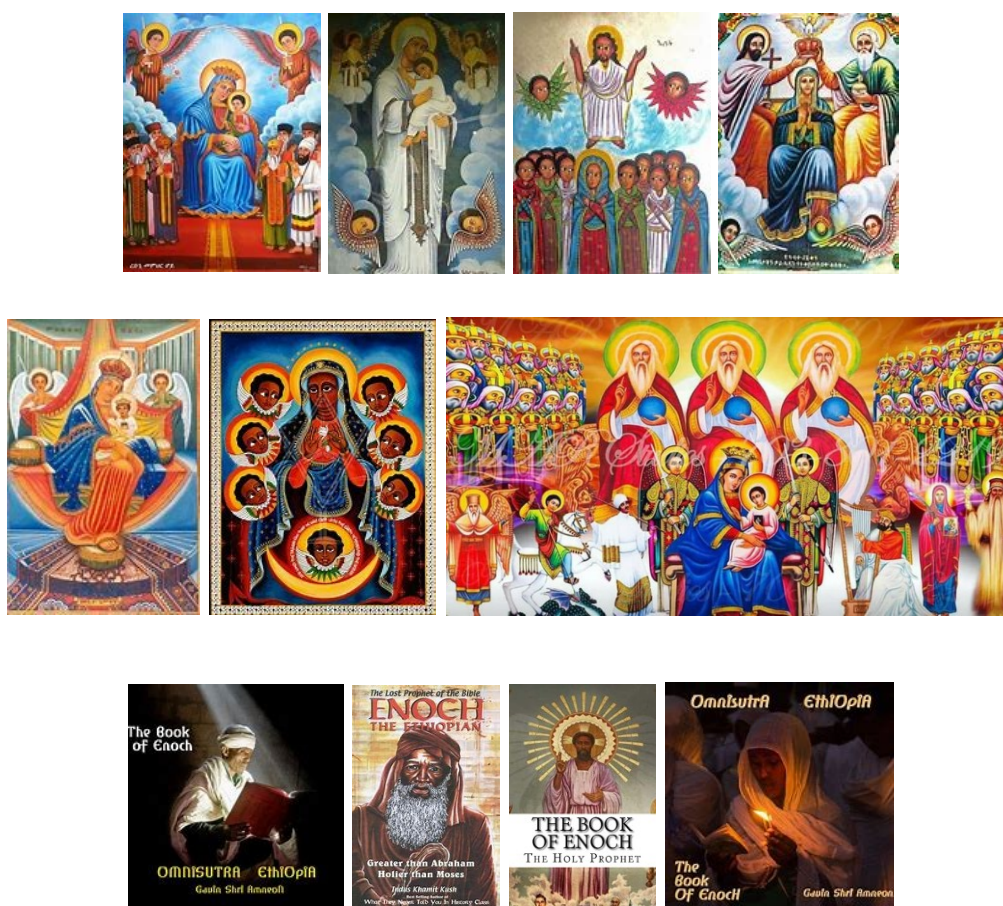
7. Erer

This City of Angels is divided into thirty tribes of angels and three chiefs. The first are called "Mekwanent." They are the trinity's fire archer and protector of human kind. Just as they saved Lot, they protect other humans. On judgment day, they collect skeleton and present it before God on [resurrection] of humans. Their chief is Selaphiel. The second ones are called "Likanat" whom are the fire horses of Holy Trinity. These are the twenty-four priests of heaven and their chief is Salathiel. Those who live on the third level of Erer are called "Angels" and they protect all creatures. Their chief is Ananel.

Angels are close aides of God and are always by His throne praising Him. (Revelation 4:8-11). They serve Him and human beings by Ministering between man and God where they ascend and descend within the world of heaven and earth. (John 1:52; Hebrew 1:14). They are very fast in their service. (Psalm 103:4; Hebrew 1:6) Angels are ordered to dependably save guard every creature (Mathew 18:10; Daniel. 4:13). Each person has his or her own two guardian angles, one for the day and the other for the night. They are sent to bring support and help in times of suffering and hardship (Acts 12:7-11; Psalm 89:7). Angels bring forth human's prayers, alms and offerings to God. This meaning the service of their intercession. They intercession and aiding duty of angels in bringing to God the prayers and offerings of men is a favor given to them. Written in Holy Bible, they present before God the prayers, offerings and alms of men and help them get rewarded. It is a grace given to them by God

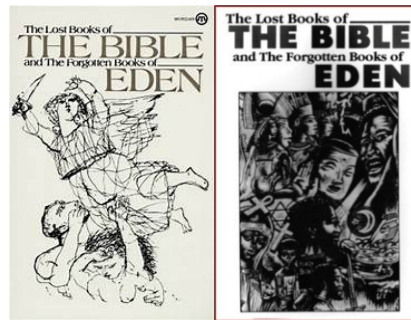
that they are the messengers who proclaim happiness, offer help and serve as the harbingers of all good tidings. (Genesis 48:16; Daniel. 10:10-12; Luke 1:13; 28-30; Jude 9) The intercession of Saint Angels is widely written in the Scriptures as can be understood from citations in the following:- (Enoch 10:7; Zacharias. 1:12; Exodus 23:20-23; Psalm 33:7) That Angels take delight in the act of those who repent is written in Luke 15:10. This indicates the love and concern they have for humans and their ministering role. With this, they bestow God's mercy and bounty to men (Daniel. 9:20-22; Luke 1, 13; Acts 10:3-5). They are also sent for exacting mercy or wrath (Roman 9:22). They are also the ones who bring humans soul after death before God for judgment, (Luke. 16:22; Sutuel Ezra. 6:6-20) They are sent to separate the sinners from the righteous when the world comes to an end (Matthew 24:31; Revelation 7, 1-4), Holy Orthodox Incarnation Church therefore venerates Archangels and Angels. Churches are dedicated in their honor, having their services and miracles written. They are offered homage of veneration of grace. (Daniel 8:15-18; Genesis. 22:31; Numbers 22, 31; Jos. 5:13-15) The day of their appointment, of their miracles and acceptance vow of God is commemorated as a monthly and annual feast. May the intercession of Angels be with us, Amen!²³⁷

QUEEN OF HEAVEN, MARY THE MOTHER OF JESUS IN ETHIOPIAN ICONOGRAPHY



²³⁷ Homily in Coptic Orthodox Church and Ethiopian Orthodox Church ©2017. MahibereKidusan - All Rights Reserved. Website by MK-IT Witnessing Miracle "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3)

**THE *TEN HEAVENS* WHERE THE ANGELS, THRONE AND POWERS LIVE
FROM "THE BOOK OF THE SECRETS OF ENOCH"**



THERE was a wise man, a great artificer, and the Lord conceived love for him and received him, that he should behold the uppermost dwellings and be an eye-witness of the wise and great and inconceivable and immutable realm of God Almighty, of the very wonderful and glorious and bright and many-eyed station and of degrees and manifestations of the incorporeal hosts, and of the ineffable ministration of the multitude of the elements, and of the various apparition and inexpressible singing of the host of Cherubim, and of the boundless light. At that time he said, when my 165th year was completed, I begat my son Mathusal. After this too I lived two hundred years and completed of all the years of my life three hundred and sixty-five years. On the first day of the first month I was in my house alone and was resting on my couch and slept. And when I was asleep, great distress came up into my heart, and I was weeping with my eyes in sleep, and I could not understand what this distress was, or what would happen to me. And there appeared to me two men, exceeding big, so that I never saw such on earth; their faces were shining like the sun, their eyes too *were* like a burning light, and from their lips was fire coming forth with clothing and singing of various kinds in appearance purple, their wings *were* brighter than gold, their hands whiter than snow. They were standing at the head of my couch and began to call me by my name. And I arose from my sleep and saw clearly those two men standing in front of me. And I saluted them and was seized with fear and the appearance of my face was changed from terror, and those men said to me: 'Have courage, Enoch, do not fear; the eternal God sent us to thee, and lo! thou shalt to-day ascend with us into heaven. . . .'²³⁸

Of Enoch's assumption; how the angels took him into the first heaven.

It came to pass, when Enoch had told his sons, that the angels took him up on to the **first heaven** and placed him on the clouds. And there I looked, and again I looked higher, and saw the ether, and they placed me on the first heaven and showed me a very great Sea, greater than the earthly sea . . . They brought before my face the elders and rulers of the stellar orders, and showed me two hundred angels, who rule the stars and *their* services of the heavens, and fly with their wings and come round all those who sail. . . . And here I looked down and saw the treasure-houses of the snow, and the angels who keep their terrible store—houses, and the clouds whence they come out and into which they go . . . They showed me the treasure-house of the dew, like oil of the olive, and the appearance of its form, as of all the flowers of the earth; further many angels guarding the treasure-house of these *things*, and how they are made to shut and open.²³⁹

²³⁸ *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* in *The Lost Books of the Bible and the Forgotten Books of Eden* (New York, A Meridian Book, 1974), (I:1-10a, p. 82).

²³⁹ *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, (III, IV, V, VI, pp. 82-83)

Of how Enoch was taken on to the second heaven

And those men took me and led me up on the **second heaven**, and showed me darkness, greater than earthly darkness, and there I saw prisoners hanging, watched, awaiting the great and boundless judgment, and these angels were dark-looking, and incessantly making weeping through all hours. And I said to the men who were with me: 'Wherefore are these incessantly tortured?' they answered me: "These are God's apostates, who obeyed not God's commands, but took counsel with their own will, and turned away with their prince, who also is fastened on the fifth heaven." And I felt great pity for them, and they saluted me, and said to me: 'Man of God, pray for us to the Lord'; and I answered to them 'Who am I, a mortal man, that I should pray for angels? Who knoweth whither I go, or what will befall me? Or who will pray for me?'²⁴⁰

Of the assumption of Enoch to the third heaven

And those men took me thence, and led me up on to the **third heaven**, and place me there; and I looked downwards, and saw the produce of these places, such as has never been known for goodness. And I saw all the sweet-flowering trees and beheld their fruits, which were sweet-smelling, and all the foods borne *by them* bubbling with fragrant exhalation. And in the midst of the trees that of life [the Tree of Life], in that place whereon the Lord rests, when he goes up into paradise; and this tree is of ineffable goodness and fragrance, and adorned more than every existing thing; and on all sides, *it is* in form gold looking and vermilion and fire like and covers all, and it has produce from all fruits. Its root is in the garden at the earth's end. And paradise is between corruptibility and incorruptibility. And two springs come out which send forth honey and milk, and their springs send forth old and wine, and they separate into four parts, and go around with quiet course, and go down into the **PARADISE OF EDEN**, between corruptibility and incorruptibility. And thence they go forth along the earth and have a revolution to their circle even as other elements. And here there is no unfruitful tree, and every place is blessed. And *there are* three hundred angels very bright, who keep the garden, and with incessant sweet singing and never-silent voices serve the Lord throughout all days and hours. And I said: 'How very sweet is this place,' and those men said to me: . . . This place, O Enoch, is prepared for the righteous, who endure all manner of offence from those that exasperated their souls, who avert their eyes from iniquity, and make righteous judgment, and give bread to the hungry, and cover the naked with clothing, and raise up the fallen, and help injured orphans, and who walk without fault before the face of the Lord, and serve him alone, and for them is prepared this place for eternal inheritance.²⁴¹

And those two men led me up on to the Northern side, and showed me there a very terrible place, and *there were* all manner of tortures in that place: cruel darkness and unilluminated gloom and there is no light there, but murky fire constantly flameth aloft, and *there is* a fiery river coming forth, where fire, and everywhere *there is* frost and ice, thirst and shivering, while the bonds are very cruel, and the angels fearful and merciless, bearing angry weapons, merciless torture, and I said: 'Woe, woe, how very terrible is this place.' And those men said to me: 'This place, O Enoch, is prepared for *those who dishonour God, who on earth practice sin against nature, which is child-corruption after the sodomite fashion*, magic-making,

²⁴⁰ *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch in The Lost Books of the Bible and the Forgotten Books of Eden* (New York, A Meridian Book, 1974), VII, 1-3, p. 83

²⁴¹ *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, (VIII, IX, pp. 83-84).

enchantments and devilish witchcrafts, and who boast of their wicked deeds, stealing, lies, calumnies, envy, rancour, fornication, murder, and who, accursed, steal the souls of men, who seeing the poor take away their goods and themselves wax rich, injuring them for other men's goods; who being able to satisfy the empty, made the hungering to die; being able to clothe, stripped the naked; and who knew not their creator, and bowed down to soulless (*sc.* Lifeless) gods, who cannot see nor hear, vain gods, *who also* built hewn images and bow down to unclean handiwork, for all these is prepared this place amongst these, for eternal inheritance.²⁴²

Here they took Enoch up on to the fourth heaven where is the course of sun and moon

THOSE men took me, and led me up on to the **forth heaven**, and showed me all the successive goings, and all the rays of the light of sun and moon. And I measured their goings, and compared their light, and saw the sun's light, and the sun's light is greater than the moon's. Its circle and the wheels on which it goes always, like a wind going past with very marvelous speed, and day and night it has no rest. Its passage and return *are accompanied by* four great stars, *and* each star has under it a thousand stars, to the right of the sun's wheel, *and by* four to the left, each having under it a thousand stars, altogether eight thousand, issuing with the sun continually. And by day fifteen myriads of angels attend it, and by night a thousand. And six-winged ones issue with the angels before the sun's wheel into the fiery flames, and a hundred angels kindle the sun and set it alight. . . . And again those men led me away to the western parts, and showed me six great gates open corresponding to the Eastern gates, opposite to where the sun sets, according to the number of the days three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter.²⁴³

Of the taking of Enoch on to the fifth heaven

The men took me on to *the* **fifth heaven** and placed me, and there I saw many and countless soldiers, called Grigori, of human appearance, and their size *was* greater than that of great giants and their faces withered, and the silence of their mouths perpetual, and there was no service on the fifth heaven, and I said to the men who were with me: 'Wherefore are these very withered and their faces melancholy, and their mouths silent, and *wherefore* is there no service on this heaven?' And they said to me: 'These are the Grigori, who with their prince Satanail [**Satan-El**] rejected the Lord of light, and after them are those who are held in great darkness on the second heaven, and three of them went down on to earth from the Lord's throne, to the place Ermon, and broke through their vows on the shoulders of the hill Ermon and saw the daughters of men how good they are, and took to themselves wives, and befouled the earth with their deeds, who in all times of their age made lawlessness and mixing, and giants are born and marvelous big men and great enmity. And therefore God judged them with great judgment, and they weep for their brethren and they will be punished on the Lord's great day.' And I said to the Grigori: 'I saw your brethren and their works, and their great torments, and I prayed for them, but the Lord has condemned them *to be* under earth till heaven and earth shall end forever.' And I said: 'Wherefore do you wait, brethren, and do not serve before the Lord's face, and have not put your services before the Lord's face, lest you anger your Lord utterly?' And they listened to my admonition, and spoke to the four ranks in heaven, and lo! as I stood with those two men four trumpets trumpeted together

²⁴² *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, (X:1-3, p.84).

²⁴³ *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, (XI-XIV, pp. 84-85).

with great voice, and the Grigori broke into song with one voice, and their voice went up before the Lord pitifully and affectingly.²⁴⁴

Of the taking of Enoch on to the sixth heaven

And thence those men took me and bore me up on to the **sixth heaven**, and there I saw seven bands of angels, very bright and very glorious, and their faces shining more than the sun's shining, glistening, and there is no difference in their faces, or behaviour, or manner of dress; and these make the orders, and learn the goings of the stars, and the alteration of the moon, or revolution of the sun, and the good government of the world. And when they see evil-doing they make commandments and instruction, and sweet and loud singing, and all *songs* of praise. These are the archangels who are above angels who are . . . *appointed* over seasons and years, the angels who are over rivers and sea, and who are over the fruits of the earth, and the angels who are over every grass, giving food to all, to every living thing, and the angels who write all the souls of men, and their deeds, and their lives before the Lord's face; in their midst are six Phoenixes and six Cherubim and six six-winged ones continually with one voice singing one voice, and it is not possible to describe their singing, and they rejoice before the Lord at his footstool.²⁴⁵

Hense they took Enoch into the Seventh Heaven

And those two men lifted me up thence on to the **seventh Heaven**, and I saw there a very great light, and *fiery troops of great archangels, incorporeal forces, and dominions, orders and governments, cherubim and seraphim, thrones and many-eyed ones, nine regiments, the loan it stations of light*, and I became afraid, and began to tremble with great terror, and those men took me, and led me after them, and said to me: 'Have courage, Enoch, do not fear,' and showed me the Lord from afar sitting on His very high throne. For what is there on the *tenth heaven*, since the Lord dwells here? On the tenth heaven is God, in the Hebrew tongue he is called Aravat. And all the heavenly troops would come and stand on the ten steps according to their rank, and would bow down to the Lord, and would again go to their places in joy and felicity, singing songs in the boundless light with small and tender voices, gloriously serving him. . . . And the cherubim and seraphim standing about the throne, the six-winged and many-eyed ones do not depart, standing before the Lord's face doing his will and cover his whole throne, singing with gentle voice before the Lord's face: 'Holy, holy, holy Lord Ruler of Sabaoth, heavens and earth are full of Thy glory.' . . . And Gabriel caught me up, and placed me before the Lord's face.²⁴⁶

The eighth Heaven

And I saw the **eighth Heaven**, which is called in the Hebrew tongue **Muzaloth**, changer of the seasons, of drought, and of wet, and of the twelve signs of the zodiac, which are above the seventh Heaven.²⁴⁷

The ninth Heaven

And I saw the **ninth Heaven**, which is called in Hebrew **Kuchavim**, where are the heavenly homes of the twelve signs of the zodiac.²⁴⁸

In the tenth Heaven the arch-angel Michael led Enoch to before the Lord's face

²⁴⁴ *Book of Secrets of Enoch*, (XVIII, 1-7, p. 87)

²⁴⁵ *Book of Secrets of Enoch*, (XIX, pp. 87-88).

²⁴⁶ *Book of Secrets of Enoch*, (XX, 1-4; XXI, 1-6, p. 88).

²⁴⁷ *Book of Secrets of Enoch*, (XXI, 7, p. 88).

²⁴⁸ *Book of Secrets of Enoch*, (XXI, 8, p. 88).

On the **tenth Heaven**, *Aravoth*, I saw the appearance of the Lord's face, like iron made to glow in fire, and brought out, emitting sparks, and it burns. Thus I saw the Lord's face, but the Lord's face is ineffable, marvelous and very awful,, and very, very terrible. And who am I to tell of the Lord's unspeakable being, and of his very wonderful face? And I cannot tell the quantity of his many instructions, and various voices, the Lord's throne very great and not made with hands, nor the quantity of those standing round him, troops of cherubim and seraphim, nor their incessant singing, nor his immutable beauty, and who shall tell of the ineffable greatness of his glory? And I fell prone and bowed down to the Lord, and the Lord with his lips said to me: 'Have courage, Enoch, do not fear, arise and stand before my face into eternity.' And the *archistratego* [Arch-commander, or General of the Lords Hosts or Armies] Michael lifted me up, and led me to before the Lord's face. And the Lord said to his servants tempting them: 'Let Enoch stand before my face into eternity,' and the glorious ones bowed down to the Lord, and said: 'Let Enoch go according to Thy word.' And the Lord said to Michael [Micha-El]: 'Go and take Enoch from out his earthly garments, and anoint him with my sweet ointment, and put him into the garments of My glory.' And Michael did thus, as the Lord told him. He anointed me, and dressed me, and the appearance of that ointment is more than the great light, and his ointment is like sweet dew, and its smell mild, shining like the sun's ray, and I looked at myself, and was like one of his glorious ones. And the Lord summoned on of his archangels by name Pravuil [Prava-El], who knowledge was quicker in wisdom than the other archangels, who wrote all the deeds of the Lord; and the Lord said to Pravuil: 'Bring out the books from my store-houses, and a reed of quick-writing, and give *it* to Enoch, and deliver to him the choice and comforting books out of thy hand.' . . . And he was telling me all the works of heaven, earth, and sea, and all the elements, their passages and goings, and the thundering of the thunders, the sun and moon, the goings and changes of the stars, the seasons, years, days, and hours, . . . And Pravuil told me: 'All the things that I have told thee, we have written. Sit and write all the souls of mankind, however many of them are born, and the places prepared for them to eternity; for all souls are prepared to eternity, before the formation of the world.' And all double thirty days and thirty nights, and I wrote out all things exactly, and wrote three hundred and sixty-six books.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ *Book of Secrets of Enoch*, (XXII, 1-II; XXIII, 1-3, pp. 88-89).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PAUL RICOEUR ON "THE SYMBOLISM OF EVIL"

Paul Gustave Ricoeur (1913-2005) was a French philosopher who advanced the methods of hermeneutic phenomenology. He followed a similar methodology and tradition as Edmund Husserl and Hans-Georg Gadamer. In 2000 he was awarded the *Kyoto Prize in Arts and Philosophy* for his work that "revolutionized the methods of hermeneutic phenomenology, expanding the study of textual interpretation to include the broad yet concrete domains of mythology, biblical exegesis, psychoanalysis, theory of metaphor, and narrative theory." In his book *The Symbolism of Evil* (1967) Ricoeur is not concerned with the primordial essence and origins of *Evil* (the primary focus of this work) but how *Evil* as a *really real* phenomenon is dealt with and expressed within the *life-world* and *lived experience* of the human person. He explores how as primordial myth *Evil* becomes symbolized as a "re-enactment" of confession of *Evil* that results from our feelings of *impurity, ethical terror, stain, and dread*. As we face the demands of the holy and what is sacred within our religious consciousness we are compelled to face *Evil* within ourselves and attempt to expiate IT (from within us) in order to overcome feelings of guilt (embedded deep within the primordial human mind = present *in the beginning when man became a living soul*). Guilt that is and overwhelming *feeling at fault* is our reward from the holy (*already embedded in our religious consciousness even before we have done anything thing good or evil*) for our acts of evil. We know that *Evil* is *present on every hand* because even before we do any act (good or evil) we feel *impure, ethical terror, stained, and dread* all of which culminates in guilt and fault. These feelings augmented by *anxiety* are *really real* so that we know that *something homicidal is out there* and has somehow invaded our minds and the inner-space of our person to threaten our very souls (i.e. who we are as a rational and emotive creature in God's *Good Creation*). Whatever IT is IT will not release us unless and until we go through the re-enactment of confession provided by symbols that have their origins in primordial myths of good and evil. Evil is therefore *really real* not because of some rationalist determination about *original sin* or speculative philosophy on the primordial origins of *Evil* (as proposed in this project) but because IT *is real in us*, that is, real for you and me in our *life-world* and *lived-experience*. As such IT in us can only be discovered or understood as we experience IT from the perspective of our feelings via our *psychic-mind* (as we will propose in later chapters of this project). Ricoeur (1967) makes the following statements along these lines:

HOW SHALL WE MAKE the transition from the possibility of evil in man to its reality, from fallibility to fault? We will try to surprise the transition in the act by "re-enacting" in ourselves the confession that the religious consciousness makes of it. . . . But if the "re-enactment" of confession of the evil in man by the religious consciousness does not take the place of philosophy, nevertheless that confession lies within the sphere of interest of philosophy, for it is an utterance, an utterance of man about himself; and every utterance can and must be taken up into the element of philosophic discourse. . . . of this "re-enactment," which is no longer religious experience and which is not yet philosophy. But let us indicate first what is *said* in the utterance that we have called the confession of the evil in man by the religious consciousness. . . . Nothing is less amenable to a direct confrontation with philosophy than the concept of original sin, for nothing is more deceptive than its appearance of rationality. On the contrary, it is in the least elaborate, the most inarticulate expression of the confession of evil that philosophic reason must listen. Therefore we must proceed regressively and revert

from the “speculative” expressions to the “spontaneous” ones. In particular, it is essential to be convinced from the start that the concept of original sin is not at the beginning but at the end of a cycle of living experience, the Christian experience of sin.²⁵⁰

At least Ricoeur is willing to consider *original sin* (as a way of explaining the presence of Evil within the human person) in his approach to phenomenology on evil as it experienced by the human person and “re-enacted” as symbol. Some religious scholars like Joseph F. Kelly don’t consider *original sin* biblical concept throwing it into the speculative realm of imaginary construction offered by St. Augustine. Kelly states: “The question of evil still revolves around God, not the devil. Original sin is meeting the same fate. Biblical scholars point out that original sin was created by Augustine and that it appears in neither the Hebrew Bible nor the New Testament. . . . reflecting the consensus of Jewish, Catholic, and mainline Protestant scholars that original sin is not a biblical concept.”²⁵¹ Sowhy consider *original sin* by phenomenology at all? One reason is to demonstrate that *Evil* is best understood from an examination of human experience that phenomenology provides rather than from a rationalist construction of *original sin*. The phenomenological approach and method is the best way to examine and explain *Evil* from within the *life-world* and the *lived-experience* of the human person. According to Kelly scholars like C. Fred Alford (while he does not define what is *Evil*) nevertheless holds that it can only be understood by seeing how it works from human experience. Alford wrote a book called *What Evil Means to Us* in 1998 and gives a clear summary of the phenomenological approach to *Evil* and the importance of the method in answer to his query. Kelly quotes Alford as stating:

Most [of his subjects] approach evil as an experience of dread. From this perspective evil is not a moral or theological problem. It is a problem of life, more practical than theoretical: how to know and live with an uncanny presentment of disaster which sneaks up on one from time to time. . . . People do not have concepts of evil, or at least that is not on the experiential ground. . . . People live an experience of evil and it lives in them.”²⁵²

This is essentially Ricoeur’s approach as he uses phenomenology to discover how *Evil* becomes *really real* for the human person as they actually *feel it* within themselves as *impurity, terror, stain, and dread* among other emotions that negatively define their *life-world* and *lived-experience* of *good and evil*. From this perspective Ricoeur’s (1967) approach is important for our project because his philosophical query using phenomenology as method opens the door to our primordial consciousness which is one primary avenue *Evil* uses on *God’s Superhighway of Modified Human Experience* to enter God’s *Good Creation* marking it with darkness using the pleasures of demonic experience. Through an examination of human emotive and psychic experience with the phenomenon of *Evil* within human persons allows us to learn something about the nature of Evil itself as it attacks the primordial religious consciousness of its human hosts to wreak havoc in human society in a grand attempt to stain and destroy God’s *Good Creation*. Using Ricoeur’s horizon of understanding (without claiming that he agrees with our purpose and aim) we can say that the human personality (i.e. mind, heart, psychic,

²⁵⁰ Paul Ricoeur. *The Symbolism of Evil*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967, pp. 3-4.

²⁵¹ Joseph F. Kelly. *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition, From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics*. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002) p. 215.

²⁵² Joseph F. Kelly. *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition*; p. 203.

etc.) while it is not the only avenue or pathway for *Evil* nevertheless *IT* is the primary pathway for *Evil* to enter onto the *Superhighway of God*. Ricoeur's approach to Evil on God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience is radically different than those theologians, philosophers, cosmologists we have considered heretofore and yet his phenomenology of Evil expressed using symbols of sin, fault and guilt in human persons *life-world* and *lived-experience* is apropos because after all we are talking about *human unified experience* of *Nothingness* with its three triune aspects of *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death* each of which God has consigned to the outer frontiers of His *Good Creation* and so when *IT* enters onto the *Superhighway of God* He has spoken against it with the deafening Divine "NO!"

What do we mean by this in respect to Ricoeur's phenomenology of sin using the symbols of sin to explain how the human person confronts Evil that God has said "NO!" to and therefore has called "Nothingness"? We can best understand Ricoeur in this respect by looking at how Karl Barth referred to Nothingness and its triune aspects of *sin*, *death*, and *Evil*. Since we have covered Barth *theology of Nothingness* (from the point of view of God's absolute sovereignty) in a previous chapter all we have to do here is summarize his main thought and then see how Ricoeur views and explains the same categories from the horizon of his *phenomenology of Nothingness* (from the human persons point of view = there *lived experience* of *sin*, death, and evil) where the symbols for Sin are prominent.

Karl Barth (1960) describes *Evil* as *Nothingness* and holds that *IT* is located on the outer edges on the frontier of God's *Good Creation*. *Evil* for him is *sui generis* meaning *IT* has autonomous being separate and apart from human experience of *IT* expressed as "Sin," that is, rebellion against the God and His Holiness. For Barth *Evil* is merely one triune aspect of Nothingness that has been consigned by God to the frontiers or outer edge of His *Good Creation* but not yet cast into *Outer Darkness* no longer to invade the material and spiritual realm of unified human existence in God's *New Heaven and New Earth*. Barth can hardly speak of sin as a single category without speaking of its place within the *triune nature of Nothingness*. Yet Barth (1960) in his *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation* states:

The reality of nothingness is not seen sharply enough, even in its concrete form as sin, if sin is understood only generally as aberration from God and disobedience to His will. This is true enough, but we cannot stop at this generalization. . . . sin and nothingness, are basically no more than our essential and natural imperfections in contrast with His perfection. Even in the bitterness of self-accusation we might still excuse and even justify ourselves by arguing that there can obviously be no real conformity between creature and Creator. . . . so that the divine demand for obedience is robbed of its ultimate rigour and its transgression is not quite so serious a matter. In sin as the concrete form of nothingness we should then be dealing again with merely the negative aspect of creation. . . . This is the case only when we realize that as disobedience to the will of God sin is a repudiation of His grace and its command, and therefore on the one hand a refusal of the gratitude which is naturally due to the gracious God, and on the other a rupture of the relationship with our neighbors which are normal and natural because of this gracious God is our Creator. . . . In relation to his gracious Creator man could and should live in this righteousness. His sin consists in the fact—and this is why it is so real and inexcusable—that he repudiates this possibility and imperative, and therefore the grace of God and its command. . . . This is what reveals the true nature of sin and nothingness as our repudiation of the goodness of God.²⁵³

²⁵³Karl Barth. *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation*. Vol. III.3. (London: T & T Clark International, 1960), 307-308.

For Barth *sin* is a real thing because it is a repudiation of God's grace and in its connection with Nothingness received the Divine repudiation "NO!" While Barth talks about "the bitterness of self-accusation" that we feel because of our sin; yet it is something that *happens to us* and not something *in us* (Ricoeur). Nevertheless, *sin, evil* and *death* for the human person (either way via Ricoeur or Barth) is *real*, that is *really real*. Barth (1960) goes on to state:

There is real evil and real death as well as real sin. In another connexion it will fall to be indicated that there is also a real devil with his legions, and a real hell. But here it will suffice to recognize real evil and real death. "Real" again means in opposition to the totality of God's creation. That nothingness has the form of evil and death as well as sin shows us that it is what it is not only morally but physically and totally. It is the comprehensive negation of the creature and its nature. And as such it is a power which, though unsolicited and uninvited, is superior, like evil and death, to all the forces which the creature can oppose to it. As negation nothingness has its own dynamic, the dynamic of damage and destruction which the creature cannot cope.²⁵⁴

Ricoeur (1967) later comes along and defines "sin: as "nothingness" but what does he mean? "Sin" as "Nothingness" as with Barth is repudiated by the Divine "NO!" but this "nothingness" according to Ricoeur does not come from the outer frontiers of God's *Good Creation* but is found in man, expressed as "sin" or rebellion against God's holiness. The "NO!" that God repudiates it with cause's men to experience IT as guilt, fault, and death unless he repents. For Ricoeur *sin as nothingness* is therefore real but it is *something real in man* that makes man *nothing* because IT *negates him*. Ricoeur states the following in Chapter II, Sin (Sec. 4 The Symbolism of Sin: (1) Sin as "Nothingness":

But sin is not only a rupture of a relation; it is also the experience of a power that lays hold of man. In this respect, the symbolism of sin rediscovers the major intention of the symbolism of defilement; sin, too, is a "something," a "reality" The symbolism of sin, then, suggests the idea of relation broken off. But the negativity of sin remains implicit in it; and we shall be able presently to survey these same key images from the point of view of the "power" of sin and also to extract from them an allusion to the positivity of human evil. This is why it is not without interest to join to this first bundle of symbols some other expressions that make the negative moment explicit and point toward the idea of a "nothingness" of sinful man. . . . This schema of the "nothingness" of idols and idolatry is the correlative, from the side of man, of the schema of the "Wrath of God" which we grasped directly in the oracle of the Day of Yahweh: man abandoned is [his] manifestation of God as the one who abandons; man's forgetfulness of God is reflected in God's forgetfulness of man. Thus God is no longer the "Yes" of the word "who speaks and it is so"; he is the "No" who puts down the wicked, his idols, and all his vanity. . . . Perhaps even the "No" of the interdiction, in the myth of the fall, is a naïve projection, in the sphere of innocence, of a negative issuing from sin itself. . . . Perhaps it is the nothingness of vanity, issuing from sin, which turns this very first creative limit into an Interdiction. Thus, step by step, vanity extends itself over everything and makes God himself appear as the "No" that forbids and destroys, as the Adversary whose will is summed up in the pursuit of death for the sinner.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. III,3, p. 310.

²⁵⁵ Paul Ricoeur. *The Symbolism of Evil*, pp. 74-77.

How can God's "No" that interdicts "sin" in man be "expiated" so that he no longer experiences the guilt, fault, and shame, the constituent elements of sin, itself one triune aspect of **Nothingness** that includes *sin*, *death*, and *evil*? Ricoeur suggests that man's attempt at expiation of sin has to do with "pardon-return" that overcomes God's interdict from the Divine "NO!" With this Divine Interdict man becomes nothing because he participates in Nothingness through his sin. God's interdiction is in place because God has already pronounced His "NO!" against Nothingness in God's *Good Creation* even prior to man's sin which is by nature under interdict the moment the human person rebels against God's holiness and His demand that we be "holy as He is Holy." Only God's "pardon" and man's "return" can reverse this interdict for as Ricoeur states:

Pardon is already fully evident in this restored capacity of knowing oneself in one's true situation in the bosom of the Covenant. Thus the penalty, felt as an affliction, is a part of the punishment and of pardon [at] the same time. By the same token, "pardon" *is* "return", *a parte Dei*, is nothing else than the taking away of blame, the suppression of the charge of sin: "I have acknowledged my sin to thee, I have not concealed my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Eternal! And thou hast wiped out the penalty of my sin" (Ps. 32:5). . . "Pardon" and "return" then coincide in the gift of a "heart of flesh," substituted for a "heart of stone" Thus the symbolism of "return" and of "pardon," in the land of its birth, holds in suspense all the aporias of theology concerning grace and free will, predestination and liberty.²⁵⁶

For Ricoeur man *tries to cope* with his sin by symbolic acts of confession and repudiation in order to *expiate* IT from his *life-world* and his *lived-experience* but he cannot of course without God's full pardon grounded in God's grace and mercy for His creation. Ricoeur gives rise to this notion when he states:

Such is the symbolic richness of this pair, pardon-return: if we try to surprise it at the level of images, it immediately throws us into the very midst of a paradox which can perhaps not be exhausted by any systematic theology but only shattered. Thus the prophet does not hesitate to exhort the people to "return," as if it depended entirely on man, and to implore the "return," as if it depended wholly on God: "Make me return and I shall return," cries Jeremiah.²⁵⁷

How can we "return" on our own without God? And if God does not choose to return us by the "free choice" of His "hidden majesty" how can we experience "pardoned" as Ricoeur suggests. Apostle Paul felt this tension that he called "wretchedness" in his own struggle with sin and what he says perhaps makes more clear what Paul Ricoeur is trying to get at in part of his phenomenology in answer to the question: How do we (as human person's under God's interdict of "NO!") as we experience *sin*, *death*, and *evil* as *nothingness* (within ourselves), and who are helpless against the *Evil's* superior power expiate IT from our *life-world* and *lived-experience*. Apostle Paul's frustration is evident in the following statement:

²⁵⁶ Ricoeur, pp. 79-81.

²⁵⁷ Ricoeur, p. 80.

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. Indeed, I do not know what I am doing! I do not practice what I desire to do; but what I hate, this is what I do! But if I do what I do not desire, I agree that the law is good. And so, I am no longer the one doing this [evil]. But [it is] the sin which dwells in me! Thus, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), nothing good dwells, because although [the power of] will is present within me, I do not find it doing what is good. In fact, the good which I desire, I do not do; but the evil which I do not desire, this is what I do! But if I do what I do not desire, *I am no longer the one doing it*, but [it is] the sin which dwells in me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, [IT] is evil that is present. For I delight in God's law *in my inmost self*, but I see a different law [working] in my members, and [IT] is at war against the law of my mind! [IT] brings me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord! And so, with the mind I serve God's law, but with the flesh, [I serve] the law of sin. [Romans 7:14-25, EOB, bold in bracket my insertion].

Many may not buy into Paul's "*the devil made me do it*" explanation for his sin and rebellion against God, although he admits he knows better; yet cannot for some reason keep from doing; but yet he gives the human person "born in iniquity and wrapped in sin" hope. In this Paul has hit on something. He speaks of something within him as if IT had a mind of its own; a mind already and inexplicably against God's holiness and at war with God's *Good Creation*. What is IT or what is this *Other Self* [this IT] that dwells in Paul's "*inmost self*," that is in his "*members*" that he cannot bring under control? Does Ricoeur have any response for this supposition and observation? He may have some answer in Part II, Chapter II of his book called *The Wicked God and the "Tragic" Vision of Existence*. Who or What in his mind is the "Wicked God?" First what Ricoeur is suggesting is "the principle of evil is as primordial as the principle of good, and that both principles existed *from the beginning*." Secondly, in the mind and religious consciousness of men gods such as the Babylonian Enlil appear to "the source both of devastation and of good counsel" but using a differing typography based in the myths of creation states that:

. . . the principle of evil is polarly opposed to the divine as its original Enemy; while the ambiguous figure tends toward the tragic when such a polarization does not occur and when the same divine power appears both as a source of good counsel and as a power to lead man astray. . . . But if the feeling that good and evil are identical in God resists thoughts, it is projected in dramatic works that give rise to indirect, but nevertheless troubling, reflection.²⁵⁸

Apparently the "Wicked God" is both good and evil such that there is no opposing dark power or principle of Evil that opposes Him as in theological dualism. This notion is rife in Greek tragic tradition and myth considering the gods of mount Olympus but Hebrew thought betrays such thinking as well when we read such biblical passages as Yahweh tells the Prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament "*I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things*" (Isaiah 45:7, KJV). We would rather hear the more comforting and less unsettling assertion in the New Testament: "This is the message which we have heard from him and which we now announce to you: that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5, EOB). Even to this day we pay obeisance to the first suspicion that God is both good and evil while we ardently hope in the second

²⁵⁸ Ricoeur, pp. 213-214.

notion that “in God is no darkness at all.” Yet when tragedy comes our way we don’t blame the Devil but rather we keep asking this poignant question: *“Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?”* This is where we have allowed some of Ricoeur’s thinking bring us back to the main question of this project: “What is Evil?” where we have to ask and try to answer this question to escape the disquieting thought or feeling that somehow God is responsible for the Evil we see in God’s *Good Creation*.

CHAPTER TWELVE

LANCE MORROW ON “*THE MODERN PARADOX OF EVIL*” (“THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT!”)

Lance Morrow, a University Professor at Boston University, storyteller, investigator and contributor for *Time Magazine* brings forth a more modern and less philosophical view of evil but no less evocative than the previous thinkers we have surveyed. He gets right to his primary argument in Chapter 1 of his book characterizing Evil as more a global phenomenon rather than personal or psychic-emotive phenomenon by which we so easily demonize persons as the source of *all evil* or as *evil incarnate* (e.g. President Trump and/or his “deplorables” or on the other hand the Press as the “Enemy of the People” or “Putin” as the leader of the new “Axis of Evil”). Somebody has to be held responsible for the evil we see in the world, it might as well be . . . anybody but the Devil, despite the Scripture which states: “*Put on the complete armor of God, so that you may be able to resist the devil’s tactics. Truly, our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness and against the evil spiritual forces of the supernatural realms.*” (Ephesians 6:11-12, EOB).

Of course you cannot convince very many modern minds today that we are *actually fighting against invisible dark and demonic powers* (admittedly by observation the working through human surrogates, acolytes, and devotees; rewarding them with the temporary pleasures of demonic experiences, e.g. MONEY, POWER, SEX). This modern view is taken also because this notion is so archaic that it is deemed by some of us never to have being true even when it was first declared by less scientifically and less technologically informed people; and of course we knowing everything, or declaring that *we can know everything* no better, and so this archaic notion is best forgotten (not being worthy of investigation and scientific enquire). So we can have fun dispatching, and daily denigrating our flesh and blood enemies with well-placed *ad hominem* attacks (against the person devolving into mere name calling; not their policies and beliefs) because they disagree with our policies, beliefs, and views. While Morrow does not deny human agency in the promotion and even advance of evil he lays out a sobering caution to mere human demonization. He suggests that if we do, we are going to miss something important about the nature of evil (from this works overall perspective and conclusion) and this may be just what *Evil* as an environmental “current” or malignant virus within society, human culture, or within the body politic (we believe is guided by spiritual rational mind) wants us to do, so *IT* can stay anonymous, hidden, invisible, and so have us direct our anger onto those flesh and blood persons *we already* hate, loathe, and so suppose are the source of Evil if not Evil incarnate. In his chapter “The Globalization of Evil” Morrow (2003) states:

Do not bother to demonize people as being inherently evil. That’s not how it works. Instead, we should view evil as opportunistic, passing like an electrical current through the world and through people; or wandering like an infection that takes up residence in individuals or cultures from time to time. Distance once helped to dampen the effects of human wickedness; and of course, weapons once had limited range. But evil has burst into a new dimension. The globalization, democratization, and miniaturization of the instruments of destruction (nuclear weapons or their diabolical

chemical-biological step-brothers) mean a quantum leap in the delivery systems of evil.²⁵⁹

In making these arguments Morrow comes close to the views held by Russian thinker, Svetozar Stojanovic, whose arguments on *auto-apocalypse* we surveyed earlier in this work. We argued that Svetozar Stojanovic suggests this technological justification for human dominion over all of God's *Good Creation* is an "absolute evil" that would likely lead to *auto-apocalyptic destruction* of the human person and human institutions. If we have the technological means to destroy others and ourselves nothing in our culture influenced by demonic passions and desires is there to stop us. *If we are technologically able to destroy and kill masses of people in order to satisfy either our greed or creed, we eventually will.* Stojanovic states:

The expanded reproduction of the means to the self-destruction of humankind has become a characteristic inherent in techno-scientific creativity and not its "collateral result." Still worse: as if this problem were not difficult enough, in trying to prevent auto-apocalypse from happening we have to paradoxically rely on that very creativity. The sources of evil are usually sought in the animal side of human nature. But the possibility and probability of absolute evil (the self-destruction of the human species) is rooted in our peculiarity rather than in our animality. Destructive potential is no external opposition to human creativity, but is inherent in it. At its "peak," human creativity itself shows it has the potential, even tendency, to be self-apocalyptic. As if a collective Thanatos, together with Eros, were built into our creativity.²⁶⁰

Stojanovic's statement suggests that evil has humanity's back against the wall and that both Death (i.e. *Thanatos*) and Love (i.e. *Eros*) both moved by inherent passions that need to be assuaged in that creative impulse of our human nature and culture. Once Pandora's box of our own creativity has opened the lid of our passions from either emotive pole it cannot be shut again, and so, what is created cannot be controlled until it is satisfied. That danger aside, the *collective* human person is limited in absolute wisdom because she or he must struggle as a composite spiritual and material being. *Evil* uses our existential condition as human persons subject to suffering and death against us. Paul calls this human condition and struggle "wretched", while Stojanovic says the struggle is between our "infinite *eagerness-to-know*" and our "infinite *hubris*" an unfortunate "compound characteristic of humanity's generic being."²⁶¹ The human person lives existentially as a physical being tied to the material cosmos, whose ontological existence is tied to the spiritual unseen universe, where we are threatened with non-being (death) and suffering as a condition of our being. We struggle against this threat of non-being, by threatening others with the same, as the one tool to guarantee (so we think) against the possibility and even inevitability of our own demise (the greatest fear moving us to destroy other *first* with our own mass technologies and instruments of death). Morrow is arguing that Evil is "opportunistic" meaning that if IT through ITs agents, surrogates, devotees, acolytes and/or minstrel dancers do ITs bidding; they do so in order to emotively share in (take pleasure in) the *demonic experience* such participation brings them and IT and so *they* will. It is also much like (as Morrow

²⁵⁹ Lance Morrow. *Evil: An Investigation*. (New York: Basic Books, 2003), p. 17.

²⁶⁰ Stojanovic , p. 2.

²⁶¹ Stojanovic, p. 2.

states) an electric current (spiritual malaise) passing through the world (i.e. culture, society, and body-politic) and also through people (sometime here and sometime there) and even like a viral infection made the more rapid and potent because of our technological advances in communicating not just words but images that can kill not only reputations, and hopes, but people themselves that are the object of our hatred. Morrow would understand Stojanovic's emphasis on technology as the *vehicle of opportunity* for Evil to advance through the world bringing about havoc, fear, hatred, and death *now here, now there* sometimes with the uncanny accuracy of causation, where the paradox of random events cannot be explained by tragic circumstance of events that appear (as if planned) as we say in this work *not a minute before, not a minute after*.

However, Morrow wants to stay closer to the human element and participation of Evil and while noting that it is both opportunistic and like an electric current and infection passing through the world facilitated by the movement and advance of technology he does not want to move wholly in that direction (and from his perspective with no warrant) toward the notion that Evil is some kind of Supra-natural dark power or influence taking advantage of our weak moral human condition subject to do the bidding of Evil in exchange for the pleasures of *demonic experiences* associated with MONEY, POWER, and/or SEX. This opportunist current of Evil for Morrow is not Evil but evil as more of a cultural phenomenon than a spiritual one, even though he asks some very important questions that must be answered about Evil whether from a cultural or spiritual perspective: "What is Evil Like?" "How does it behave?" "What are its qualities?" "What is its personality---if it has a personality?" These are all important questions that we have asked already in this work and project and were of course asked long ago by thinkers like St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas; and still others within our modern times we have surveyed. But like many other thinkers who want to avoid claiming that Evil is some kind of rational entity (i.e. has embodiment and/or rational-mind and thus purpose, and aim) or has some kind supra-natural being or essence (spiritual or material) Evil in their mind begins to or must devolve into or be dispersed into some kind of unseen *but non-living influence* (without material or spiritual embodiment) in the world; where no real explanation can be offered for the havoc we know is caused by Evil; except the human person that can always justify their actions with the declaration once made popular by the black comedian Flop Wilson playing the female character "Geraldine" who would defend "her" actions by saying *"The Devil made me do it."*

Morrow begins to go down this illogical track into a *cul de sac* leading nowhere but back to the original questions he asked, one of which is "Does Evil have a personality?" Morrow states: "Lucifer has a personality (at least admitting the possibility that the Devil is real and has real being). Hitler had a personality. Nero had a personality. Stalin had a personality. But perhaps evil does not, and something else altogether---a germ, a virus, a bug? Or as Hannah Arendt said, a fungus?"²⁶² If Evil is just a "bug" what a hell of a "bug" it is, which has been around for thousands and even millions of years causing havoc on humanity and society. On a more serious note it is obvious that all of these natural phenomenon and certainly these human personalities (whom history has demonized) which Morrow mentions have indeed caused great havoc both natural and man-made, bringing great sorrow with *ITs* coming and passing through like an electric current *now here, now there*. But can we take Morrow seriously that he believes any of these including the personalities cited (who are dead and gone to their just reward) are the source of Evil or Evil incarnate? In this work we think not. The Scripture even declares that *Satan-El* was a holy angel until Evil was found in him, falling from God's grace and because of it cast out of Heaven (See Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-17); so *Satan-El* (as we

²⁶² Morrow, p. 28.

argue in this work) cannot be Evil incarnate, even though he is *IT's* *Chief surrogate, acolyte, and devotee*, influencing the human person via deceit and the offer of demonic pleasures to act on behalf of the *IT*, that is, *Evil*. Nevertheless, we cannot merely dismiss Morrow's arguments and musings. His is a popular, yet a serious attempt to investigate the nature, character, modes of operation, and pathways of Evil in and through the world and more so because of the devastating impact and influenced Evil has had and still is having within human civilization. Morrow is imploring us not to dismiss the notion of Evil but give it more serious thought worthy of investigation. How do we know Morrow has serious intent? It is because he recognizes, like we do in this work that the greatest danger to the advance of good in this world is dismissing Evil and the idea of it as of no consequence to modern life, culture, society and people. Morrow makes the following pertinent statements in this regard while at the same time continuing to avoid the notion that Evil is more than a mere idea or cultural current and so does not have rational being (is a rational actor in the universe with purpose and aim) which also has essence (i.e. embodiment, as St. Thomas Aquinas would suggest could be an "Entity." See his *On Evil*, First Article "Is Evil an Entity", pp. 55-62) that somehow or someway is *really real*. Morrow writes like he believes Evil is *really real* but not in the sense we claim for this project. Nevertheless, his view is substantive, and so states:

But evil evolves. It has a talent for adaptation. Its keeps up with history and technology The word "evil"—and the idea of evil— have become pertinent from a new angle. A door has opened into another dimension.²⁶³ The idea of evil has to be rethought in that dimension, under new conditions. A lively awareness of evil, once part of any healthy mind, must be re-installed in the consciousness of the West. With[out] an awareness of evil, people become confused; they fail to anticipate its ruthless possibilities. In the new instantaneous global dimension, it may be catastrophic not to think clearly about evil, not to be aware of what it is capable of doing. . . . The mystery of evil, with us from the beginning, remains essentially intact, so one must operate on the premise that the discussion is still open to laymen. I am not qualified to pronounce definitively on evil. Who is? An arch-bishop? A saint? A murderer? Anthropologist? Sociologist? Psychiatrist? Who, except one of the monsters or one of his victims, can claim professional expertise?²⁶⁴

Again Morrow deals with our emotive and rational inhibitions to credit Evil as the source of human havoc and devastation (whether natural or man-made [i.e. moral]). We have gotten to the point that we cannot even mention *IT's* name in the same breath with human tragedy, and that is why what Morrow is saying here is so important. For so many of us *some other explanation* (other than Evil) must be had why for instance a man would rape and murder four women and then claim that burning their bodies afterward was a cleansing ritual to honor their death. We have to look for "rational" mitigating factors that explains why this inhuman or rather human abuser did what he did, such as "He was once inhumanely abused himself" so say the psychologist in an attempt to explain so dark a psychosis for certainly no sane person without this terrible history of abuse would do such inhuman acts and then try to provide a "rational" explanation for the act beyond the claim that it was pure Evil Itself as the cause. Certainly, defense lawyers need such explanations to get a reduced sentence from death to life in prison for their client; and even prosecutors need the same explanations

²⁶³ See below my discussion of "God's Superhighway" the pathway upon which both evil and good are permitted to travel within *Time and Eternity* through God's *Good Creation*].

²⁶⁴ Morrow, pp. 4-5.

to convict such a person, denying that such mitigating factors played any role whatever (or is insufficient to account for the level of human disregard and barbarity); but for neither does pure evil come into view, especial with the notion that some unseen spiritual force (like the Devil) made him do it. Here Satan-El as the Chief Prosecutor of humanities actions that he instigates is cast out of the court room of one of the actors. For the human prosecutor "He (the accused) just did these heinous crimes and deserves full extent of punishment the law allows, never mind needing to explain why the accused did it in such cases. Morrow has some inkling that we go through these emotive rationalizing exercises so that (1) we can have a rational reason why irrational acts by human persons occur, and (2) to decry the truth in the back of our minds that Evil *Itself* is the cause and nothing else, even though we carry the evil actions out. We cannot speak *ITs* name and so Morrow states:

The secular, educated, cosmopolitan is a fox; it tends to shun the word "evil" and, as an optimist and creature of the Enlightenment, approaches the world's horrors as individual problems that be solved (we hope) in a systematic way. People who use the word "evil" are apt to be hedgehogs. But to alter. . . the test of the first-rate mind may without losing the ability to function. The intelligent mind is bifocal, capable of seeing evil in both modes. Evil appears in an immense and subtle variety of forms—including, sometimes, the form of apparent good. The task is to recognize evil for what it is, and yet to respond to it with discernment. See comprehensively, as a hedgehog does, but respond discriminately, flexibly, as a fox does, without the dogmatism that makes zealots stupid and prompts them, from time to time, to burn people at the stake.²⁶⁵

I would hope in this project that I am not one of Morrow's dogmatic zealots and certainly not one that burns people at the stake or "burns" them using social media to either demonize them using *ad hominem* strategies to undermine their argument and ideas simply because they do not agree with mine. Yet I hope Morrow is not such a bifocal hedgehog hiding within the framework of human empathy or fairness so that Evil is rationalized such that even good can be seen as one of *ITs* modes of operation. Here it should be pointed out that this is one of *Satan-El's* tactics to appear to us as an *Angel of Light* rather than who he really is, the Chief Surrogate for Evil. He is not an angel of light but transforms himself into one using his ability as a *Cherubim* (e.g. *shape-shifter*, a *changeling* = a *Change-Thing* = a *changing thing* = a being that is the "Prince of the Air" or "Prince of the Elements" and so could be standing right next to you and you would not know it). Being so spiritually constituted Satan-El likely changed himself into a serpent in the Garden of Eden (See 2 Corinthians 11:14; Genesis 3:1-15; Ezekiel 28:11-15) in order to deceive its human/divine residents, just as today he takes on many forms to deceive so-called modern men as well, the more so because we generally and as a whole do not believe he exists and is *really real* to his tactical advantage, not ours. However, what Morrow suggests above is a slippery slope that will eventually lead one to calling darkness light and light darkness; calling good evil and evil good so that there is no discernible distinction between the two as we are moved to avoid the inevitable conflict between good and evil through the prohibitions of PC language and unwarranted sentiments that calls Evil the evil that it is when one clearly sees it in operation within God's *Good Creation*. Certainly, from our perspective this would be one of Evil's primary objectives to use the sentiment of fairness and censorship inherent in today PC norms to enforce *Its* *gag order from Hell* not to speak against the works of the Children of Darkness lest we be charged with (God forbid) *judging them*. Sadly those of us who know better and either through *fear*

²⁶⁵ Morrow, p. 13.

of . . . or *complicit with* . . . these anti-God, anti-Man cultural sentiments will eventually stand accountable before the Judgment Seat of God for Revelations specifically condemns the *fearful* and those who *cooperate with* Evil to the same fate, for as the Scripture warns “*To the one who overcomes, I will give these things. I will be [a] God to him, and he will be a son to me. But as for the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic, idolaters, and all liars, their part is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death*” (Revelation 21:7-8, EOB). The Epistle of James points out how God views those complicit with Evil in the world even if they do not do these things that others do: “Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility with God? Whoever wants to be a friend of the world is hostility with God?” (James 4:4, EOB). The New Testament Greek defines *the world* as *κόσμος* (*kosmos*) supposedly an ordered system of civilization = ordered system as opposed to *chaos* = disordered system, that is, nevertheless “the system of practices and standards associated with secular society (that is, without reference to any demands or requirements of God) – ‘world system, world’s standards, world.’”²⁶⁶ When this so-called God-less ordered system begins to support, celebrate, and even reward *crude, rude, and lewd* behavior then societies quickly devolves into *chaos = disorder* permitting openly nearly any kind of evil affirming the prophecy in Revelation:

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, and a shelter for every unclean and detestable bird! Truly, all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality: the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich from the abundance of her luxury (Revelation 18:1b-3, EOB).

Rather than the people of God = the Children of Light becoming complicit in the sins of such a nation (i.e. becoming their friends and empathizing or God-forbid rationalizing their wrongs) Revelation advises them to: “*Come out of her, my people, so that you may have no participation in her sins, and so that you may not receive any of her plagues. For her sins have reached up to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Give back to her just as she returned and repay her double according to her works*” (Revelation 18:4-6a, EOB). Finally, we come back to some concrete notions to show that Morrow is just like the rest of us when trying to understand the nature of Evil. Evil is some kind of unseen undefined spiritual dark power (some kind of “current” or cultural malaise within society) influencing some maladjusted individuals to do wrong and sometimes wreck great harm on others with seemingly no regrets or remorse. From our point of view Evil is *really real*, meaning IT is a rational spiritual being (i.e. an Entity we have dubbed Nothingness, etc.) that has rational purpose and aim but nevertheless acts irrationally as IT cannibalizes (i.e. eats up ITs own children) the very beings that have substance and gives IT life. To understand the nature of Evil we are forced to see ITs actions and aims through its human surrogate agents, acolytes and devotees who in turn receive temporary pleasures of *demonic experiences* offered. The rational for all of these human actors is one and the same (of some sort): “THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT!” The field of psychology has bought into these and many more rationalizations lock stock and barrel. The only reason that this work and apparently Morrow entertains any part of this notion and excuse for human evil is that human agency is the primary way of understanding the nature of Evil and in addition is the way we can understand

²⁶⁶ *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. Compiled by Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, Editors. (New York: United Bible Societies, , 1988-89), Vol. 1, p. 508.

the rational and irrational aims of Evil as it seeks to operate on God's *Superhighway of unified human experience* that we will elaborate on in the following chapters. Morrow states the following in line with some of these assumptions by asking the question in his chapter on "Why Do They Do It?" that is, "Why do People do Evil?" Apparently, there are all kinds of rationalizations and musings including what some regard as the laughable phrase "*The Devil made me do it*" made popular by black comedian Flip Wilson in the character of "Geraldine Jones" on the "Flip Wilson Show" between 1970 and 1974. This rationalization among others on Morrow's list stands as the shallow metaphor of similar human excuses and rationalizations for doing evil none of which will do any of us any good when standing before God's judgment seat as strongly suggested throughout the *Revelation of John*. So "Why Do They Do It?":

- Because it gives them pleasure
- Because it gives them power
- Because they don't know any better
- Because they are afraid of their victims
- Because they think that the evil they are doing is righteous, or good, or necessary
- Because they are too morally stupid to recognize the evil they are doing
- Because they are forced to do it by people holding power over them
- Because they are caught in a mob's frenzy
- Because they feel a perverse itch to do harm and it occurs to them that they may do so
- Because it is customary among their people, and not to do it would be a breach of community tradition or ceremony
- Because it is an accident
- Because they are habituated to it
- Because they suffer from a compulsion
- Because they themselves were treated evilly once
- *Because Satan makes them do it*

People who write about evil as if it were a phenomenon subject to measurement and scientific inspection—which it is not—make distinctions between "natural evil" and "moral evil," between "hard evil" and "soft evil," between "strong evil" and "weak evil." Natural evil, much like soft evil or weak evil, means earth quakes, cancer, and other evils arising in the course of life. Moral evil, or hard evil or strong evil, has human agency and presumably involves evil acts committed by human choice. The most profound, painful, and potentially humiliating question that human beings have to ask themselves about evil is whether moral evil exists. Do people really have a choice? Do people choose to do what they do, or are even manifestly evil acts such as serial killing) predetermined—the wires of slaughter and atrocity and genocide, for example, manipulated by other forces? By heredity? By brain chemistry? By God? If moral evil does not exist, how can society itself exist? Why have laws against murder if the murderer cannot help himself? No one has managed to reconcile divine determination and personal responsibility.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ Morrow, pp. 34-35.

Further Morrow states:

Evil is an imitation of God—of God’s inscrutable, peremptory, mysteriously smiting self. This, again is the evil of a usurping pretender: the insurrection of the negative. . . . Evil is often happiest when it operates in the autonomy of the gratuitous—enjoys the ease of movement, prefers to be the master of its own motions. This is evil’s idea of an aristocratic discretion. Evil demands discretionary power. If evil operates under compulsion, it is not evil, but something else—an agent, a servant: Just following orders. Evil, properly, is an exercise of malignant mastery. Evil can do anything that it can imagine. Evil has a reasonably fertile imagination. It has expressed itself in ingenious ways. It learns new techniques and styles. Does evil evolve? Does evil learn from its experiences? Is it the case that evil evolves roughly as human beings evolve, *pari passu*, a dark parallel evolution? Evil keeps pace. New Technology enables new evil. . . . Evil is limited by its resources, or empowered. Evil, as an opportunist, lives as a parasite upon even the honest exertions of the mind.²⁶⁸

Painfully, Morrow is trying to bridge the conceptual gap between human moral responsibility for their actions and the notion of divine determination (providing humans with another oft used rationalization = “God is responsible” somehow for what is happened to me or what I have done; as in Job the claim that “*The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; I alone have escaped to tell you*” (Job 1:16b, NRSV) when in fact the previous passages makes it clear this supernatural tragedy was brought about by *Satan-El*; albeit with God’s permissive will. When other rationalizations fail “God is responsible” serves us well; nevertheless it is a notion under which humans are ultimately without freewill and therefore are not able to avoid choosing or doing evil acts, whereactions we take are not our fault leading us to denywe have freewill and therefore choice, as reasonable and responsible agents of our own *will to power*. Morrow exacerbates this struggle of understanding by further dismissing any notion of a supra-natural spiritual being called the Prince of Darkness as the influencer of these human acts of evil; yet he wants to say that “evil evolves” and “learns from its experiences” in evolution with human development and human technological advances. Morrow calls the concept of a Prince of Darkness an archaic notion like that of the pre-modern notion of absolute monarchy. We do not yet have a *theology of Evil* that does not let us off the hook for our self-serving rationalizations. A *theology of Evil* will suggest that if Satan-El as the supreme agent of Evil is not *really real* then neither is God as the supreme agency of good; an assertion that is theological untenable. Further, how can Evil learn or evolve with human development and human technological advances less along take advantage of opportunities to advance *ITs* demonic aims within God’s *Good Creation* without either the rational mind of a supra-natural entity or human agent? As archaic as it may sound the notion of supra-natural *Dark Prince of the Air-Waves*, the Chief acolyte and devotee of Evil advancing *ITs* aims and purposes via the rude, crude, and lewd, ideas and acts through the medium of television, movies, and other mediums of technology *is necessary* despite all denials to the contrary. Evil using human technological advances to advance *ITs* own aims and purpose sounds awful modern and sounds like Morrow’s notion that “Evil evolves” “Evil learns”; yet is still in line with the so-called archaic or medieval idea that there is a rational dark power behind much of the human evil we see being promoted today along God’s *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. If is not for nothing that the Bible states:

²⁶⁸ Morrow, pp. 37-38.

The Prince of Darkness Roaming the Earth Seeking Opportunities to Advance Evil

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said to Satan, Whence have you come? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking on it. (Job 1:6-7, Peshitta Text, trans. By George M. Lamsa)

Be sober, self-controlled, and watchful. Your adversary, the devil, roams about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, knowing that your brethren throughout the world experience the same sufferings. (1 Peter 5:8-9, EOB New Testament).

The Prince of Darkness as Influencer via his Role as the Prince of the Air[Waves]

You were dead in transgressions and sins, and this was your lifestyle according to the age of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience. We used to live among them and we used to live in self-indulgence, doing the desires of the {fallen} flesh and mind, and we were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God who is rich in mercy, on account of his great love by which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved! (Ephesians 2:1-5, EOB New Testament).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

EVIL ON GOD'S SUPER HIGHWAY OF UNIFIED HUMAN EXPERIENCE: A COMMUNITARIAN PERSPECTIVE ON GOD'S PROVIDENCE

With Barth and Wink, we have learned something more substantive about the nature of *Evil* than we learned from St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas. Yet, without both of these ancient theologians, both doctors of the church (one African and the other European) the question could hardly be raised. Their work is foundational although incomplete without Ricoeur's phenomenological examination of the symbolism of Evil that makes the question of "What is Evil?" (following Alford) more than a theoretical question but a "practical" one as we seek to understand the nature of Evil through the *life-world* and *lived-experience* of the human person. All theodicy's want to know if *Evil* is genuine because if IT is then Christian theology in its classical form has a problem. By looking at this question both St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas advanced the study that evil is indeed genuine and more than that it is *really real* as some kind of negative ontological reality (as inferred by their questions/not their answers) even though neither of them would admit this truth in any substantive way. It was way beyond their theological horizon of thought to do so until the work of Barth and Wink. The theologies of Barth, Wink and some others (Stringfellow, Ricoeur, Morrow, etc.) where needed to advance the questions that St. Augustine and St. Thomas initially raised. The conclusions and supposition that both Barth and Wink made would have utterly startled even them; and I am not sure if they have not done the same to modern theologians and churchmen since Protestantism (following St. Augustine) nor Catholicism (following St. Thomas) having advanced very far beyond the horizon of thought of these two ancient and very powerful theologians.

Advancing somewhat beyond classical and traditional Christian theology we understand that *Evil* operates to oppose God either outside God's *Good Creation* (Barth) or operates inside God's *Good Creation*, mainly through the activities of the principalities and powers (Wink). Further we know from Barth that *Nothingness* imitates and mimics the triune nature of God with its own triune nature, and so opposes the divine Trinity in three negative aspects of *Evil*, *Sin* and *Death*. St. Augustine largely dealt with **Sin** the second triune aspect of *Nothingness* in the development of his *doctrine of original sin*, and St. Thomas Aquinas largely dealt with **Evil**, the first triune aspect of *Nothingness*, while Barth dealt largely with **Death**, the third triune aspect of *Nothingness* unmasking **IT's** end game or purpose in opposing God by attacking God's *Good Creation* in every conceivable way possible. Although Barth focused on negative Trinitarian aspect of **Death**, he also included in his theology and examination of **Evil** and **Sin** as well. Wink on the other hand attempts to bring about a practical operational synthesis of all three aspects of *Nothingness*. Nevertheless, two questions remain. How does Evil, as a triune aspect of Nothingness, operate within God's good, created order, and why does God permit it to operate in God's *Good Creation*? All good theodicies ask these two questions: *Why Doesn't God stop IT? Does God not care?* In the words of Jesus' disciples, said in a boat on the sea of Galilee: *"Master, carest thou not that we perish"* (Mark 4:38, KJV). Or in Process Theology (which we have not touched on yet: *"Maybe God Can't Stop IT because He has self-limited both His Power and His All Knowing!"*; something the ordinary human person could not even conceive of and would be outraged if such as thought was taken seriously. Nevertheless, how can we say that God is both all-loving and all-powerful and yet allow *Evil* to exist and operate in God's good, created order apparently with impunity, and if classical theology is correct then by God's permissive will? Or considering the theology of Barth, can we now say: Evil operates even in spite of God's will? In this project we believe the answer lies in

knowing that there is a *unified field of human experience* along which God permits both good and evil to travel. We have called this **unified field of human experience** *God's Superhighway* and principally designated as such because God has (in His immutable wisdom) allowed all sentient being (good or evil) to operate on it in order to work out their own destinies as God attempts to *lure* each down a pathway to life and away from choices that God knows leads to death. The how and the why of the question that I proposed from my project "What is Evil?" can be answered for the most part with the development of this conceptual metaphor borrowed from *Process Philosophy* (Alfred Whitehead) and *Process Theology* (Charles Hartshorne).

The most significant thing we can say at the beginning of this development or conceptualization is that God cannot stop *Evil* from traveling on **God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience** without at the same time preventing *Good* from traveling the same road.²⁶⁹ Additionally, God cannot do so without violating the freedom of His creatures that have (within the interiority of their being) the freedom to do either good or evil because (metaphorically speaking) we all have eaten from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*.²⁷⁰ The human person is permitted to promote either *Christological experience* or *demonic experience* on God's superhighway of unified experience. *Christological experience* is **cruciform** in nature (i.e. leads to the cross for each disciple who experiences some degree of suffering as they travel along *God's Superhighway*) but in the end leads to eternal life and **deiform transformation** of the human person. *Demonic experience* (which is **thanaform** or **thanatic** in nature, coined from Greek Θάνατος, "death", "sentence to die", "doomed to die") leads to the death of the human person and human institutions. Death under this rubric means a cessation of deiform transformation that God has envisioned for the human person and human institutions. God's reasons for permitting this state of affairs are grounded in God's providential care of God's *Good Creation* and the fact that God Himself on His Throne is coming down from Heaven to live among *deiform human beings* within a transformed *New Heaven and a New Earth*, so these will enjoy **on Earth Christological experience** for all of eternity:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the

²⁶⁹ **Unified human experience** here means that human experience of the phenomenon of good and evil is of one fabric (i.e. made from the same cosmic, emotive, and psychic stuff within God created universe) so that we (as humans) experience good and evil substantively the same way modified only by our *life-world* (i.e. cultures, traditions, societal norms, etc) and *lived-experience* of the same.

²⁷⁰ So to speak we all have eaten together from the one *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* and if we want to be redeemed as human persons and human societal institutions from the effect of this choice we must do so through the advancement of *Christological experience* within the interiority of ourselves and within our human institutions (saying at the same time "No!" to *demonic experience*) as we progress on the **Superhighway of God** if we want to eat together from the *Tree of Life* and drink from the *Water of Life* as a free gift from God for those who conquer and overcome Evil within ourself and in our human institutions.

thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:1-8, NRSV).

This horizon of thought grounded in biblical theology brings us to concepts embedded in *Communitarian* philosophy and theology enforcing the notion that what is happening here in the Earth of Time is all important for us and Heaven and that counter to the traditional view and claim of the church *we are not going up to Heaven but Our God is coming down here to Earth to live with us forever*. We are in fact not taking God's *Good Earth* serious enough to know that “what goes up must come down” and that God was serious when He made the human person the caretaker in the His *Garden of Eden*, and finally that “God will destroy those who destroy His Earth.” (Revelation 11:18).

We can see in God's *Communitarian* and *Trinitarian* being²⁷¹ that God tolerates the presence of Evil for the sake of completing the *deiform transformation* of the human person and all other sentient beings, such as unseen powers and principalities that follow *the lure of God* along the **superhighway of unified human experience**. All living being from this perspective are moving toward and are being lured toward *deiform perfection*, according to God's initial aims for the totality of God's good creation, that is, each being transformed according to the nature God has envisioned for each within the context of *communitarian life* primarily here on Earth. This includes all sentient beings in the spiritual and temporal realms of God's *Good Creation* with command functions to oversee God's *Good Creation*. All of this is occurring on God's superhighway of unified human, spiritual, and cosmological experience, taken in its totality.

However, before we can look directly at how things operate on this ontological and existential highway of experience from a phenomenological horizon of thought the question of God's nature as a caring God has to be looked at. In other words, we have to approach the problem of Evil from the doctrine of God's providence as both Barth and Wink did in formulating their theologies. God does care, so why does He not do something about Evil? What is the nature of God's caring for God's *Good Creation*? The answer lies in understanding two aspects of God's moral nature as an omni-benevolent being. If God's moral nature is to be understood, it must be looked at in two aspects. God is both a **Trinitarian being** and a **Communitarian being**. God's love encompasses God's caring for all three persons of the Trinity and God's love for all sentient beings, including the totality of the creation, expressed in God's communitarian nature. In the *Communitarian* aspect of God's nature He in love wishes to protect and advance the growth and development of all things that God has made through His Word. In the *Trinitarian* aspect of God's nature He loves the three persons of the Trinity including Himself. This is expressed in Scripture as “the Lord's name is Jealous and He is a jealous God” (Exodus 34:14) and also God “will not give His glory to another” (Isaiah 42:8). In this aspect God stands in defense of His own moral nature of holiness, righteousness and sovereignty. God is a holy God and will not permit that holiness to be violated or share His glory with any sentient being that is not part

²⁷¹ We signify by **God's Communitarian and Trinitarian nature** that God has to be understood from two primary aspects of His holy and righteous being. God is Trinitarian or Triune in nature because of the bond of eternal love that exists within the unified essence of the Three Persons as seen in the formula “God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, God One.” God Communitarian nature is displayed in His eternal love and bond with the human person with a love so great that God gave His only Son that whosoever believes in him will not perish but experience eternal life (John 3:16). God is Communitarian because His Son is Emmanuel (i.e. “God with us” and “God for us”).

of the Trinitarian deity (i.e. God-head). As part of God's Trinitarian nature, He also loves the second and third persons of the Trinity, as **God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit**, complete in eternal union with **God, the Father**, where together they are **God One**. This *Trinitarian Union of Divine Love* is expressed as God's pathos, or divine feeling of complete oneness within His Trinitarian nature and being. This prehended eternal union may be visualized as the Three Persons standing facing one the other in pure love which is beyond the capability of the human person to either comprehend or give expression too. Jesus talked about his disciples being included in this divine oneness in the Gospel of John, Chapter 17:

Jesus said these things, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, "Father, the time has come! Glorify your Son, so that your Son may also glorify you, even as you gave him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all who you have given him. This is eternal life: that they should know you, the only true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ. . . . I do not pray only for these, but also for those who [will] believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you. May they be one in us, so that the world may believe that you sent me. The glory which have given me, I have given to them, so that they may be one even as we are one; I in them, and you in me. May they be perfected into one, so that the world may know that you sent me, and [that you have] loved them, even as you have loved me. (John 17:1-23, EOB).

The ancient Egyptians likely had the same or similar unified subsuming understanding of human/divine love. There is enough grammatical evidence to conjecture that the Egyptians had both a *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* understanding of the nature of God revealed in the use of the "**Meriti**" which means "*the one who is beloved*" or "*the beloved one*" or the "object of one's love." The Egyptians made a clear distinction between love among the three divine persons (i.e. Amen-Ra, Osiris, and the Horus-Christ) and the love between human persons. For the "**one beloved**" among and

between human persons they used "**Meriti**" in the hieroglyphic form . To achieve this same conception using the same word for the Three Persons of the Trinity (in their case Amen-Ra, Osiris, and Horus) they needed only to replace the determinative for the human person  and

replace it with the determinative for the divine person  to indicate the "**one beloved**" among and between the three divine persons so as to read; . But how do we know the Egyptians were trying to make a distinction for *love among and between* human persons and *love among and between* divine persons? It is because when the Egyptians wanted to signify "benevolence" and "love of mankind" directed to them by God (because God is love) or by humans (motivated by the love of God)

they used the term "**meri-reth**", that is,  in its hieroglyphic form. We believe this hieroglyphic form is equivalent to ἄγαπη, "*agape*" meaning "to love" and have "loving concern" for another that goes beyond "association" because one is your friend or "reciprocity" because you expect love in return. In New Testament usage this Greek form for "unselfish love" expresses the divine love of God participated in by human persons. To be more precise the Greek form for "**meri-reth**" would be ἄγαπητός meaning "pertaining to one who is loved", "object of one's affection", "one who is loved", "beloved". How do we know that "**meri-reth**" is not merely the hieroglyphic for *human*

friendship as in the Greek term φίλος "*philos*" meaning "friends" or more precisely "a male person or associate for whom one has personal regard or affection" and so has nothing whatever to do with ἀγάπη, "agape" the divine love of God? It is because when the Egyptians wanted to give expression

to mere human friendship they used the term  , *merriu*, meaning "those who love", "lovers", "friends". With these grammatical distinctions we are on good ground to conjecture that   , that is, "Meriti" refers to the *Trinitarian* aspect of the divine love *among and between*

divine beings (i.e. the Triune God Amen-Ra, Osiris, and Horus) and that   , "*meri-reth*" is the *Communitarian* aspect of divine love that is inclusive of human participation among *and between themselves and the Triune God*. This grammatical analysis suggests that the divine love between the three persons of the Trinity is distinct and by its very nature is a higher form of love that the love humans share between themselves alone. However, the oneness in the Trinity of eternal love *among and between themselves* is not exclusionary as this special divine relationship at first appears and as we have shown with the grammatical analysis of the Egyptian notion of the same idea or conception. God, the Father extends this oneness of eternal love found perfectly in the three persons of the Trinity to the entire creation and may be apprehended in the affirmation that ***"Indeed, God so love the world that he gave his uniquely-begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life"*** (John 3:16, EOB).

God wants His *Good Creation* to share in that divine Trinitarian love and oneness as a communion of deiform beings, in various states and decrees of perfection, which has been envisioned by God. God has decreed that this ultimate gift of eternal love to the human person comes only through the advance of Christological experience expressed by us (the human person) as love for God and love for our neighbor. Apparently the human person and human society will reach this level of participation in eternal love of God at the apex of the *Omega Point of Christological experience* (i.e. where the love of God is given the highest possible human/divine expression as we give our lives for one the other) when enough of us have said ***"Yes!"*** to *Christological experience* advanced by the *lure* of God's goodness and ***"No!"*** to *demonic experience* advanced by *Evil*. When this happens God will be fully understood as not only *Trinitarian* in nature but *Communitarian* in nature as two aspects of His holiness and righteousness that advances the good in His created order motivated purely by His love, and His nature as the *All Loving God!*

God's nature is both *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian*. However, the *Communitarian* nature of God is subsumed in God's *Trinitarian* nature. If not for the fact that God experiences perfect love and oneness as a Trinitarian being, God would not know how to extend this love and oneness as a Communitarian being to the human person and to the totality of God's *Good Creation*. Indeed, something else is needed in order for God's knowledge to be perfected in His providential care of His *Good Creation*. God had to experience first-hand what it meant to be human in order to deal with *Evil* as felt and experienced by the human person within their *life-world* and *lived-experience*. This phenomenological knowledge would perfect God's *Communitarian being* as a continuing work of transformation for the entire created order. God is not finished with His *Good Creation* as Jesus affirmed *"My Father is still working, and I am also working"* (John 5:17, EOB). Part of that divine work was to send Jesus Christ as *God in the flesh* (not to advance God's knowledge of the human person (because He knows all things) but to allow God to experience how we as human persons experience the *phenomenology of suffering and pain* on God's Superhighway caused by *Nothingness* in *ITs* triune

aspects of *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death*. In short God needed to experience how we suffer as human's through His Son, Jesus Christ for His own redemptive purposes and dare I say perfect His own being as Process Theology would propose, supported by this biblical statement: "God abides in us (experiences our pain and suffering) and God's own "love is perfected in us" (i.e. not here meaning we are perfected by His love, but that God's love within Himself is perfected by suffering with and within us.) by abiding within our life-world and lived-experience of this world God is making His own love perfect or complete, a theological notion from Process Theology and traditional church theology will outright reject, being that "God needs to perfect Himself by living in and through the human person." Nevertheless, the epistle of Hebrews gives us a hint as to why Jesus Christ came in the flesh:

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, 'Here I am --- it is written about me in the scroll --- I have come to do your will, O God' " (Hebrews 10:5-7, NIV).

This Christ, as a member of the Holy Trinity, has joined the Trinitarian nature of God (become one with) in a complete permanent and communitarian way, to the human nature, where the human person in Christ is now one with God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit. God now is able to experience our suffering, because of our human condition and sin nature, and feel the assault of Evil on our persons overcoming (for us) the triune aspects of *Nothingness* which are *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death*. Through us God is experiences the full onslaught of Evil, Sin and Death on the cross as *God with us*. God is able now, not just to know us because God is *omniscient* (All-knowing), but to experience us, as an *All-feeling Communitarian God*. This goes beyond God's moral attribute of omnibenevolence (all-loving God) to a doctrine of God's *omni-pathos* (*omni-pathetic* All-feeling God because He is *All Loving* and *God is Love* [1 John 4:8b] by nature in His divine essence) where He, as a Communitarian God with us, is able because of Christ's divine-human sacrifice enabled Him really feel everything we feel, that is, suffering, pain, disappointment, confusion of mind. God is now (because of the Christ Event assaulted by the crucible of Death) able to feel our ever-present fear of death, that is, our anxiety because due to the threat of non-being and negation by *Nothingness*. The Hebrew writer affirms this view, stating:

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are --- yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16, NIV).

Two theologians, one Catholic and female, and one Jewish and male, will affirm my analysis of both God's Communitarian nature subsumed in God Trinitarian nature and God's moral character as omni-pathetic. Both of these aspects of God's nature are necessary to claim that God has a Communitarian nature derived from God's own Trinitarian being. This view advanced through the following analysis will explain why God defends the human person on the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*, as part of God's providential care and tries on *God's superhighway of human unified*

experience to deliver us from *all Evil*. The Catholic theologian, Catherine Mowry LaCugna states in *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (1973) that:

The fact that God exists because of the Father shows that His existence, His being is the consequence of a free person; which means, in the last analysis, that not only communion but also *freedom*, the free person, constitutes true being. True being comes only from the free person, from the person who loves freely ---that is, who freely affirms his being, his identity, by means of an event of communion with other persons." Being, existence, is thus the event of persons in communion. *Both* Greek and Latin theology affirm communion as the nature of ultimate reality. However ---and this is *the* critical point ---the scholastic theology of God speculates on trinitarian communion as an *intradivine* occurrence. The communion of Father, Son, and Spirit among themselves structures the divine substance; communion is the unifying force that holds together the three coequal persons who know and love each other as peers. Greek theology situates the mystery of communion in the economy of redemption and deification. Jesus Christ *is* the true union of divine and human and therefore the means of our own communion with God and with one another. The Holy Spirit is the power and presence who brings about through *theosis* the real union of creature with God. The entire purpose of the economy in the Greek vision is the communion of all in all, all in God, God in all.²⁷²

Lacugna affirms the claim that God's Communitarian nature is subsumed or derived from God's Trinitarian nature, which is bound by love brought "about through *theosis* the real union of creature with God. But does God's love in that Trinitarian communion mean that God loves us? And if God loves perfectly like God loves God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, does that mean God loves us in the same way? What is missing in Lacugna's analysis of *theosis* is *why* God loves us. What is the basis of claim by the writer of John 3:16, in Jesus' words, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (NIV). I claim that God loves us because God is not only *omni-benevolent* but that God's perfect love towards us is God's moral attribute of *omni-pathos* (the capacity to deeply care for one's own as one actually feels the pain and suffering of the one who is beloved or the object of one's love). God in Christ actually put Himself in our shoes as mortal beings threatened by *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death* the triune aspects of *Nothingness*.

Jewish theologian, Abraham J. Heschel (1907-1972) supports this claim. Heschel, of course does not ground God's pathos in God's Trinitarian nature. There is no such concept in Heschel's theology because there is no such concept in Jewish theology. In the Jewish faith God is a unity of undivided being, not a union of being. Yet, remarkably Heschel and Lacugna arrive at the same place in regard to God's divine freedom. For Lacugna, God experiences the human person's condition and situation within the divine communion of the Trinity. But for Heschel, God experiences unqualified pathos, a necessary and absolute feeling of care for the human person, which is not an attribute of God, but a necessary response to the human situation, because, God is God. Heschel states:

To the prophet, we have noted, God does not reveal himself in an abstract absoluteness, but in a personal and intimate relation to the world. He does not simply command and expect

²⁷² Catherine Mowry Lacugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1973), p. 249.

obedience; He is also moved and affected by what happens in the world and reacts accordingly. Events and human actions arouse in Him joy or sorrow, pleasure or wrath. He is not conceived as judging the world in detachment. He reacts in an intimate and subjective manner, and thus determines the value of events. Quite obviously in the biblical view, man's deeds may move Him, affect Him, grieve Him or, on the other hand, gladden and please Him. This notion that God can be intimately affected, that He possesses not merely intelligence and will, but also pathos, basically defines the prophetic consciousness of God. . . . pathos was understood not as unreasoned emotion, but an act formed with intention, depending on free will, the result of decision and determination. Even "in the moment of anger" (Jer. 18:7), what God intends is not that His anger should be executed, but that it should be annulled by the people's repentance. . . . Man's deeds do not necessitate but only occasion divine pathos. Man is not the immediate but merely the incidental cause of pathos in God, the "*occasio*" or "*causa occasionalist*," which freely calls for a pathetic state in God. There is no nexus of causality, but only one of contingency between human and divine attitudes, between human character and divine pathos. The decisive fact is that of divine freedom. Pathos is not an attribute but a *situation*.²⁷³

Both Lacugna's view of why God seeks communion with the human person as a free choice, because of the human persons condition, and Heschel's view that God pathos is relational based on free choice, because of the human situation, may be subsumed under the doctrine of the providence of God. Both views explain why God fights Evil on behalf of the human person and on behalf of God's *Good Creation*. God, as a *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* being, faces *Nothingness* in all three aspects of its *thanatic nature of evil, sin and death* on the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*, and also within the creation on *God's superhighway of unified human-divine experience*. I can now say that I have established that God experiences what we as human person's experience and positively responds to that experience because of and through Trinitarian and Communitarian nature of love and pathos. This is why Jesus, the Christ had to die on the cross. God's love, which is cruciform, is fully expressed in the nature of God's complete *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* being.

This is my understanding of the reasons for providential care of God's *Good Creation*. For me, there is no doubt that God's aim for the human person is eternal life and the aim of *Evil* (as the first triune aspects of Nothingness) is the *thanatic* and total destruction of the human person by means of *Sin* and *Death*, the second and third triune aspects of *Nothingness*. God's total *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* nature is adequate for this task. While God does permit Evil to operate on the *superhighway of human experience* (whether because the IT is necessary for deiform transformation of God's *Good Creation* or as an unintended consequence of God's creative act that simply must be borne by the human person or that must be faced as a cobelligerent with God to arrest IT within the interiority of the human person and within the creation or some other reason. I have shown that God does not do so without opposing *Evil's* progress on the *Superhighway of God* at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* as the first line of defense and as the second line of defense within the interiority of the human person (referred to in Ethiopian Orthodoxy as the *six doors of the human heart*) as the second line of defense through His *communitarian nature of love*. There is definite and sometimes deafening divine opposition. God is fighting *Nothingness* at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*, where the battle is just between God and that ontological negative being, where God's "**No!**" is constantly opposed to the "**No!**" of *Nothingness*.

²⁷³ Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: HarperCollins, Publishers, 1971), pp. 288-290.

The human person cannot help God here at this ontological and cosmic level of the struggle between good and evil. This is God's first line of defense, where the creative Word of God opposes the destructive and homicidal word of *Nothingness*. Nevertheless, the struggle is not only fought on the frontiers of God's *Good Creation*. If we believe the Bible the enemy of God and Man has arrived as an external dark and homicidal power that by nature and vocation is opposed the deiform form or Christological transformation of human person and/or human institutions. Revelation 12:12 confirm that something of this nature has occurred. The text states; *"Therefore, rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short"*(NIV). The war with Evil did not end in Heaven but continues on Earth. Fortunately for us God has not abandoned His Good Creation to the arbitrary whims of Nothingness in all of its triune aspects.

The second line of defense is the temporal existential order of human existence, where God and the human person, as God's co-belligerent, do battle on the God's *superhighway of unified experience*. The battle at this level would be against the development of demonic experience in favor of Christological experience and in favor of deiform transformation that comes through acceptance of a temporary cruciform condition and situation and against thanatic threats of chaos, destruction, and defilement of God's *Good Creation*, which excites God's pathos (grounded in His *communitarian* nature) in favor of the suffering human person. The human person, as God's co-belligerent has to understand God's nature in its *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* aspects before they can successfully enjoin battle on God's behalf with *Evil* in their realm of temporal existence. The nature of the battle is primarily spiritual, cruciform and therefore Christological. It is also cosmic and material because human institutions are affected and are a powerful source for either good or evil.

Revelation envisions the saints of God overcoming Evil through the power of the second member of the Trinity, God the Son. Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ tells the saints, *"Do not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good"* (Romans 12:21, NIV). This is accomplished not only by us doing good, but also by the good Jesus Christ has done in overcoming Sin and Death in his own person culminating in his resurrection power that vanquished Death in the human/divine person. The people of heaven sing in celebration of this ultimate victory of God's saints over the Devil, which in our scheme is the acolyte and devotee of Evil: *"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death"* (Revelation 12:11, NIV).

Other views on the *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* nature of God are also valuable in support of my horizon of understanding. The relationship of God's *Trinitarian* and *Communitarian* nature to the human person, the cosmos, and God's tolerance for the presence of evil, is supported by the philosophical theology of Father Joseph A. Bracken, S. J. (i.e. *Society of Jesus*), one of the world's leading process theologians, and professor of theology at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, was my teacher on the subject of the problem of Evil, and later my Master's Thesis advisor, who led me too a deeper understanding and study of the problem. My first encounter with him as a teacher at Xavier University was on September 5, 2003 in a class on the Problem of Evil. We used a book by Joseph F. Kelly on *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition: From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2002. I will never forget that day and wrote down in the margins of my copy of Kelly (p. 40): "Prof. said that the African Church fathers were black 'No question about it' including Augustine." I could see the shocked look on the white students faces, but they were no more shocked than me but for different reasons. I already knew from my own studies that the church fathers of North Africa were black "No question about it." This is what shocked me! Here was a white Jesuit Priest telling a predominately white class that the church fathers of the North African church

for which the Catholic Church and the Church Universal has to thank for much of their theology and doctrine, which they hold sacred today where black African. Joseph F. Kelly himself, who gives a comprehensive introduction to the problem of Evil, infers this notion in Chapter 4 “Out of Africa” states:

In its earliest centuries the intellectual heart of Christianity was the African continent, in Egypt and in North Africa. Tertullian of Carthage (modern Tunisia) lived from about 160 to 220. He was a hard man who lived in a hard world, at a time when a Roman emperor of African descent launched a persecution there. Tertullian did not believe in turning the other cheek. He is the first Christian writer to claim that one of the *joys* of heaven would be watching the damned fry in hell, and he had a list of Roman officials he expected to see there.²⁷⁴

Fr. Bracken, in his *The One in the Many: A Contemporary Reconstruction of the God-World Relationship* (2001), critiques the metaphysics of William Desmond, found in *Being and the Between* (1995). Desmond's discusses four primary senses of being, which are univocal, equivocal, dialectical, and metaxological. Bracken is mostly interested in Desmond's metaxological concept of being. It shows the "dynamic interplay of finite entities in this world" that occurs somewhere in "the between" of its "transcendent source and immanent context,"²⁷⁵ that can both serve to unite and separate finite entities.²⁷⁶ Bracken compares and contrasts Desmond's metaxological metaphysics with his own metaphysics of intersubjectivity, worked out in his lifelong study of Alfred North Whitehead's process

²⁷⁴ Joseph F. Kelly, *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition*, p. 40. Kelly's reference to the Roman Emperor of "African descent is Septimius Severus, Emperor of Rome from 9 April 193 C.E. to 4 February 211 C.E. His race is disputed between Africanist and Western scholars and white popular writers that go around accusing Africanist of making any person of note "Black" while in fact they have been doing that for years, *whitening* Africa with every conceivable personage from Moses to Hannibal, not to mention Jesus in both serious scholarly works to movies and television. Every Easter the world is informed through the various Water stories in plays and through television with a white Jesus, the implication being since he is the "Son of God" then God by implication must be white as well, although neither is never openly claimed to be so. The images touted enough to push this message as *the truth*. However, when Africanist push *the truth* they are accused of revisionist history; one example of such accusations is from the author Mary Lefkowitz in her book *Not Our of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became and Excuse to Teach Myth as History* (New Republic, 1996).

Various Representations of African Emperor Septimius Severus: From Black African to White Greek



Emperor Septimius Severus and his Greek wife mixed son Caracalla/late Emperor Caracalla



²⁷⁵ Bracken, Joseph A., S. J., *The One in the Many: A Contemporary Reconstruction of the God-World Relationship* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 207-208.

²⁷⁶ Bracken, p. 9.

philosophy of creativity. Bracken takes Desmond's metaphysics and uses it to construct an intersubjective metaphysics that relates the dynamic interplay between human communities to the interplay between the communities of divine beings, that is, the Trinity. Bracken's metaphysics of intersubjectivity says that there is a hierarchically-ordered set of ongoing and dynamic interrelationships between collective human persons, who are becoming integrated into what Desmond calls the "agapeic" life, that is, the spiritual communion of love, which exists between the community of divine/human persons.²⁷⁷ Bracken states:

My plan in this book, as already indicated, is to offer a new process-orientated metaphysics . . . is to offer a new process-orientated metaphysics based on what I call a logic of intersubjectivity. Within this metaphysics of intersubjectivity, objectivity will be assessed not with reference to an external world presumed to exist apart from the individual human subject but rather with respect to the "layers of social order" which individual subjects of experience set up over time as part of their ongoing exchange with one another. . . . Subjects of experience inevitably presuppose a given state of affairs as the objective context for their dynamic interrelation but then subtly alter that same objective state of affairs by their sustained interaction. . . . Moreover . . . if one likewise conceives of God in line with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as a community of divine persons in dynamic interrelation, then the world of creation can be seen as a hierarchically-ordered set of communities, each with its own "layer [or layers] of social order," which is ultimately integrated into the communitarian life of the divine persons.²⁷⁸

For Bracken, the Trinity is a community of divine persons in a dynamic relationship of being, within that communitarian life, hierarchically-ordered communities, which differ socially from one another, are integrated into the communitarian life of the Trinity. At this point Bracken does not say how this is done. The question is, does God have to allow these hierarchically-ordered communities to come into the communitarian life of divine persons, that is, within the creative process of intersubjective dynamic relationships without being holy or in process of becoming deiform? Did God permit Israel to do so without being brought into a covenant of holiness that demanded that they stand against evil in their own community as well as the unholy communities God sent them to punish? I presume that God's injunction to "Be holy, because I am holy," (1 Peter 1:16, NIV), that is, standing apart from evil, is a necessary covenant condition of this intersubjective dynamic relationship that leads to being included in the divine communitarian life of the Trinity as cobelligerents against *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death* the triune aspects of *Nothingness*. Bracken gives us some answer to this question. First, God knows that all created being including Wink's fallen powers are in a process of becoming as they are lured by God toward Christological experience and deiform transformation into the Sons of God.²⁷⁹ God is not finished with us and so has patience with His human creation. Nor is God finished with God's cosmos, for God plans to make all things new, i.e. a new heavens and a new earth (Revelation 21:1-5). Second, God tolerates the presence of Evil during this process, out of respect for the freedom of will of the human person inclined and/or lured toward demonic experience that will ultimately lead to death (i.e. the second death, Revelation 21:8). Bracken understands Desmond's

²⁷⁷ Bracken, p. 209.

²⁷⁸ Bracken, p. 4.

²⁷⁹ Bracken, p. 209.

metaphysics and latches on to his notion that in order for hierarchical communities to overcome their tendency toward separation, and conflict (which such interrelationships naturally engender) they must overcome Evil by doing what is good.²⁸⁰ Evil is described by Desmond as "the equivocality of the good,"²⁸¹ and so human communities, faced with the ambiguity of what is the good and what is evil cannot fight Evil on their own. Rather, they must acknowledge a transcendent source, which is the origin and sustainer of what is truth and good. Bracken states:

But in the end one must move to the metaxological understanding of truth in which individuals through ongoing dialogue share their separate understandings of the truth in question and acknowledge the One as the transcendent source and ground of truth. Similarly, evil as "the equivocality of the good," is ultimately overcome only when we reflect on the transcendent origin of good, the patience of the One (or God) to bear with the presence of evil out of respect for the freedom of the evildoer. Agapeic love or self-sacrificing service of the other in the midst of real or apparent evil is thus the metaxological form of the good which is available to human beings only when it is gratefully received as a gift from the transcendent source of goodness, agapeic being itself.²⁸²

This is how human communities can obey the Pauline injunction to "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21), acknowledging and coming into communion with the community of divine persons. Human communities will not be able to overcome evil unless they are somehow transformed into a wider beloved community of deiform human persons (holy ones set apart for God's service in the community), that is, a community grounded in an agapeic relationship with the communion of divine persons, the spiritual tie that binds them together. This relational divine/human aspect signifies both the Trinitarian and Communitarian nature of God's love for His *Good Creation* over against the thanatic Trinitarian Power of Nothingness which seeks to destroy God's *Good Creation* and the divine love within it that seeks to grow and bind it together as adeiform human/divine unified field of Christological experience on God's Superhighway.

Okechukwu Ogbonnaya, an African student of Bracken's work, received his Ph.D. from Claremont School of Theology, and is a leading lecturer on African world views in relationship to Christian thought. Ogbonnaya critiques Bracken's work in *On Communitarian Divinity: An African Interpretation of the Trinity* (1998). He does not believe that creating a beloved community, grounded in communal relationships within the communion of divine persons, is sufficient to bring desperate communities together or to keep unitary communities together. Ogbonnaya says that communities must also have spirituo-genetic binding. Communal ties that bind must be spiritually and genetically grounded. By this I understand Ogbonnaya to mean that there are cultural and ethnic factors that even an agapeic relationship in the context of a divine communitarian relationship cannot overcome or bridge. Evil in opposition to the creation of such a communitarian space for God's *Good Creation* to operate in is too pervasive. Evil has no respect for Trinitarian communitarian structures reserved for the concrescence of Christological experience. Rather Evil uses the unified field of human experience to create demonic experiences. Evil strategically plays up the differences evident in

²⁸⁰ Bracken, p. 211.

²⁸¹ Bracken, p. 211.

²⁸² Bracken, p. 211

Bracken's supposed hierarchically-ordered communities that will be integrated into the Trinitarian communitarian divine life of God. There are plenty of racist minded people who go to church each Sunday, claim a love relationship with the community of divine persons, but yet fail to see that their actions against other communities they hate is a contradiction of their Christian claims. Ogbonnaya, titles the introduction in his book "Joseph Bracken's Communal Analysis of the Trinity and African Worldview" and seems to suggest that Bracken's metaphysics of intersubjectivity underestimates the power and pervasiveness of Evil in human relations, especially between radically differing social and cultural human units. Ogbonnaya also responds similarly to Bracken's book *Spirit and Society: A Trinitarian Cosmology* (1991) and states:

Among the works of the Trinity, Joseph Bracken has done a much more profound communal analysis of the theological concept. Within his two revolutionary works, an African scholar may find many points of agreement and help, but one who is attuned to the African worldview will also find, seeping through the work, some problems. Bracken sees collective substance as opposed to individual substance as the bases for community, not supra-individuality. The definitive concept for analyzing the Trinity from Bracken's perspective is society. Society is a preconstituted "environment" . . . It is necessary to reconceive "the God-world relation in terms of interrelated fields of human activity within which the three divine persons and all their creatures continuously come into being and are related to one another". . . Bracken proposes that "the three divine persons should be understood as personally ordered society or occasions and that their unity as one God is the unity of a Whiteheadian structured society or society of subsocieties" . . . Bracken considers "Society, as the ongoing field of activity or social environment, [that] preserves the pattern of interrelatedness for successive generation of actual occasions. Some questions still remain to be addressed. For instance, what is the ontological basis of society that allows this preservation of generational interrelatedness? . . . From my own African philosophical perspective, I believe that internal relations demand that these be something more than the environment as the field of activity unless environment is defined as the totality that does not presuppose the old external/internal dichotomy that has characterized a major strand of western Christian philosophy. Change that begins with one localized phenomena becomes distributed to all the constituent or actual occasions within a given sphere because there is a basic contemporary principle of communality."²⁸³

Ogbonnaya does not oppose Bracken's intersubjective metaphysics for human and divine communal interrelationships, grounded in the agapeic communion of the three divine persons of the Trinity. However, it appears that Ogbonnaya questions whether this grounding alone is sufficient to both create and preserve patterns of "interrelatedness for successive generations of actual occasions."²⁸⁴ Still, a basic question remains. Is the love of God, or the love of the One in communion with human society sufficient to preserve communal unity through generational changes of occasions in time, considering how *Evil* has used human hatred, racism, distrust, war, and suffering to create just the opposite situation on *God's superhighway of unified human experience*? Ogbonnaya wants to add three additional concepts or propositions to Bracken's metaphysical scheme. He presents these from an *African-Centered Perspective*. Ogbonnaya states:

- (1) That the communal principle is considered a shared environment. But shared environment does not necessarily create connection that is lasting and

²⁸³ A. Okechukwu Ogbonnaya, *On Communitarian Divinity: An African Interpretation of the Trinity* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Paragon House, 1998), pp. xvi-xvii.

²⁸⁴ Ogbonnaya, p. xvii.

communal. Unless the environment is somehow impressed upon the basic genetic interrelation of members as actual entities within the environment. But community is not mainly a matter of mere genetic interconnection it is more a matter of the spirtuo-genetic bindings created in and sustained by a communal mode of being in and seeing the world. Bracken says that "the element of order or patterns of intelligibility is due to the genetic interrelatedness of the members' actual entities." This will fit well with the African concept of fundamental connection which will be used to advance the Trinity.²⁸⁵

- (2) As the Community is prior to and also outlasts individuals entities within it, this genetic structure must be consistent and perpetual. That is it must not change or if it changes its change must be so minuscule that its effect is not noticeable for large epochs. Thus communal connection and consistency becomes another criteria for examining the Model of God.
- (3) Or, it must be shown that there is an ontological connection beyond genetic structures binding the disparate parts together even in their seeming individuality. Within, this African worldview this is attributable to some kind of spirit or soul that one may not be able to measure or dissect. This soul or spirit through some kind of centrifugal dynamism is able to multiply itself yet at the same time retaining its basic characteristic or inherent connection to its parts.²⁸⁶

The last proposition by Ogbonnaya shows that what he is proposing is nothing different than what is proposed by Bracken's intersubjective metaphysics in relationship to the community of divine persons. God is able through successive creative impulses of spontaneity to create dynamic occasions an infinite numbers of times in order to achieve God's initial aims for the created human and cosmic order. God transforms sin nature into a deiform nature, that is, God in us, but yet remains the same as a communion of divine persons. This is required in Ogbonnaya's second proposition. God changes human communities, but for all intent and purposes, God's moral nature and attributes does not change. God does not change in respect of God's moral nature, i.e. God is love, and God is holy, even though God and all of creation are in a process of becoming in respect to the development of a world communion of divine and human persons, deiform in nature. This metaphysical scheme allows for stability and sustain human moral and spiritual development within the communion of divine persons. This calls for divine and human cooperation, *co-creation* of that which is good and *co-belligerency* against all evil. This is perhaps why Bracken suggests "if the divine persons choose to create a cosmic community, then they need our cooperation in order to sustain that common space between us and themselves."²⁸⁷ This is the ground for the *concrecence* of the human and divine life. This is the meaning of the incarnation of the divine life in the collective human person and society through Jesus Christ. It is the beginning of the end of evil, within the interrelated social structures and substructures of human society. I propose in this work and project that evil seeks either to prevent, or destroy the concrecence of these intersubjective interrelations, that is, those relationships between hierarchical-ordered communities themselves and between these human communities and God on the super-highway of unified field of human and cosmic experience. Evil as the second in the trinitarian aspect

²⁸⁵ Ogbonnaya, pp. xvii-xviii.

²⁸⁶ Ogbonnaya, pp. xvii-xviii.

²⁸⁷ Joseph A. Bracken, S.J. *Christianity and Process Theology: Spirituality for a Changing World* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2006), p. 9.

of Nothingness fears nothing so much as the threat to ITs being as the concrescence of divine communitarian interrelatedness proposed by God's *communitarian nature* that seeks to include all *deiform living human beings* bound in divine love that would literally *lockout* the desire of *thanatic demonic experience* in favor of *Christological experience* in both human persons and human institutions. *Nothingness* would then have no living human/divine being through which *IT could live and have ITs being*. Death would be seriously threatened with death Itself being cast out into outer darkness beyond the frontiers of God's Good Creation through the Trinitarian and Christological program of communitarian interrelatedness of love between God and Man where no room is found for Evil either within the human person (in love with God in Christ) and human institutions now governed by deiform living being. Without going deeply into Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. theology we think here this is what he envisioned as the *Beloved Community* which will survive "the death of Evil on the Sea Shore."

In the meantime, anticipation of blissful state of being Evil operates along the same pathway or continuum of time and eternity, as does the good, as it must for the moment. This pathway may be characterized as the *unified field of experience*, as I have been saying can be influenced by either Christological or demonic powers. God as the means to achieve the good and the beautiful, which we define theologically as Christological experience, created this pathway for the good. But what warrant do I have for saying such a unified field of experience exists between human persons, human communities, and between these and the divine communion of persons? We stay with Bracken for the moment, since we are already dealing with some aspects of Bracken's philosophical theology in respect to process creativity. In Bracken's newly published work, *Christianity and Process Thought: Spirituality for a Changing World* (2006), Bracken states that there is an interrelated cosmic community, in which everything that exists shares a common living space and has "an enormous network of hierarchically ordered and overlapping fields of activity for all these created subjects of experience."²⁸⁸ Bracken states:

What emerges out of this Whiteheadian approach to reality is a third model for the God-world relationship . . . This third model is based on the notion of a cosmic community in which everything that exists is both itself and partner with everything else to make up a common living space, a community in which to live together. . . . In creating us, the three divine persons thus invite us into their living space, their divine communitarian life, insofar as we finite creatures can share in it. Heaven, in other words, is all around us even through in this life we do not fully realize where we are. Limited as we are by the concerns of life in the body here and now under the conditions of space and time, we lose the bigger picture of what is really going on. . . . The attractiveness of this third model is that it allows the three divine persons and all of us creatures to be ourselves as separate subjects of experience and yet by our interaction with one another to co-create a common space, a cosmic community to which each and every creature contributes and upon which each and every creature at the same time depends. . . . Communities only come into being when subjects of experience dynamically interact and co-create a common space that is gradually shaped and structured by their ongoing interaction. Equivalently they co-create a common field of activity for their ongoing exchange of information and affective response to one another. What you say and do affects me, and what I say and do affects you. Together we bring into being what Martin Buber in his celebrated book *I and Thou* called "the Between," an intangible but very real link

²⁸⁸ Bracken, p. 9.

between us that lasts as long as we remain in contact with one another on the interpersonal basis.²⁸⁹

Bracken suggests here the construction a unified field of experience as a common space or roadway, where communities can experience the life of God in Trinitarian communitarian deiform being. What makes this possible is that we are already in the common space of this unified field of human/divine experience but we just don't realize it and so are not able to take advantage of it to build deiform communitarian structures that are *life-giving* and *life-saving* communities. Apparently, Bracken understands that this unified experience can either be good or evil, especially if the human person is not aware and what each person does and says within this field of experience affects everyone in God's *Good Creation*. For my part, I see the construction of this space as God's superhighway of unified experience, where what we do or say creates a pathway for either Christological or demonic experience to prevail. If the unified experience is demonic then the highway, like Bracken's community, could collapse under the weight of *Evil*. It must be understood that Evil has to work within two realms of existence to carry out its aims against the human person and the created order, that is, the spiritual and material order, which includes the psychic and spiritual interiority of the human person. I maintain that there is a unified field of experience between the two realms of existence that cannot be separated, and that evil cannot be understood unless a demonic pathway is constructed to carry out its own initial aims both on a cosmic/spiritual and temporal level. Barth refers to these two realms as **"From above as well as from below."**²⁹⁰

This Barthian pathway of interrelationships is both horizontal (human to human) and vertical (human to divine, and vice versa). Apparently, what happens on Earth affects what happens in Heaven, and what happens in Heaven affects what happens on Earth. Jesus put forth the same notion when Jesus says to the disciples, "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven," (Matthew 18:18, NIV). However, Bracken talks about the spiritual structure and relationship between heaven and earth. For Bracken Heaven is all around us as seen in his statement above. Heaven is not necessarily up but is part of a spiritual dimension that envelops our own. There is a spatial relationship of some kind between time and eternity, and heaven and earth through which passes the *Superhighway of God*, which is the unified field of human and celestial experience that operates back and forth throughout the cosmic order. Robert C. Newman, a conservative biblical scholar suggests that heaven is not up in respect of this spatial relationship between heaven and earth. Newman's doctoral thesis *The Biblical Teaching on the Firmament*, states:

All of this suggests that the Biblical statements about the abode of God do not fit some crude picture of an ordinary sort of place way up in the sky (as Jack might reach climbing a beanstalk). Rather they form a sophisticated picture of a location right here which is not connected with us in an ordinary spatial relationship.²⁹¹

There is, undoubtedly, some kind of spatial relationship between *time and eternity/heaven and earth*. I propose in this spatial relationship the possibility that heaven occupies the same cosmic

²⁸⁹ Bracken, pp. 8-9.

²⁹⁰ Barth, p. 354.

²⁹¹ Robert C. Newman, "The Third Heaven, God's Dwelling Place," *The Biblical Teaching on the Firmament* (PhD Thesis, 1992.), p. 36.

continuum as does the earth, as my graduate advisor Fr. Bracken suggests metaphorically, which I say is *really real*. In other words heaven *really* occupies the same geodetic cosmic space as earth and overlays it so that it seems to the human person that when the angels of God appear to them it is instantaneous. I heard an African-American preacher once say that the reason we cannot see God is because we are situated *in God*. This is a crude understanding but I submit that there must be some kind of geodetic cosmic interrelationship between God, angels and men, so as to effectuate divine communication within the communion of divine persons and to carry out God's economy of salvation. Jesus suggested that there is a cosmological connection between heaven and earth, saying, "the kingdom of God is already here," (Matthew 12:28).²⁹²

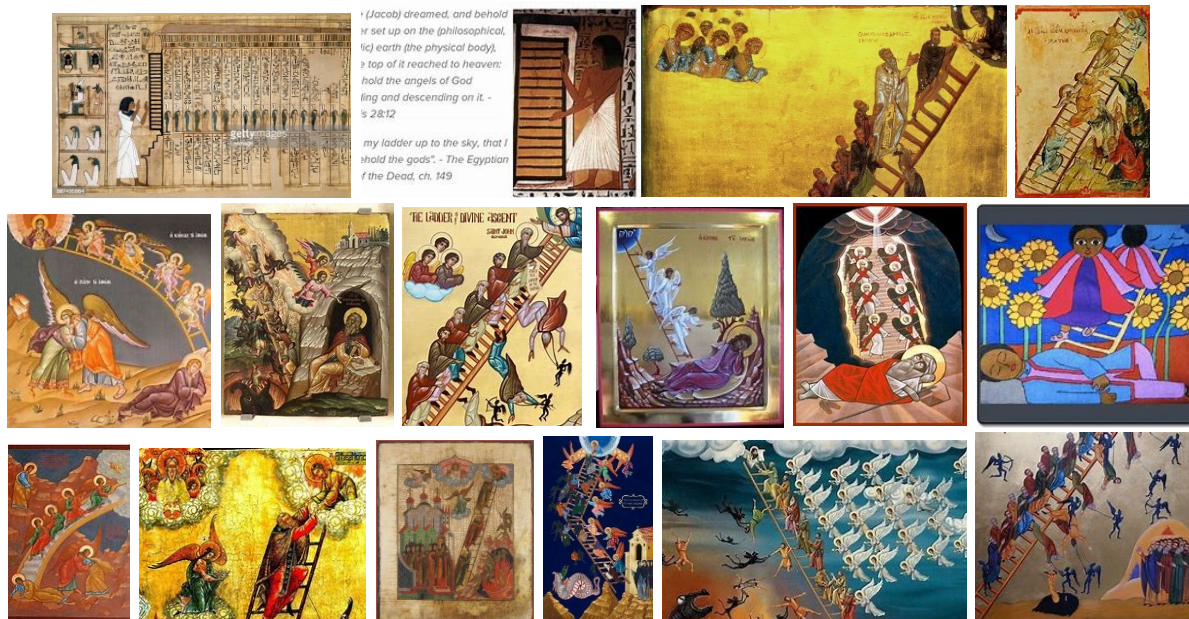
Heaven is not *up there* as God demonstrated to the foolish people in Genesis 11:1-9. The people sought to reach Heaven by building the Tower of Babel. Perhaps, humankind is trying to do this again. They are trying in their technological brilliance and triumphalism to reach beyond the stars. Perhaps, after evil has been made to loosen its grip a bit, and Satan can no longer deceive or blind the nations (Revelation 20:3; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Isaiah 25:7), humans will discover that heaven has (as Bracken said) been here all of the time, when God removes the shroud of confusion that covers over our eyes (Isaiah 25:7): "*On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations*" (NIV). Maybe what this means is that God's spirit is within and around the collective human person.

The kingdom of God is present in its most intimate fashion, in the inner spiritual space of the human person's heart, luring them toward a deiform spiritual life vouchsafed to them by God. The human race does not need to build a Tower of Babel to reach God or see the kingdom of God. They need only take seriously Jesus' word that, "*The Kingdom of God is within you*" (Luke 17:21b, EOB). It is apparent from all of this that the superhighway of God has spiritual structures and substructures, ontological and/or geodetic spatial location, which allows creative novelty, that is, movement, moments, and occasions for growth. These interrelationships among all of the various beings and objects in God's *Good Creation* operate on the same unified field of experience that each has helped to construct or create. Yet, the paradox remains that both good and evil uses this pathway of God to achieve its aims. It appears that once the unified field of experience is created, God is either unable or unwilling to prevent *Evil* from using this same pathway to achieve the concrescence of demonic experience in God's good created order. The purpose for the super-highway of unified experience is to progress, in a process of creativity, toward the concrescence of the good and the beautiful within God's *Good Creation*. But Satan the main acolyte and devotee of evil (like all other created beings God has made) is allowed to travel on God's spiritual superhighway, as well, wrecking destruction on the human person, corrupting human institutions and blighting the ecology, apparently at will. Satan is limited only by the power and will of God. Satan is the Chief acolyte and devotee of *Evil*. Satan's activities, attitude toward the human person, power and limitations can be seen in the story of Job. In the story the *ha-satan* is asked by God, "Where have you come from." Satan answers, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it," (Job 1:7, NIV). Later, Satan appears in scripture, as a roaring lion, walking about back and forth on God's super-highway of unified human experience, seeking

²⁹² In the appendices to my project I introduce a three diagrams that I created to give expression to the conception that there is an ontological and geodetic special relationship between heaven and earth and how evil works within the geodetic cosmic space of ontological human/divine relationships.

whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8, NIV). These texts support the notion that God has willed not tooor at the least is unwilling (for the time being) to prevent the activities of *Evil* within the divine cosmic order, whose activity occurs along the *Super-Highway of God*. The biblical metaphorical reference for the entrance or gateway to this pathway between the two realms of existence, where a semi-divine being like Satan may do his work with God's permission, between heaven and earth has been referred to as *Jacob's Ladder*. At the head of this ladder sits God on His throne. Genesis 28:10-16 states:

Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the Lord, . . . When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven" (NIV).



Based on this biblical text there is a portal or entrance way, back and forth, between the temporal and eternal realms of existence. Apparently, there is a spiritual gateway by which the angels of God may enter onto and exit from the Superhighway of God we have called the *unified field of divine-human experience*. However, is there any scientific support for suggesting that a unified field of experience exists and is *really real*? The theorem of quantum physics, called by some scientists the *Theory of Everything* (TOE), suggests that a material basis exists that allows a unified field of human experience to be created and operate once created. This theorem tries to explain the inter-relatedness and behavior of all phenomena on the atomic and subatomic levels. This theorem is also referred to as the *butterfly effect*, where it is held that the fluttering of the wings of a butterfly in one part of the world affects or can affect what happens in another part of the world. The idea is that just a small change in one part of the universe can make a huge difference in another (seemly) unrelated part of that same universe. The theory shows how sensitive, interrelated, and fragile is the whole fabric of the material universe. *Chaos theory* has developed a science that tries to discover the nature of these

changes and their effects so that the ensuing uncertainty that follows can be more predictable. Leonard Smith in his book *Chaos: A Very Short Introduction* states:

The study of chaos is common in applied sciences like astronomy, meteorology, population biology, and economics. Science making accurate observations of the world along with quantitative predictions have provided the main players in the development of chaos since the time of Isaac Newton. According to Newton's Laws, the future of the solar system is completely determined by its current state. The 19th-century scientist Pierre Laplace elevated this determination to a key place in science. A world is deterministic if its current state completely defines its future.²⁹³

The conditions of prediction outcomes within a chaotic state of cause and effect are three according to Pierre Laplace's studies in probability theory: (1) one must have exact knowledge of the Laws of Nature (i.e. all natural forces); (2) must have the ability to see the exact state of the universe all at once (occurrence of every occasion); and (3) have the intellect so vast it can make infinite computational analysis of the data gathered so that the occurrence caused by the occasion is absolutely predictable (knowing what comes next before it happens).²⁹⁴ Pierre Laplace who developed these three properties for predictions in his probability theory suggested that some entity (later called Laplace's demon) had this kind and degree of intellect. Laplace states:

We may regard the present state of the universe as the effect of its past and the cause of its future. An intellect which at a certain moment would know all forces that set nature in motion, and all positions of all items of which nature is composed, if this intellect were also vast enough to submit these data to analysis, it would embrace in a single formula the movements of the greatest bodies of the universe and those of the tiniest atom; for such an intellect nothing would be uncertain and the future just like the past would be present before its eyes.²⁹⁵

Christian theology would suggest that the only *Intellect* that could see the past, present, and future *all as one event is God*. These properties (which can only be possessed by a deity like God) allows Him to control all that goes on whether good or evil on the *Superhighway of God*. Nevertheless the reason such an Intellect whether God or Laplace's so-called demon can make such predictions is because universe is made up of *one fabric of cosmic stuff* in the first place. We have surmised that the gateway by which one navigates the universe through this cosmic stuff or between the material and spiritual realms of existence is God's Superhighway. Nothingness in all of its triune aspects has taken full advantage of the freedom or free access that God allows all ontological being into the universe (described as a cosmic unified field) by means of this Superhighway of unified human experience. Political scientists, Edward S. Greenberg and Benjamin I. Page have suggested how subtle yet powerful this cosmic unified field is. In their book *Struggle for Democracy* (2003). They point out that "Scientist often speak, for example, of the climate effects in one part of the world that are generated by a single butterfly flapping its wings in another part of the world."²⁹⁶

²⁹³ Leonard Smith. *Chaos: A Very Short Introduction*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 3.

²⁹⁴ Smith, p. 3.

²⁹⁵ Smith, p. 3.

Anything could upset this ordered balance. Evil, its spiritual acolytes, and devotees obviously understand this better than the ordinary human person. Yet there are more human minds that are becoming attuned to this interrelatedness and fragility of God's *Good Creation*. According to Michio Kaku, a theoretical physicist at City College, City of University of New York some scientist who study unified field theory seek: "an equation an inch long that would allow us to read the mind of God."²⁹⁷ This statement merely points out how seriously scientists are taking the notion that all experiences are interrelated. If this is true for science (from the theological and philosophical perspective) might there not be a unified field of some kind between the temporal and spiritual realms of existence along which good and evil can travel according to each its purpose and aim?

Philosophy has weighed in on the question as well. Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), English mathematician and philosopher, talks about "the interrelatedness of experience and the development from simple events to more complex events."²⁹⁸ Whitehead criticized the classical empiricism of David Hume (1711-1776), a Scottish philosopher and John Locke (1632-1704), an English philosopher. Their philosophies basically said that we could only know that which we can see, feel or hear through the senses. Whitehead, according to Creighton Peden, holds "that all experiences are connected and interrelated,"²⁹⁹ and that we feel or know things within the complexity of novelty, which our senses cannot immediately discern or understand with clarity so that "Reaction does not depend upon sense-experience for its initiation."³⁰⁰

David Hume proposed that everything we know is confined to the senses, but our senses can fool us. We cannot therefore establish the truth of everything that exists or events that happen by means of the senses. Hume said in an essay entitled "Miracles" that "Though experience be our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact; it must be acknowledged, that this guide is not altogether infallible."³⁰¹ This actually leaves wide open the possibility that there are things that the senses cannot detect which exist and which are *really real*. Hume went on to discuss the outlines of what he called "uniform experience" as the key to knowing what is possible to happen, and that which is not likely or possible to happen in the material world. Hume's philosophical contribution is that there is such a thing as unified human experience that testifies to or denies unseen realities (i.e. miracles, etc.); where "uniform" for this project suggest "sameness" of experience, when in fact "unified" means multiple difference experience within the same plane or fabric of existence. There is no "sameness" of human experience because each experiential human experience is unique to that living creature or entity. We experience what is surmised as "sameness" or "uniform" *differently each and every time*. Each occurrence within the unified fabric of experience is felt differently by each living entity differently than other entities and even felt differently each time such living entity experiences a similar phenomenon again and again. That is why this project says that human experience is "unified" rather than "uniform." Nevertheless, Hume's philosophy of religion may be found in *David Hume*:

²⁹⁶ Edward S. Greenberg and Benjamin I. Page, *The Struggle for Democracy*, 6th edition (New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, Inc., 2003), p. 307.

²⁹⁷ Michio Kaku, "Unified Field Theory" (Internet Resources, 1993), p. 1.

²⁹⁸ Charles Hartshorne and Creighton Peden, *Whitehead's View of Reality* (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1981), p. 50.

²⁹⁹ Hartshorne and Peden, p. 54.

³⁰⁰ Hartshorne and Peden, p. 50.

³⁰¹ David Hume, "Miracles" in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (X, Part I & II, 1748), p. 112.

Writings on Religion (2000), edited by Antony Flew and taken from Hume's essay on "Miracles" in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748). Hume states:

A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and as firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. . . . There must, therefore, be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as a uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle, nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior. . . . It is experience only which gives authority to human testimony; and it is the same experience which assures us of the laws of nature.³⁰²

However, any event that did not appear to be common to that experience, Hume denied happened or could happen. Yet the religious skepticism that informed Hume's philosophy left open the possibility that *unified human experience* had not yet experienced everything in the material universe that is known. Hume states:

There are a number of circumstances to be taken into consideration in all judgments of this kind; and the ultimate standard, by which we determine all disputes that may arise concerning them, is always derived from experience and observation. Where this experience is not entirely uniform on any side, it is attended with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgements, and with the same opposition and mutual destruction of argument as in every other kind of evidence. . . .³⁰³

I beg the limitations here made may be remarked, when I say that a miracle can never be proved, so as to be the foundation of a system of religion. For I own that otherwise there may possibly be miracles, or violations of the usual course of nature, of such a kind as to admit of proof from human testimony; though, perhaps, it will be impossible to find any such in all the records of history.³⁰⁴

Hume of course doubts the reality of that which is unseen and uncommon to "uniform" human experience or, more accurately, says that if such realities exist they cannot be proved by uniform human experience, meaning, "constant and uniform experience" (i.e. by definition "remaining the same in all cases and at all times; unchanging in form or character. . .")³⁰⁵ Hume's says human testimony about what is not common to nature, at first seems contrary to constant and uniform human experience, is probable, if it conforms to what appears possible within the framework of uniform experience and can be submitted to proof and experiment. Hume says "it is evident that our present philosophers, instead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain, and ought to search

³⁰² Hume, pp. 116, 124; Antony Flew, editor, *David Hume: Writings on Religion* (Peru, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Co., 2000), pp. 68-69.

³⁰³ Hume, p. 114.

³⁰⁴ Hume, p. 124; Flew, p. 85.

³⁰⁵ Hume, p. 115.

for the causes whence it might be derived.³⁰⁶ Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) the late professor of medieval and Renaissance literature at Oxford and Cambridge universities and popular theologian, mounts the stage here to refute the naturalist and pragmatic claims that miracles do not happen in the natural order of the cosmos and therefore cannot be part of a constant and unified human experience. The naturalist makes constant and unified human experience part of an interlocking system of nature that is the *whole show*, even though they admit that such a natural system exists as long as it is not a closed system that does not admit of God or the miracles. For the super naturalist what happens in nature, including constant and unified human experience is not the *whole show*. The naturalist, however, can even admit God to this system, as long as He is part of the interlocking system of nature, and subject to it.

Process theology comes closest to representing such a God the naturalist can admit to the interlocking system of nature it proposes. This theology grounded in the philosophy of Whitehead insists that the human person (as well as God) must be *in process of becoming*. God is not necessarily all powerful, needing nothing and no one, but actually to make the creative process work "God needs the world for the divine becoming as much as the world needs for its becoming."³⁰⁷ Not all process thinkers agree with this theological proposal. Bracken states:

This does not mean, of course, that the three divine persons depend upon us creatures for their own existence . . . for they have their own communitarian life even apart from creation. But it does mean that, if the divine persons choose to create a cosmic community, then they need our cooperation in order to sustain that common space between us and themselves.³⁰⁸

Other theologians and philosophers, who accept the proposals advanced for Process God or the God of traditional Christianity, nevertheless, posit the notion of a transcendent cosmic force, referred to as *the One*, who works within the so-called natural interlocking system of beings, acting to link "individual finite entities to one another within the cosmos."³⁰⁹ Clive Staples Lewis states the following in respect to how the Naturalist views the interlocking system of being, entities and things:

What the Naturalist believes is that the ultimate Fact, the thing, you can't go behind, is a vast process in space and time which is *going on of its own accord*. Inside that total system every particular event . . . happens because of some other event has happened; in the long run, because the Total Event is happening. Each particular thing . . . is what it is because other things are what they are; and so, eventually, because the whole system is what it is. All the things and events are so completely interlocked that not one of them can claim the slightest independence from "the whole show." None of them exists "on its own" or "goes on of its own accord" except in the sense that[sic.] exhibits, at some particular place and time, that general "existence on its own" or "behavior of its own accord" which belongs to "Nature" (the great total interlocking event) as a whole. . . . Spontaneity, originality, action "on its own," is a privilege for the whole show," which he calls *Nature*. . . . Naturalism, without ceasing to be itself, could admit a certain kind of God. The great interlocking event called Nature might be

³⁰⁶ Hume, pp. 124-125.

³⁰⁷ Bracken, *The One in the Many*, p. 212.

³⁰⁸ Bracken, *Christianity and Process Thought*, p. 9.

³⁰⁹ Bracken, *The One in the Many*, p. 213.

such as to produce at some stage a great cosmic consciousness, an indwelling “God” arising from the whole process as human mind arises . . . from human organisms. A Naturalist would not object to that sort of God. The reason is this. Such a God would not stand outside Nature or the total system, would not be existing “on his own.” It would still be “the whole show” which was the basic Fact, and such a God would merely be one of the things . . . which the basic Fact contained. What Naturalism cannot accept is the idea of a God who stands outside Nature and made it.³¹⁰

All this is, at present speculative. It by no means follows from Supernaturalism that Miracles of any sort do in fact occur. God (the primary thing) may never in fact interfere with the natural system He has created. If He has created more natural systems than one, He may never cause them to impinge on one another. But that is a question for further consideration. If we decide that Nature is not the only thing there is, then we cannot say in advance whether she is safe from miracles or not. There are things outside her: we do not yet know whether they can get in. The gates may be barred, or they may not. But if Naturalism is true, then we do know in advance that miracles are impossible: nothing can come into Nature from the outside because there is nothing outside to come in, Nature being everything. No doubt, events which we in our ignorance should mistake for miracles might occur: but they would in reality be (just like the commonest events) an inevitable result of the character of the whole system.³¹¹

Lewis is a supernaturalist for whom natural interlocking is not the *whole show* and is not a closed system that cannot admit a God who can perform miracles within the natural interlocking system. There is a God or being that while standing outside of this interlocking system still has the power to sustain the system *and also interfere with it from the outside*. Humans call these miracles which are meant for the good of the whole interlocking and inter-relational cosmic order of things. The *whole show* for the super naturalist or theist includes God and miracles and would constitute the total fabric of *human-divine unified experience*. I surmise that unseen spiritual phenomenon do influence the material universe and despite the demands of empiricism is part of the human fabric of uniform experience. The phenomenon Hume calls “miracles” are now regarded by modern science as real occurrences, even if observation by the naked eye of human experience cannot acknowledge the uniform nature of the experience, influence or occurrence. Popular writers, such as James Redfield, have weighed in on the discussion of the interlocking field of unified human experience expressed as unified interconnected energies. Redfield suggests the way to operate within this field of pure energy is to apprehend that which is beautiful in it. Redfield states in *The Celestine Prophecy: An Experiential Guide* (1995) that:

The Universe is Pure Energy. The Third Insight informs us that everything in the universe is made up of energy, and this energy creates all the forms and substances of what we call our reality. One big ocean of vibration, this energy coalesces into the myriad forms of existence, whether it be a rock, a wave, a flower, a coat in your closet, or yourself. Existence is made of the same basic substance, and it is always in action --- being born, unfolding, transforming, and shifting. *We Are Cocreators through Our Thoughts.* The Third Insight reveals that all things are literally one and therefore interconnected. Because all energy is interconnected, it

³¹⁰ Lewis, *Miracles*, pp. 14, 17.

³¹¹ Lewis, p. 19.

is malleable to human consciousness through the action of intention. Incredibly, it responds to our expectations. Our radiating thoughts and feelings cause our energy to flow out into the world and affect other energy systems. *Beauty Raises Our Energy*. The Third Insight encourages us to own the reality of this universal energy by observing it in nature and with people. In the beginning, the easiest way to get closer to seeing energy is to cultivate our appreciation of beauty. When we become aware of the unique and beautiful qualities of nature or a person, we have, in effect, raised our vibration on the continuum of consciousness. After putting ourselves into resonance with the beauty of an object or person, the next level of perception will be to see the energy in that which we find beautiful.³¹²

Apostle Paul suggests something similar to Redfield. Paul states:

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are commendable, if there is any virtue or any praise, think about these things. What you have learned, received, and saw in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:8-9, EOB).

This way thinking is how we should drive down *God's superhighway of unified experience*, that is, engaged with **energy** (*energies*) that are beautiful; therefore, promoting Christological experiences that lead to obtaining the peace of God. *Evil* wishes for the human person to engage with negative energies that promote demonic experiences. Is this why Paul also encouraged Christians to engage with that which is beautiful (to overcome *Evil* not only by doing what is good but also by thinking about the good and the beautiful)? Maybe Paul understood that *unified experience is of one fabric* and that if demonic experience prevails over Christological experience on God's superhighway of life, then the whole thing will be corrupted and subject to structural decay; like one torn thread in a carpet tends or threatens to unravel the rest, not immediately but ultimately over time. Promoting the good and the beautiful is one way of dealing with *Evil* on God's superhighway of unified experience. What exactly are these the energy and/or energies human/divine beings used to advance Christological experience on the Superhighway of God? According to the EOTC, that is, the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tawehedo*(ተወሐዶ) Church in their faith and practice the **Energy** we mentioned above is God as transcendent divine being and the **energies** are God's *grace*, *power*, and *potentiality* for actual occasions (expressions of immanence and benevolence grounded in divine love) that promote the good and beautiful in God's *Good Creation*. According to Qesis Dr. Mebratu Kiros Gebru:

The EOTC's teaching about God shares the Eastern Orthodox theological stance that while God always remains transcendent in essence, God is immanent in the divine energies, which are also called "grace," "power," or "uncreated potentiality." . . . Though the essence-energies distinction appears to be paradoxical, the distinction is important to understand God's existence in the divine essence and the presence of God's energies in creation. While "the divine *essence* is God *in his being*, the divine *energies* are God *in his actions*. As John Chrysostom notes, the paradoxical aspect of God's presence in creation signifies "on the one hand, a sense of affinity or immanence whereby God is recognizable in the beauty of the world; and on the other hand a sense of otherness or transcendence, where God is above and

³¹² James Redfield and Carol Adrienne, *The Celestine Prophecy: An Experimental Guide* (New York: Time Warner Company, 1995), pp. 60-61.

beyond anything worldly.” By the essence-energies distinction God’s transcendence is honoured, whereas the divine intimate immanence in creation is celebrated. The distinction is a fair way of saying that “God exists both in His essence and outside His essence” and even if no human participation is possible in the divine essence, we are able to share the life of God through the energies.³¹³

This is what Paul was talking about when he encouraged the human person “to think on these things” that is, what is beautiful in God’s universe, namely God’s *grace, power, love* and *potentiality* for advancing the good and the beautiful along the Superhighway of God so that as participants in Christological experience we “are able to share the life of God through the energies” emanating God in His actions on our behalf against *Evil* and act as God’s cobelligerents in this struggle between good and evil. In this project I assert that there are unseen cosmic powers and principalities of good and evil operating along the pathway of *unified field of human-divine experience*, which exists between heaven and earth (i.e. by means of the gateway in cosmic experience of *Jacob’s Ladder*).

The central idea is that we (as human persons) are all connected to the one super source of all experience through God as the *Transcendent Energy* actuating **energies (grace, power, potentiality, love**, which may share) that promote actual occasions for the good and beautiful on God’s Superhighway of unified human/divine experience. That source or *Energy* is God. It is through the power (*energies*) of God (who knows and experiences all things at one and the same time) that we also can essentially experience and know all things through Him. We, however, cannot claim divine omniscience, because of the human person’s limited capacity to take in and conceptualize all experiences *as one occurrence*; but nevertheless, we have the power to see things through the mind of God. That is how we receive direct revelation. That is how John, the Apostle of Jesus Christ received and perceived the occurrences, events, and occasions represented in his Revelation. However, we receive such information from God through value-ridden filters of our own prejudices, *life-world* and *lived-experience*. Therefore, what God sends us (of course) is obscured, so that, it is like looking through a glass darkly. Paul in First Corinthians talks about receiving revelation from God in just this way. Paul states: “*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known*” (1 Corinthians 13:12, KJV). Empirical philosophers such as Hume and Locke would say that our knowledge of the self and others is confined to the senses.

Whitehead would say that such a philosophy is superficial because neither view takes into account *both* cosmological and environmental realities that condition experience. Whitehead claims that there is an “infinite of actuality” or events that are experienced and known by the whole human person that goes beyond the senses. We know and react to that which we cannot sense with clarity and so “Reaction does not depend upon sense-experience for its initiation.”³¹⁴ This is the philosophical counter-part to the notion found in unified field theory in quantum physics, which claims the relatedness of all things seen and unseen. We don’t have to see everything we react to. We, in fact, react to and experience both physical and spiritual phenomenon, all of which operates along a continuum we call a unified field of human/divine experience whether we see these things or not. I suggest that this unified field of human/divine experience is the pathway that God uses to inculcate the good and the beautiful, ever luring us toward higher and higher levels of Christological experience.

³¹³ Mebratu Kiros Gebru. *Liturgical Cosmology: The Theological and Sacramental Dimensions of Creations in the Ethiopian Liturgy*. Doctoral Thesis. (Toronto: University of St. Michael’s College & Department of the Theology of the Toronto School of Theology, 2012), p. 73, 84.

³¹⁴ Hartshorne and Peden, 50.

I am also suggesting that God cannot create or bring about the good or the beautiful in the cosmic order and in the human person without at the same time allowing Evil (as a negative force) to oppose those realities or eventualities prompted by actual occasions. We have to say then that God either cannot (in the sense that if He does actual occasions for Evil will increase or get worst) or on the other hand is unwilling (grounded in His infinite wisdom and sovereignty) to prevent *Evil* from using the same unified field of experience as human/divine beings trying to promote the good and the beautiful.

From these propositions arise traditional theodetic questions about the omni-benevolence and omnipotence of God. How is it possible for an all-powerful God, whose moral nature is love to permit *Evil* to exist and travel along the pathway of God with the opposing aim of preventing the concrescence of the good and beautiful that God has willed into existence and actuality? Even if God is omni-benevolent (All-Good) is God also omnipotent? Is God sovereign? If God is all-powerful and does permit Evil to reign, is God All-Good? More radically, if Evil is a necessary part of the concrescence of the good and the beautiful, is God responsible for the works of *Evil*? Is God therefore evil despite of the biblical assertion that: "*God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.*" (1 John 1:5b, NIV). I have already shown that St. Augustine asked these same questions well before anyone did but he avoided answering these questions, following them to their logical conclusion; and found a way around the logical process of his mind by proposing the *Doctrine of Original Sin*.

Evil, as demonic experience can be described as a disjunction between time and eternity, where what God experiences or prehends as good and beautiful for humanity is disrupted, delayed, or subordinated to the advance and advantage of *demonic experience*. The struggle or battle between good and evil is played out as a disjunction and near permanent breakdown of *relationality* between humans and the material universe; and between humans and God. The negative aspects of these struggles leads to a devaluation of life, which can come in many forms such as war, genocide, racism, ethnic cleansing, cosmic disruptions (e.g. earthquakes, fires, tornadoes, Tsunami's, hurricanes, etc). These actual occasions are harbingers that prehend the devolution of civilization. *Demonic experience* (with its destructive power) seeks to bring about the devolution of civilization in order to permanently impair the concrescence of the good and beautiful for human person and all the created order. The unified and uniform field of powers is what I mean by convergence of *Evil* in concrete institutional form both public and private as *concrescence of demonic experience*. When public and private institution subscribe too and are rewarded by demonic experience Evil has reached the degree where it can infect all other institutions and humans to comply with ITs will by *receiving the mark of the beast in their hand or on their forehead*. At the least these human institutions that subscribe to Evil and are rewarded by *demonic experience* issue ***Gag Orders from Hell*** to ward off anyone in or outside the said institution to ***Speak Truth to Power*** against the moral wrong doing and injustice the ***Powers-that-be*** does, which are plain to everyone except those human persons that are truly deceived and see darkness presented to them by *Evil* as light. This aggregate of institutional *evil* can influence any human/divine agent of the created order, i.e. the human person, public and private institutions or even the natural and physical order of the cosmos. Objects, both animate and inanimate, have certain *withinness* of energy that makes the cosmos alive within "the psychic universe" as argued by Teilhard de Chardin.³¹⁵ Both good and evil may use this energy or cosmic energies provided to it by God's

³¹⁵ De Chardin, p. 71-72; Doran McCarty, *Teilhard De Chardin in Makers of the Modern Theological Mind* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publishers, 1976), p. 93.

grace and to assist or influence travelers on the Superhighway of God to achieve good and beautiful ends, or evil and thanatic ends. Wink (whom we have already discussed in some detail above) uses the work of J. Christian Beker to support the claim for the existence of a unified field of powers. These are Evil's shock troops operating on *God's Superhighway of unified human experience*. They are organized and so are all the more deadly. Nothing is random occurrence, like these powers wish it to appear to the human person, and nothing is coincidental, which is what they want the human person to believe. Evil has discovered two great facts about what happens on God's superhighway of unified human experience and its thanatic forces are using it to their advantage.

First, nothing along this superhighway is a random occurrence. There is a pattern so complex and large within the fabric of unified human experience that only God can see what they are, but these occurrences look random to the human person because we do not generally have the capacity to see the bigger picture and even if we did we generally cannot process the data without material, psychic, or spiritual assistance. *Bad things just don't happen randomly to good people. Evil with ITs homicidal nature and aim is always the cause.* That is why Jesus said that the human person should *always pray*. We need direct revelation from God to see where we are going on God's superhighway and to see why bad things happen to good people. God can see around corners before we make our turns on the superhighway of life. We need God's omniscience to intuit and discern the right and left turns as we face various occasions of occurrences and/or phenomenon.

The second great fact and discovery is that there are no coincidences. *Things happen not one second before nor one second after they are supposed to happen.* Bad things just don't happen to good people without a cause and a reason. Randomness and coincidence of actual occurrences are for the immature human mind who cannot deal with the thought of a sinister dark power with rational/irrational mind and purpose that is behind each actual occurrence of disaster and suffering. *Random and coincidence* of actual occurrences are two words serve as an explanation of what happens to us when there is no other. Otherwise, we would have to think the unthinkable. ***Something homicidal is out there*** that only God in Christ can combat. *If the human person wants to see the face of Evil and live the strategies of Evil must be known and understood.* We must know what Evil knows about God's superhighway. Evil is trying to corral us like cattle off God's superhighway into cul-de-sacs of confusion and inaction for the kill. The herd mentality is its best weapon against the human person; having us all run for safety in the same direction; and then cut off the weakest and most vulnerable confused straggler for the kill.

Walter Wink, whose theology I presented above, suggests that Apostle Paul understood evil as a unified field of powers, which are allied against the human person, human institutions, and the general created order in the form of death, sin, law, and the flesh. Jesus Christ, however, has delivered the human person, societal structures made up of humans, and the entire cosmos order from Evil by arresting and neutralizing the principalities and powers in these and other forms within his own body that suffered death *for all*. The law aspect of Paul's thinking includes all public and private institutions. In Wink's view these human institutions, *including the church*, are fallen in nature and subject therefore to being overwhelmed by a spiritual Tsunami of demonic influence. For example, the evil of segregation, which became concrete as the "sacred" law of the land in the Southern states and took on, at least in that region, the aura of respectability and inviolability. Wink states:

He [Paul, my insertion] prefers elsewhere to speak of those ontological powers that determine the human situation within the context of the God's created order and comprise the "field"

and death, sin, the law, and the flesh. This field says J. Christian Beker, is an alliance of powers under the sovereign rule of death.

All the powers of the field have their specific reign or dominion: persons are "under the power of sin" . . . or "under the power of law" . . . death "reigns" . . . the flesh (sarx) has a "mindset" of its own . . . or "desires" . . . The field operates as an interrelated whole; its forces cannot be genetically delineated, and no power can be viewed in isolation from the others.

Within this field of interlocking forces, death is the primal power, "the last enemy" (1 Cor. 15:26). "And death remains in some way the signature of this world, even after its allies --- the law, the flesh, and sin --- have been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ The death of Christ now marks the defeat of the apocalyptic power alliance and signals the imminent defeat of death." When I spoke of "demythologizing," I meant simply the withdrawal of the mythic projection of the real determinates of human existence out onto the cosmos and their identification as actual physical, psychic, and social forces at work in us, in society, and in the universe.³¹⁶

From a theistic point of view this concrescence of evil apparently unimpeded, even by the death and resurrection of Christ in its effects, impairs for the moment the visage and will of God within human experience, the human person and the contextual environment of the cosmos in which that human experienced is lived out. This cosmic-divine-human struggle is between the totality of benevolent forces in the universe in favor of the concrescence of divine creativity in process, which are ultimately aimed at promoting the good and the beautiful of the universe. On the other hand, the totality of malevolent forces is aimed at its disruption and total thanatic destruction of that which is good and beautiful. From an Christological perspective this struggle between good and evil is given expression as a battle between the church as a light on a hill and evil in high places (i.e. corrupt governments, or institutions that no longer seek the will of the people or the will of good but say ***"We know what is best for you!"*** within the context of *Progressive Elitism* masquerading as *democracy* and *the rule of law*. The Christian struggle is to promote Christological experience over against this kind of societal and institutional grand-domestication and over against its spiritual component the ἀντίχριστος, that is, the "anti-Christ," whose technical meaning carries the idea of not only being against what Christ stands for; but actually seeks to replace Christ as the object of worship and, therefore seeks to displace Christological experience with demonic experience masquerading as light and truth in the human person and human institutions, especially the church. The anti-Christ stands over against the process of divine concrescence for the good and the beautiful even though it claims otherwise. The weapon of the anti-Christ is deceit, and by its use means to usurp the role of Christ, that is, replace authentic Christological experience with a *counterfeit rationality and relationality* between human beings in and among themselves and between humanity and God. It seeks to do this in the realms of the spiritual, moral, social, economic, natural and political spheres of life and being. Simply put, the goal of evil is to replace Christological experience as a co-created process for the good in favor of demonic experience so as to prevent the culmination of the concrescence of divine initial aims for deiform transformation in God's *Good Creation*. The complete concrescence of the divine within the total life of humanity would mean non-existence and negation of *Nothingness*.

³¹⁶ Wink, *Naming the Powers*, pp. 61-62.

Nothingness (which is according to Barth) is a *Some-Thing* will then become a *No-Thing*, and in this process both initiate and advance human persons and human institutions by *the lure of God* toward the good and the beautiful, that is, the concrescence of Christological experience leading to deiform transformation of the human person, human institutions and the cosmic order, even while the nature of *Evil* cannot be fully apprehended as of yet. We don't have to know everything about the nature of Evil. We know enough to move toward (ever so slowly and painfully) *deiform existence* by promoting within ourselves and our institutions Christological experience. One thing we do know is that this *Nothingness* in its complete triune being will someday become a *No-thing*. ITs total negation is what ITfears. *It is here that we must have faith and trust in God, who is preparing our world for a renewal so that God can come down from Heaven and live among and with us forever.* We know this one thing that whatever Evil is, it is radically homicidal and detrimental to all *life giving, lifesaving* occasions and entities, which bring about the concrescence of human-divine nature, human-divine systems and human-divine institutions as deiform entities. Now we know why. *Evil* as the first aspect of the triune nature of *Nothingness* fears its own negation and non-existence, even as we do. Therefore, we need a well thought out ontology and cosmos-genesis of good and evil, which will explain in what ontological, historical and spiritual context this eternal struggle takes place. Such a study will lead eventually to the development of a *theology of Evil*, a contribution to divine-human knowledge in a world now facing the destructive power of a spiritual Tsunami of demonic experience on almost every level of human existence, where every form of evil and permitted and even celebrated as *freedom of expression*.

Leonard Sweet, Dean of the Theological School, Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, focuses on one aspect of demonic experience, which Sweet calls the "godlet phenomenon" that is leading the human person, the world and the church down to destruction, because they are focused on *self-worship*. This is one of the designs and aims of Evil to create acolytes, devotees, and surrogates of Evil to hide behind and operate toward ITs end within them. Jesus infers such an outcome, and so states: *"Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. How narrow is the gate, and how pressing is the way that leads to life! Few are those who find it"* (Matthew 7:13-14, EOB). Sweet states in *SoulTsunami* (1999), the problem of the postmodern mind and world is:

A GENIE OUT OF THE BOTTLE –Ira's problem, and that patient's problem, is the godlet phenomenon of postmodern culture: the misguided notion that we are gods or can be as gods Postmoderns now have unprecedented powers --- power to change life, to change themselves, to change the world. Postmodern culture is a sucker for the serpent's lie: "You will be like God" (Gen. 3:5)The secret appeal of the serpent's lie is that, if we are gods, if we are sole authors of our lives, then we can do anything we want, create any religion we want. . . . Even in the church we are prone not to worship someone other than ourselves. Our worship impulse constantly snags on shadowy, darker reefs. . . . Hell is getting what *you* want. Hell is doing only what works for you. Hell is building a self based on a foundation of one. Heaven is being the self God made you to be and the self you can't become with God and the church.³¹⁷

³¹⁷ Leonard Sweet, *SoulTsunami: Sink or Swim in New Millennium Culture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), pp. 288, 290, 295.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

EVIL ON GOD'S SUPER-HIGHWAY OF UNIFIED EXPERIENCE: A COSMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



I surmise that the *Superhighway of God* has two planes or levels. One is on the level of human/divine unified experience, which we have discussed thoroughly and sufficiently enough in the previous chapter. The other level is above the level of direct human/divine unified experience. This level is the cosmic or pure spiritual plane of existence. Here human experience is taken into account but has much less effect. The ancient Egyptians understood this relational aspect in the dictum “As above, So below.” Nevertheless, there is a disjunction and chasm created by God to keep the two levels separated and for good reason. This is done so that Evil cannot completely undermine the proposed one fabric dynamic of human-divine plane of existence. This is God’s strategy to keep Evil confined to particular portion of God’s superhighway and so will not let it exit off onto its upper deck, which runs for the most part, parallel with unified human experience. Remember that Revelation declares that Satan and his angels (now demons, fallen angels) were cast down to Earth and no permanent place could be any longer found for him in heaven. So the plane that is the Earth of Time is where the primary battle between good and evil is waged. A higher spiritual battle is being waged by God (as we have already explained in examining Barth) between God and Nothingness at the frontiers of God’s Good Creation. Humans have little or nothing to do with this spiritual duel except to know that such a war at the frontier of our existence is being waged by God in defense of both Heaven and Earth.

Jesus alluded to the distinct spiritual nature of the two planes of existence on God’s superhighway in the disciple’s prayer: *“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread . . .”* (Matthew 6:9-11, EOB). It is clear from this passage that God’s will is perfectly done in Heaven but not on Earth. Jesus implores Christian disciples to pray that the obedience that is evident in Heaven become a reality for the Earth among human persons as well. The reason that God’s will is done in Heaven is not because the Holy Angels of God cannot commit error. Those that rebelled against God to follow Satan certainly did and the Epistle of Jude suggests that even before these Angels were cast out of Heaven some fell into error by leaving their place in Heaven to marry and have sexual relations with the Daughters of Men. Jude states: *“The angels who did not keep their first domain but deserted their own dwelling place, he has also kept in darkness and eternal chains for the judgment of the great day”* (Jude 1:6, EOB). However, the Holy Angels that remain in Heaven are not likely to rebel against God (and do His perfect will) because Satan the Chief acolyte of Evil has been cast out of Heaven (where he can longer deceive those who dwell there) down to Earth where he can wreak havoc among mortal men who are just a little lower than the Angels of God in power and strength of will and are

now the subject of his deception and homicidal purpose and aim. It is evident that the primary battle between good and evil is on Earth as suggested by Revelation although this does not mean that we are fighting this battle alone without divine help from the Trinitarian God and His Angels. Nevertheless, Revelation in Chapter 12 states:

A war took place in heaven: Michael and his angels made war on the dragon, and the dragon and his angels made war. But they did not prevail, and there was no longer any place found for him in heaven. The dragon was hurled down, the great old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. . . . Therefore, rejoice, heavens, and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he only has a short time. . . . The dragon became enraged with the woman and departed to make war with the rest of her seed, those who keep God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 12:1-17, EOB).

Other Biblical texts and extra-Biblical texts will show that this grand struggle is not only taking place within the human person, but on the level of withiness of the cosmic universe itself. The struggle is there between the forces of good and evil at the confluence of *Time and Eternity* or at the tangent point where time and eternity meet. I have included a diagram of this phenomenon in the appendix to this project. I believe Barth was right when he inferred that the battle involving God and God's co-belligerent, the human person with Evil, is being waged "From above as well as from below."³¹⁸ There is little doubt that this maxim is of ancient origin and that it was a way of understanding the origin and source of good and evil observed in the world, for it is cited in the Old Testament pseudepigraphic work *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* (Asc. Isa. 7:10) in these words; "*And as above, so also on earth, for the likeness of what (is) in the firmament is here on earth.*"³¹⁹

This notion can also be found in the canonical New Testament in the Book of Hebrews 8:5, which talks about the Tabernacle that the Aaronid high priests served in as being a copy of the one in heaven. The sacred text itself states: "*They served at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.*" [NIV]. This text supports my claim of interconnectedness, metaphysical and ontological bond between heaven and earth, such that what happens in Heaven [Celestial realm] effects what happens on the Earth [temporal realm]. This intuitive understanding of reality by ancients now has a scientific basis shorn of its religious mythological wrappings but is no less cosmogenic. It is not to be passed over in this supposition that what happens on Earth also has some effect on what happens in Heaven. Jesus hinted at this when he said to Peter: "*I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven*" (Matthew 16:19, EOB). So here we can advance the ancient Egyptian dictum from "As Above, So Below" to "As Below, So Above" as a way of saying that the two spiritual planes or levels of the Superhighway of God has some kind of effect on one the other *although it is clear that they exist in separate dimensions and cannot be crossed accept God will it*. Likewise, Evil is prevented from operating with impunity on these levels or planes of divine/human existence. Even on the human/divine spiritual cosmological plane Evil is

³¹⁸ Barth, p. 354.

³¹⁹ *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* Vol. 2, ed. by James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), p. 166.

limited by God's will as to what **IT** can do and accomplish through the human person and human institutions. It was Albert Einstein who coined the term **unified field theory** to explain the theory of relativity. It explains the nature and behavior of all phenomena on the macroscopic level (the things we can see with the naked eye). Quantum theory explains the nature and behavior of all phenomena on the microscopic level (the things that we cannot see, but which are no less real). The general conception that unified field theory gives rise to is that what happens on the macroscopic level affects what happens on the microscopic level of physical reality and vice versa. In other words, there is a unified field of activity of cause and effect between the two levels of phenomena even if we cannot see it or prove it. This represents my upper and lower deck on God's superhighway of unified experience. What if the same thing is true for the physical and the metaphysical realms of existence? This is not as far-fetched as it first appears. What if Michio Kaku, the theoretical physicist we mentioned above, is right and we can by this means (with "an equation an inch long") apprehend the mind of God even as God apprehended us? If this is true, then the meaning of the following scripture makes sense: *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face-to-face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known"* (1 Corinthians 13:12, KJV). Those who are in pursuit of a unified field theory seek "an equation an inch long that would allow us to read the mind of God." This effort of course reveals the awful hubris of men but I am not sure the good and merciful God is upset about and is likely laughing at us like human fathers laugh at their children comically but seriously trying to tie their shoes (succeeding) but with each shoe on the wrong foot. We are permitted to keep trying until we discover our own limitations in the effort. The whole idea behind God's plan of development for us is not that we discover things, but discover who and what we really are.

Nevertheless, it can be suggested here that perhaps science itself has crossed the barrier between the physical and the metaphysical realms of reality and that science now agrees with the philosopher of religion that there is a unified field of cause and effect, between the physical and metaphysical realms of existence. Is this not the kind of understanding that God sought to delay in man's infant spiritual development, as exemplified in the story of the human person trying to build the Tower of Babel up to the heavens in Genesis 11:1-7, where God says in verses 6 and 7 that:

If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other (NIV).

Do we also want God to shut off access to certain pockets of knowledge on God's superhighway, because we are too immature to deal with it or we desire to have that knowledge in conjunction with our desire to participate in demonic experience? We have a "want our cake and eat it too" mentality. Science and religion have been in a state of confusion, because of the disharmonies between each disciplines conceptual language and technical language, and so have not understood one another. The ancients have held to the truth of a unified field of cause and effect between earth and heaven, that is, between the physical world and the metaphysical world but wrapped them in religious myth statements like "As above, So below." Now modern science is approaching the same conception from below. They have developed a hypothesis about the nature and behavior of physical phenomenon. Science's ontological statement is that what happens in one part of the universe affects being or existence in another part of the universe, no matter how vast or minuscule the distance in space or time. This is the new scientific *Tower of Babel*. Science has provided the content for the ancient maxim *As Above, So Below*. This ancient maxim appeared at first to the modern scientific mind to be mere

Babel. Both philosophy and science have arrived at the same place with this conception of unified field theory, each from their own perspectives as disciplines. It is now time for theology to grow up as well. It needs to first stop thinking of heaven as up or as temporal spatial phenomenon, but rather as a continuum between Time and Eternity. Maybe then unified field theory, as an explanation for cause and effect between the physical and metaphysical realms of reality will make more sense. From this new horizon of understanding, *Evil* can be understood as part of the necessary cosmic mix that is leading to the final concrescence of the good and the beautiful. Process Theology and Theological Cosmology are already trying to bridge this gap of understanding. Walter Wink, in *Naming the Powers* (1984), comments on the *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* and states: "the macrocosm/microcosm view of reality --- the notion that whatever happens on earth ("microcosm," or small world) is a mirror image of the activities of Powers in heaven (the "macrocosm," or large world).³²⁰ This is a theological restatement of unified field theory that seeks to explain the micro-world in terms of the macro-world of reality. This project in part seeks to show that time and eternity is accessed on two parallel decks of God's superhighway. Restated, there is a continuum between time and eternity and that this highway provides the unified field on which evil travels back and forth on at least the lower deck to create an environment in which it can live and have its being. It is the proposition of this project that we can discover or uncover the nature of *Evil* by its manifestations within the observable unified field of human and spiritual existence.

With this understanding of a unified field of cause and effect between heaven and earth we can modify the ancient view *As Above, So Below* and say *As Below, So Above*, as well. This view affirms that *Evil* has its operational environment on earth, influencing free spiritual agents or beings in both realms, because of the fact that one-realm affects the other. For heaven, the battle on earth is paramount. This view suggests that there is an indirect relationship between what happens in the two realms of existence in respect to the actions or choices made for good or evil by free spiritual agents riding on either deck of God's superhighway. This view provides an opening for a solution to the problem of evil, absolving God from being responsible for everything that happens in the universe or within two realms of reality and existence. Of course, God is responsible for somethings we call evil and He is not afraid to say so (while we muster everything in our theological arsenal to say God our created is not guilty). We even make biblical translations that affirm that "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." Isaiah 45:6-7 is given this kind of grammatical treatment.

6. *That they that come from the east and they that come from the west may know that there is no God but me. I am the Lord God, and there is not beside .*
7. *I am he that prepared light, and formed darkness; who make peace, and create evil; I am the Lord God, that does all these things.* (Esaiaas XLV: 6-7, LXX)
8. ἵνα γινώσιν οἱ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ δυσμῶν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν πλὴν ἐμοῦ ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἕτι
9. ἐγὼ δὲ κατασκευάσας φῶς καὶ ποιήσας σκότος ὅποιον εἰρήνην καὶ τίζων **κακά** ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὅποιον ταῦτα πάντα

κακός kakós, kak-os'; apparently a primary word; worthless (intrinsically, such; whereas Strong's [G4190](#) properly refers to effects), i.e. (subjectively) depraved, or (objectively) injurious:—bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked.³²¹

³²⁰ Wink, *Naming the Powers*, p. 131.

³²¹ **STRONGS G2556:**

κακός, κακῆ, κακόν, the Sept. for κακός (from Homer down), bad (A. V. (almost uniformly) evil);

The grammatical data of this biblical passage is disturbing but God said it! In His sovereignty He said it; make of it what we will. Since we don't like what He said, let make our own gods, like we are prone to do and ignore the plain Word of God! The Greek for **κακός***kakós*, **kak-os'** which suggests moral evil, has the basic meanings “**bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked.**” Or of a bad nature; not such as it ought to be of a mode of thinking, feeling, acting; base, wrong, wicked; troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful. However, in many English so-called “dynamic” translations for the Greek **κακός***kakós* that would be less accusative or suggest God somehow has not committed moral evils. Gods permissive will that Job to be punished when God Himself declared *twice* was the most righteous man on the earth. These “dynamic” translation come up with such “translations” for the Greek word of “Evil” as create “disaster” (NIV); “calamity” (ESV); “woe” (NRSV); “disaster” (NJB); send “bad times” (NLT); create “discords” (MSG), etc. These translations are not wrong *per se* but they are trying to cover the notion that God creates *moral evil* such as what is “base,” “wrong,” and certainly what is “wicked” and focus on words that suggests *natural evil* which the Bible certainly shows God justifiably unleashes on the enemies of God, the rebellious, and the wicked. It is apparent that either our theodicesand traditional theology are wrong or we don't know God as well as we claim to know Him! We therefore find ourselves putting the Word of Man over the Word of God, i.e. *what God says about Himself in His own Word.*

My project here is not to defend the righteousness of God but to understand the nature of Evil, which cannot be fully understood without understanding the nature, character and attributes of God, Almighty. Nevertheless, as I said above what I have presented grammatically is disturbing. The only way I can deal with it at this point is to rely on Barth's notion that *within God Good Creation* there is *an unexplainable negative aspect* that *just is!* This is where I think we must place Isaiah 45:7.

The second line of understanding would be that whatever God does in respect evil must be a necessary by-product of God's creative nature and actions in defense of His plan for the deiform transformation of the creation, that is, “to make all things new.” Here we are left struggling to understand (with the joy of our *rational heart*) what God says about Himself in His Holy Word. This struggle to understand (at this point) says very little about God but very much about us and hubristic challenges to overcome our own human limitations. As Paul spoke about his own struggle to understand God and himself: “*For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known*” (1 Corinthians 13:12). Here (trying to know God) humility is the key. Here is where we tame our intellectual hubris.

1. universally, of a bad nature; not such as it ought to be.

2. (morally, i. e.) of a mode of thinking, feeling, acting; base, wrong, wicked: of persons, [Matthew 21:41](#) (cf. Winers Grammar, 637 (592); also Buttmann, 143 (126)); [Matthew 24:48](#); [Philippians 3:2](#); [Revelation 2:2](#), [διαλογισμοί](#); [Mark 7:21](#); [ὁμιλίαι](#), [1 Corinthians 15:33](#); [ἐπιθυμία](#), [Colossians 3:5](#) ([Proverbs 12:12](#)); [ἔργα](#) (better [ἔργον](#)), [Romans 13:3](#), neuter [κακόν](#), [τόκακόν](#), evil i. e. what is contrary to law, either divine or human, wrong, crime: ([John 18:23](#)); [Acts 23:9](#); [Romans 7:21](#); [Romans 14:20](#); [Romans 16:19](#); [1 Corinthians 13:5](#); [Hebrews 5:14](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#); [3 John 1:11](#); plural (evil things): [Romans 1:30](#); [1 Corinthians 10:6](#); [1 Timothy 6:10](#) ([πάντα τὰ κακά](#) all kinds of evil); [James 1:13](#) (Winers Grammar, § 30, 4; Buttmann, § 132, 24); [κακόν ποιεῖν](#), to do, commit evil: [Matthew 27:23](#);

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

GOD'S END GAME OF GOOD AND EVIL ACCORDING TO THE *EGYPTIAN ORIGINAL* & JOHN HICK'S "SOUL-MAKING" IRENAEAN THEODICY

The common cognomen of this world among the misguided and superstitious is "a vale of tears" from which we are to be redeemed by a certain arbitrary interposition of God and taken to Heaven---What a little circumscribed straightened notion! Call the world if you Please "The vale of Soul-making". . . Do you not see . . . how necessary a World of Pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul? The Letters of John Keats³²²

We suggested much earlier in this work that we would deal with God's *end game* in the struggle of good against evil and that we would focus on a contrast between John Hick's understanding the *Irenaeian Theodicy* where he lays out his conception of universal salvation and the Osirian Traveler in the *Egyptian Original*. We handled Hick's thoughts in a very cursory way in explaining Walter Wink's views on evil. Earlier we made the following statement that more appropriately serves as an introductory statement of what we hope to achieve by looking at John Hick's work to explore *God's End Game on Evil* and the limits under God's plan of salvation especially in regard to *postmortem soul-making* based our own biblical understanding obtained from Genesis and the saga of the Osirian Traveler in the *Egyptian Original*. There we stated:

Hicks view about postmortem universal salvation while interesting and is supported in part (absent the notion of the necessity of universal salvation as God's *end came* in the struggle to overcome Evil) by the *Egyptian original* is for a later exposition in this work on contrasting Hick's understanding the *Irenaeian Theodicy* with the *Egyptian Original* to show good and evil has ontological qualities, purpose advanced against the human person beyond the vale of this present life. In this contrast we shall demonstrate God's *end game* in the struggle against Evil modifying Hick's view with the *Egyptian Original* focused on the post-modern journey of the *Osirian Traveler*.

Here we offer what we promised earlier. In fact we must dive deeper into Hick's theodicy and his notion of universal salvation but we yet have some ways to go before getting *there*. There is no way to dismiss Hick's proposition for *universal salvation* without understanding somewhat how he got there. Hick in his *Evil and the God of Love* [1966] based on fragments from Irenaeus and the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher in his *The Christian Faith* [1830] posits the notion that *the divine purpose* [or God's endgame] *is soul-making* (deiform process of transformation) and that our earthly environment is made in such a way (including all good and evil, even evil that is Dysteleological excessive and harsh, seemingly with no purpose at all but pure destruction of the human person and his environment] so as to spiritually reform mankind and influence him to freely seek out a loving and trusting relationship with his Creator is separated purposely by *epistemic distance*, where mankind operates in God's *Good Creation* as if there is no God, unaware, or even caring for conclusive evidence for or against the existence of God.³²³

³²² *The Letters of John Keats*, ed. By M. B. Forman. London: Oxford University Press, 4th ed., 1952, pp. 334-5. In John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 259, Footnotes.

³²³ "Simply put epistemic distance can be taken to mean as a **distance in knowledge or awareness**. In this religious hypothesis, the world would remain 'religiously ambiguous', that is, there is no conclusive evidence for or against the existence of God.

There is some support for a finding of *epistemic distance* in the Bible but not to the extent where mankind does not wonder about God through an engagement with His creation *at all*. A passage in Romans chapter one declares:

However, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what is known of God is revealed in them, for God revealed it to them. Indeed, since the creation of the world, his invisible things are clearly seen. They are perceived through created things, even his everlasting power and divinity. This is so that they may be without excuse, because knowing God, they did not glorify him as God or give [him] thanks. Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless heart was darkened. (Romans 1:18-21, EOB);

And in Psalm 18(19) (in the Greek version we use here) it says;

The heavens declare the glory of God; The firmament shows the creation of His hands. Day to day utters speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. Where their voices are not heard. Their proclamation went forth into all the earth. And their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 18:1-5, The Orthodox Study Bible);

The Creation itself is God's testimony about Himself. He therefore has not left himself without a witness given too mankind whether they believe or do not believe, whether they go to church or do not go to church, whether they worship or do not worship, or whether they read the Bible or do not read the Bible. In traditional theology this is called "General Revelation." The Creation is always present to warn mankind in his striving to maintain or imagine *epistemic distance* from God. The *Deist* of the 17th and 18th century put forth such a claim:

Deism: belief in the existence of a supreme being, specifically of a creator who does not intervene in the universe. The term is used *chiefly* of and intellectual movement of the 17th and 18th centuries that accepted the existence of a creator on the basis of reason but rejected belief in a supernatural *deity* who interacts with *humankind*.³²⁴

Both Deism and Christianity used a teleological argument called the **watchmaker analogy** or **watchmaker argument** to support their various views on God. This argument was by William Paley in his 1802 book *Natural Theology or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity*. This teleological argument by way of analogy states that "a design implies a designer, especially intelligent design by an intelligent designer, i.e. a creator deity." What Deist loved adding to this idea was that the watchmaker wound up the universe then departed to let men operate it as they saw fit. This analogy for epistemic distance worked well of the Founders of the United States and likely allowed them to subscribe to belief in God, which left them free to build their Republic any way they saw fit, including the using millions of black men and women as slaves to help build it. Nevertheless, there is something to be said for the notion that God intended *epistemic distance* as one of the means by which He engages in soul-making according to Hicks. *Epistemic distance* as part of the divine purpose is evident in Ecclesiastes 3, where it says:

People are left with a choice." *On Epistemic Distance and Faith* by Victorino Raymundo T, Lualhati. (*De la Salle University – Manila*). Presented at the DLSU Research Congress 2018, De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines, June 20 to 22, 2018.

³²⁴ *Oxford Languages*. Oxford University Press, 2023.

*I have seen altogether the tasks which God has given to the sons of men to be engaged in. He made everything beautiful in its time and He indeed put eternity in their hearts in such a way [i.e. epistemic intellectual distance of the rational heart] that man may not find out the work God made from the beginning to the end. I know there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and do good in their lives. Indeed, every man should eat and drink and experience the good in all his labor --- this is God's gift to him. (Ecclesiastes 3:10-13, *The Orthodox Study Bible*); and this book further states:*

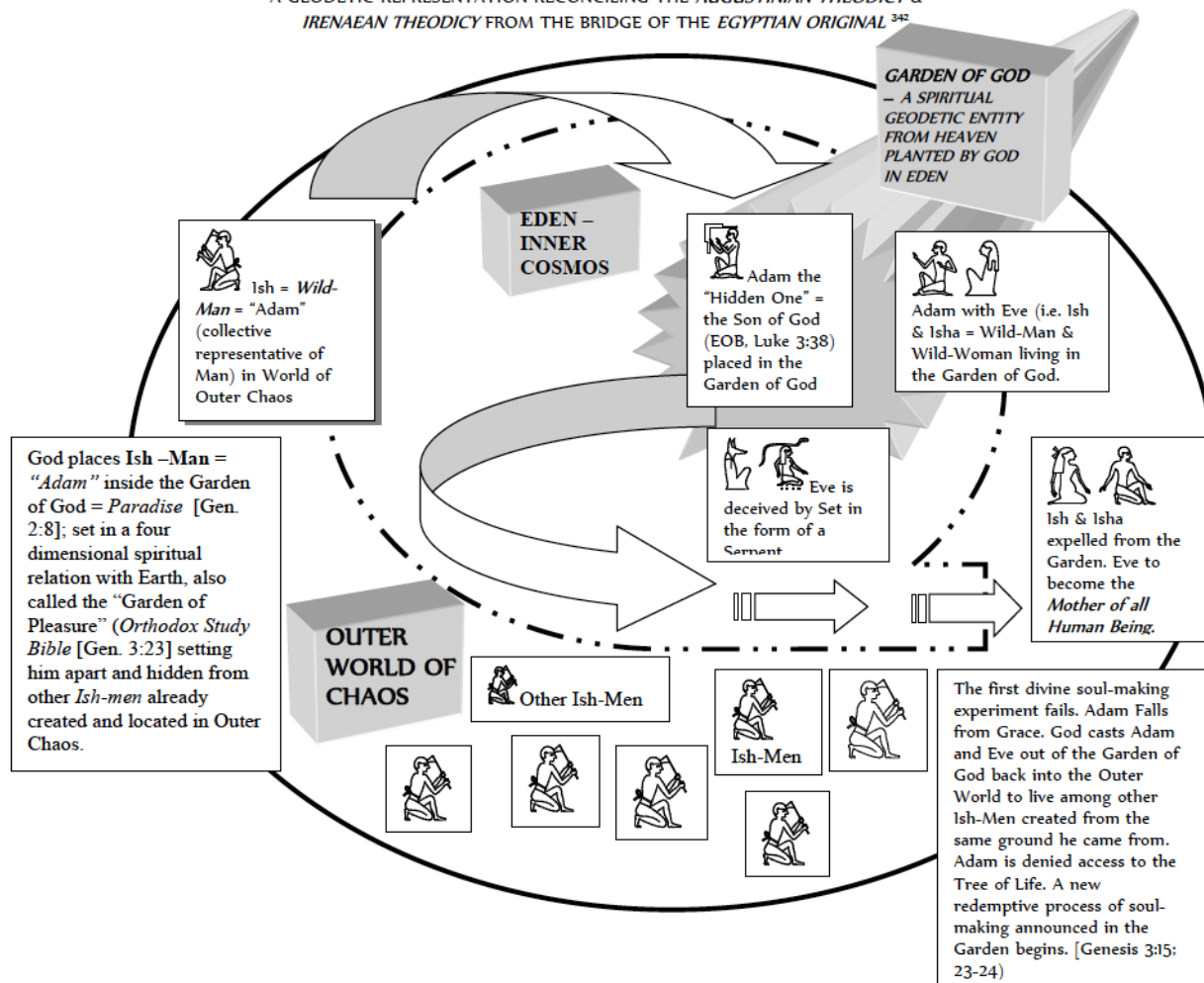
*Then I saw all the works of God, that a man cannot discover how He does His work under the sun. No matter how much a man labors to discover it, yet he will not find it out. And no matter how much a wise man may speak of knowing it, he will not be able to find it out. (Ecclesiastes 8:17, *The Orthodox Study Bible*).*

The divine purpose for *epistemic distance* where mankind focusses totally on his environment is *soul-making* where man comes to realize within its harsh environment that they need something or someone greater than themselves. John Hick's formulated his *Irenaean Theodicy* to describe what this all means. Hick had to construct this theodicy himself, since Irenaeus did not fully develop such a theodicy, nor does it appear he intended it. As a preliminary basis for the discussion to come we offer the following geodetic representation of God's **End Game** in overcoming Evil through a beginning process of soul-making in Genesis where God's intent is made clear among other narrative statements "*Let us make man in our own divine image*" and "*God made man and breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul*." Hicks would say that while man is made in God's image that becoming like God is a process of evolutionary *soul making* according to His divine purpose. Below is the geodetic representation (using Egyptian hieroglyphics) that we shall use throughout in our discussion at various points to describe God's *End Game* for eliminating or more precisely arresting evil by arresting its acolytes and devotees, including Satan and his crowd, both human and demonic.



END-GAME ON GOD'S SUPERHIGHWAY OF UNIFIED HUMAN EXPERIENCE

A GEODETIC REPRESENTATION RECONCILING THE *AUGUSTINIAN THEODICY* & *IRENAEAN THEODICY* FROM THE BRIDGE OF THE *EGYPTIAN ORIGINAL* ³⁴²



³⁴² I will be explaining the representation above in part using the following biblical based scheme that begins God's plan of soul-making: **Creation Phase I** (General): Genesis 1:26 to 2:3. **Creation Phase II** (Experimental): Genesis 2:3 to 3:19. **Creation Phase III** (*First Divine Intervention* - Redemptive Process Begins): Genesis 3:20 to 5:32. **Interlude I** (*Second Divine Intervention* - Destruction of *all* first Wild Men): Genesis 6:1 to 7:24. **Creation Phase IV** (Redemptive Process Continues - Only Eve's Children Survive the Flood): Genesis 8:1 to 9:28. **Interlude II** (*Third Divine Intervention* - Human Wisdom Fails, Confusion Prevails & Eve's Children are Scattered over all the Earth): Genesis 11:1-09. **Creation Phase V** (The genealogies and story of the *Table of Nation* where *one nation is chosen* through whom God continues the redemptive soul-making process for all men beginning with Noah, Shem, Terah to Abraham): Genesis 10:1-32; 11:10-32

We claimed that both God and *Evil*(as one triune aspect of Nothingness) are ontological co-eval spiritual realities. Here we do not mean that *Evil* is necessarily or in fact *co-eternal* with God, but *IT* somehow stands outside the creation as an autonomous metaphysical reality, which existed before or least at the creation of the Heavens and the Earth. *Evil* is an entity but was not brought into existence like other created sentient beings. God did not purposely create *IT*. However, *IT* exists as a by-product (i.e. something really real) that was an *unintended consequence*; but necessarily came into existence as result of God's creative process.

This by-product of divine creativity came into existence as darkness, a void, a *livingNo-thing*, before or at the creation. *Evil* as one triune aspect of *Nothingness* is just *out there* or *beyond here* but manifests itself as *Sin*, and *Death* within the human/divine realm on the Superhighway of God. Nevertheless, evil is real being and may be the unavoidable consequence of God's action in the beginning to create the heavens and the earth. *Evil*, from this perspective can be seen as a negative irrational, but co-determinant being. It may be described as Barth's *Nothingness* and my *No-thing*, which somehow has the power to interject a "No!" to God's "Yes!" in the created order that is geodetically located on the lower deck of the Superhighway of God. Yet this *No-thing* is still subject to God's will and power, which is the human person's only hope against its negative determination to bring about in the human/divine realm sin, blight, corruption, and death. *Evil* is the negative anti-thesis that opposes God and His creation and appears (for the moment) to be the necessary negative anti-thesis to God and His good creation to help it advance through Christological experience of suffering toward deiform transformation at the culminating Omega Point where a New Heaven and New Earth will come into existence. Why this negative power (called Evil) is necessary in relationship to God (who is All-good and All-powerful) is a question for a developed *theology of evil*, grounded in a corresponding *Doctrine of Evil*. This is not a question for theodicy, which I believe are asking the wrong questions. The human person may cry foul, rail at or accuse God, while the creation groans under the weight of *Evil* and all living being may rebel against *ITs* presence; yet it is a sobering fact that Evil is genuine, is *really real*, and appears to be successful in its aims, in spite of God, who is All-good and All-powerful. What is God doing in the face of Evil's deafening "No!" to God's emphatic "Yes!?" That is what a theology of evil would want to know. God perhaps is using a process or occasions of creative novelty (Whitehead) that must accept Evil as a necessary element to promote the good and the beautiful within God's *Good Creation*, with the aim of redeeming the fallen created order in both heaven and earth (Wink). We call this process of creative novelty Christological experience.

We claimed that *Evil* seeks to be worshipped within the life of all created being by invading the spiritual interiority of sentient being, especially the spiritual interiority of the human person and human institutions. By this process of invasion of being (i.e. possession) evil seeks to prevent or overturn the economy and design of God for the creation. Evil uses the threat of death, that is, the threat of non-being as its ultimate sanction to achieve these aims against sentient life, so that these aims are achieved through fear, acquiescence, quietism (i.e. by obeying Satan's *Gag Order from Hell*) and participation in a demonic experience (via receiving the *Mark of the Beast* in one's hand or forehead). Evil knows what some theologians apparently do not know. God's *Good Creation*, especially the earth, even now is spiritually and intellectually and spiritually a baby relative to the vast cosmos, and so has not reached its complete design, that is, its completed form and its *imperfect perfection* as it moves through Christological experience to its final *deiform transformation*. What God pronounced as finished at the Sabbath was only the birth of creation in process of becoming. That creation process is what was completed within six days and God rested on the seventh day from that initial work to jump start the universe. There is a hint that this supposition is true in Genesis. God pronounced the creation *good*, even *very good* but never did God say it was perfect or perfected, as in "It is finished!" The idea is that from *there* the entire creation began to march from its infantile stage to maturity, still yet unfinished in our own day. The advance of that maturity toward deiform transformation (by means of the increase of Christological experience) is halted or slowed down or corrupted by *Evil* (the triune aspect of *Nothingness*) that uses the same pathway (i.e. the Superhighway of God) in order to accomplish *ITs* purpose and aim to wreck and bring to naught God's *Good Creation*. It is very clear in the New Testament from the pen of Paul that:

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed toward us. As it is, the creation waits with eager expectation for the revelation of God's children. Indeed, creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that creation will also be delivered from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the totality of creation groans and labors in pain until now. Moreover, so do we who have the first fruits of the Spirit! We groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:18-23, EOB).

The "totality" (*all of*) the creation and the human person (that God made *very good* with the first stage completed or "*finished*") and by inference human institutions are in birth pains as we suffer various tribulations and upheavals in our *life-world* and *lived- experience* and move closer and closer by means of Christological experience toward deiform transformation that will finally evolve into a New Heaven and New Earth. These suppositions and assertions are counter to those theological minds, who protest the notion that what God created is merely "the best of all possible worlds" (Leibniz, 1646-1716).³²⁵ Some theologians, like John K. Roth, see this notion as an excuse for a *Pathetic God* or impotent God (Hume, 1711-1776), who is merely doing "the best that is in God's power" to do. Theologians of advancing protest theodicy do not see a *Process God*, who is still finishing the work of creation, and is still bringing it to its final material and spiritual maturity as a deiform adult.³²⁶ Evil (for them) is in an *unequal* contest with a *Pathetic God*, who is unable to stop IT from destroying God's immature work of creation before it is full grown. *Evil* comes against the cosmos, the living Earth, or non-sentient being with Sin and Death that bring about *moral, spiritual, and ecological blight* (i.e. corruption of sentient being transformed into something other than God intended).

Science views the corruption it sees in the cosmos as the natural order and the process inherent in all thing's material. I see, however, a negative spirituality at work within the cosmos interposing blight within the regenerative processes of creation, constantly advancing life over death, where *Death* (i.e. non-being) is the third aspect of the triune nature of *Nothingness*. Within the human person the corruption is expressed as *Sin*, or disobedience to God, selfishness, the worship of the self, and mistaking the material order of things as the *whole show*. I called this process of blight, idolatry, material and spiritual corruption demonic experience through this project. *Evil's* primary nature is idolatry. The ultimate aim of *Evil* is exalting the *contingent* and *temporary* over that which is *permanent* and *eternal* (i.e. *faith, hope and love*). In other words, exalting the human person, human institutions (rewarded by the temporary pleasures of demonic experiences) whether church, state, nation, other corporate personality or the material and spiritual universe above God, who created all things through Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the spiritual agency designed to advance justice and moral creative principles within God's *Good Creation*. Nevertheless, the demonic aims and purpose to advance idolatry of contingent being over non-contingent being (i.e. Deity, God), I hold that God is the only non-contingent eternal being, and so the worship of anything contingent, created good but imperfect, whether human or supra human is idolatry. I further claim (following Barth) that *Evil* is a negative supra-natural entity that nevertheless stands outside God's created order of things. We don't know where IT came from accept the possibility that IT came into ontological being as a negative by-

³²⁵ Kelly, p. 121.

³²⁶ John K. Roth, "A Theodicy of Protest," in Stephen T. Davis, ed. *Encountering Evil* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), p. 11.

product of God making the heavens and the earth. We used Barth's theology of *Nothingness* to prove this. Using *apophatic theology* (the theology of what ontological being is not advanced by Qesis Dr. Mebratu Kiros Gebru in his *Liturgical Cosmology* promoted as a safe approach the *unknowability* of God) we say that *Evil is not* merely the absence of the good (St. Augustine). *Evil is not* a mere defect in the cosmic order, or imperfection in the human person (which allows the human person an excuse or way out), nor is *Evil* itself a contingent being within the order of creation, which necessarily implies that God created IT.

However, Evil could be an intellectual entity within the human person, and so is *really real* only when the human person subscribes to IT (St. Thomas Aquinas) desiring to receive the rewards of various demonic experiences. It is this view of St. Thomas Aquinas that helped me understand the propensity for the human person's desire to participate in *demonic experience* offered as reward by Evil to ITs acolytes and devotees. But I cannot except that Evil is merely an intellectual being given reality (*really real*) within the mind of the human person. Evil is also *really real* apart from its potentiality in the human person, and so stands outside and against of God's *Good Creation*, as a triune aspect of *Nothingness*. This was Barth's contribution to my project. It resolves in great part the problem of evil that seeks to defend God's righteousness. As Barth shows, Evil has to be a *Some-Thing* that stands outside the created order, whose origins are the negative, but necessary by-product of every act of creation by God. *Evil* must be some kind of entity in order to exist ontologically apart from God's *Good Creation*, otherwise to say it is *really real* even in the mind of the human person makes no sense. *Evil* is the "No!" to God's creative "Yes!" IT is a negative irrational being opposing the very being of God, and threatening with death, and non-being everything in God's created order inside God's *Good Creation*. That is why Jesus Christ in his own flesh body had to experience death and overcome IT through the power of Almighty God. Further, the greatest weapon that *Nothingness* has in its arsenal in fighting the deiform plan and process of God is promised one day to be done away with and cast with all Evil and acolytes and devotees of Evil into Outer Darkness *forever!*

God has consigned *Nothingness* to the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* for the time being; but that does not stop *Evil* from entering onto the *Superhighway of God* by means of *Sin* in the human person who apparently has the insatiable desire to participate in demonic experiences as Moses signified when he wrote: "*The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain*" (Genesis 6:5-6, NIV). *Sin* is the primary means used by *Evil* (a triune aspect of *Nothingness*) passes through the frontier of God's *Good Creation* to affect its aim of *Death* in the human person and blight in the cosmic material order, because in finality *Sin* leads to *Death* but Satan, the primary acolyte and devotee of Evil constantly tell human person "You will not die, but He knows when you eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil you will become like gods!" We fall for this claim all the time.

Evil rules through the preeminent principality and power of *Death* and is capable of doing so because all of creation, principalities and powers exist in a fallen state of being where all living being (seen and unseen) fear *Death*, which threatens *non-being* (i.e. the cessation of life). I have defined the state of *non-being* as separation from God and from His purposes and design for the concrescence of the good and the beautiful in God's *Good Creation*. We can then extend this understanding of the fall of man to the fallen state of the human institutions, and of the powers and principalities operating contrary to God's will, who are participating in, and cooperating with *Evil* as its acolytes and devotees. The nature of *Evil* cannot be fully understood within the context of the fallen state of created rational being because on the one hand IT stands outside the created order; yet the paradox is that ITs *tentacles*

are inextricably interwoven within the created order like weeds among wheat. Only God's angels on God's command can unravel them, not mankind. All attempts to understand *Evil* within this context devolves into mere systems of moral ethics and or virtue ethics, and PC language that pronounces anything good it sees fit (and woe to those who openly disagree). Such ethical, moral and cultural systems presume that human persons can understand and overcome Evil within themselves by education or by a mere change in their moral character. This has been the effect of Aristotle's virtue ethics on traditional Christian theology. This theology has transmitted these Greek philosophical ethical norms as Christian, and made them into a system of Christian ethics, which are often oddly at variance with what God considers right and wrong according to the Word of God.³²⁷ That is why Jesus told Satan who came as Peter *"Get behind me Satan! You do have in mind the concerns of God, but the concerns of men."* (Matthew 16:23).

The limitations of moral ethics (when misunderstood) allows the human person and human institutions to deny the need for the saving act of God, not to mention the idea that men need to repent of their sins; be baptized to new life, making the good confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God, and the Savior of the World. The church does not even preach the need for repentance anymore as a precursor to being saved, being born again by being washed in the saving blood of Jesus Christ. Since humans can provide their own systems of right and wrong (moral prescriptions on how to "do the right thing") redemption and salvation by God through Jesus Christ becomes unnecessary for the human person and human institutions, that preaching in the Church even becomes little more than inspirational talks using biblical texts as veneer or superficial cover for feel good topical sermons that people in the pew love to hear. God warned Ezekiel about his preaching and people listening to him. Ezekiel engaged in "pretty preaching" and God warned him not to be impressed by the nice things people were saying about his preaching. God told him that his "pretty preaching" was the only reason people came to hear him; and that despite the truth of the word he preached that they did not intend to do a thing he said. God said to Ezekiel:

As for you, son of man, the sons of your people are talking about you by the walls and at the gateways of the houses. They speak as a man speaks to his brother, saying: 'Let us gather and hear the words that proceed from the Lord.' So they come together before you as people do, and they sit before you to hear your words, but they will not do them, because a lie is in their mouth, and their heart pursues their own defilements. For you are to them as a sweet, well-tuned song [e.g. pretty preaching, prettier sermons], and they will hear your words, but will not do them. So when it comes to pass, they will say, 'Behold it has come.' They will know a prophet was among them. (Ezekiel 33:28-31, The Orthodox Study Bible).

Evil by nature is deceptive, irrational and homicidal, in that it seeks deceive; to destroy the very sentient life upon which it must live in order to experience to the full the pleasures of demonic experience; something like the Gerasene demonic out whom Jesus cast a legions of demons³²⁸; who

³²⁷ Take for example, Rahab's, a Canaanite prostitute and ancestress of Jesus, lying about the Hebrew spies hiding out in Jericho (Joshua 2; 6:22; Hebrews 11:31; Matthew 1:5), or Jesus' defense of David's actions that broke the law against eating sacred things that only priests should eat, and in the temple no less (Mark 2:25-25). And strangely enough these people are commended in the Bible as people of faith of whom the world was not worthy (Hebrews 11:38); including elsewhere, David being mentioned as the apple of God's eye (Psalms 17:8). From the point of view of virtue ethics, their lives do not measure up to the Greek ethical norms or moral character of a virtuous person, with David being the worst of the lot, both a murderer, liar, and a rapist (Psalms 34:1; 2 Samuel 12:9).

³²⁸ A Roman Legion comprised about 5,000 to 6,000 soldiers during the time of Christ.

pleaded with him not to torture them before its time and so cast them into *outer darkness* or the *abyss*; but at the least allow them to go into a large herd of swine that were feeding (root hogging) nearby so the demons could live in them. The demons obviously needed some living host in order to *feel anything* (experience anything). Jesus granted their plea; however, in this case the demons were so evil that even the pigs could not bear this demonic possession of their flesh bodies (Luke 8:26-39).

Evil seeks to blight or control even the non-sentient cosmos or material universe as a denunciation and refutation of God's sovereignty over God's highest life-bearing contingent being, mankind.³²⁹ In this project we have claimed that there is a **unified field of experience** that makes the *universe one spiritual fabric*. We called this unified field of experience the **Super-highway of God**. This cosmic and spiritual highway allows God to affect his purposes through occasions of creative novelty by which He may lure His living rational creatures to higher levels of deiform experiences and actions and away from thanatic demonic experiences that end in death.

This superhighway or unified field of cosmic and human experience can be described as a continuum of some sort between time and eternity or between heaven and earth. This proposition projects an original contribution to the process of thought. The whole idea of a unified field of experience is not new, but when I apply it concretely to the struggle between good and evil new value is added to the notion. I would like to refer to this pathway, which we are talking about as the cosmic highway God has used and is using as a means to promote the good and the beautiful in process of creative novelty (Whitehead). This cosmic highway has a *spiritual gateway*, which the Bible calls **Jacob's Ladder**. This Cosmic superhighway is the lower deck of God's superhighway of unified human/divine experience. The lower deck of the unified field of experience is how both Christological experience and demonic experience operates within the created order and economy of God. We therefore say there is a unified field of cause and effect between the physical and metaphysical realms of reality. The spiritual powers of light and darkness are permitted by God for the time being to use the same unified field of cosmic, human, and or sentient experience in the struggle between good and evil, but only on its lower deck. The powers behind good and evil have vastly different aims, but congruent aims. One is to promote the good and the beautiful in the totality of the created order, and the other its blight and total thanatic destruction. The unified field of experience gives the spiritual cosmic loci of the struggle between good and evil. This struggle will culminate at the *Omega Point* of human/divine experience, where the *Cosmic Christ* shall become the **final solution** to the *problem of evil* or Barth's *problem of nothingness*. All being (good and evil) will be sublated and reconciled within the *Cosmic Christ* who is the second person of the *Communitarian Trinity*. We don't know how this spiritual/cosmic sublation of good and evil will be accomplished through the Cosmic Christ but we know that the ultimate goal is put all things under God's feet so that God will be *All in All* as the Bible says:

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority, and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this,

³²⁹ The recent Tsunami in South-East Asia and Africa may be an example of such a homicidal attack on mankind using nature as the weapon with the death of over a hundred and seventy-five thousand human beings. This again raises the question proposed by Willem B. Dress and others, *Is Nature Ever Evil?*

then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:24-29, NIV).

The intellectual impasse we have with the problem of evil can be resolved by understanding the nature of the struggle between good and evil on God's super-highway of unified human/divine experience. The real problem of evil and problem of nothingness is that both the agents and acolytes in the service of either good or evil can use this highway as a means to achieve its ends. I say that if the physical and metaphysical world is all of one spiritual/cosmic fabric, what happens in it is connected directly to the throne of God Himself. On the Superhighway of God, *Evil* itself becomes a necessary part of this spiritual fabric, and so *Evil* cannot be dismissed as not being a *really real* power or ontological reality. When the human person rationalizes *Evil* away as a *No-thing* *IT* then becomes a *Some-thing*. *Evil* laughs at this human attempt to dismiss *IT* as *really real*. For Barth *Evil* or Nothingness is no laughing matter but takes *Nothingness* in all three of its triune aspects, *Evil*, *Sin* and *Death* seriously as a *Some-thing* that threatens both God and God's *Good Creation*. While Nothingness or *Evil* is really real and must be taken seriously *IT* is nevertheless not a part of us and does not belong in God's *Good Creation*. Barth states: "We thus affirm that it is necessary to dismiss as non-Christian all those conceptions in which its character as evil is openly or secretly, directly or indirectly, conjured away and its reality is in some way regarded or grouped with that of God and His creature."³³⁰ Nevertheless, we claim (and sadly to say and affirm) that evil is (for the moment) a necessary part of the created order.

We further claim that the created order is made up of one spiritual fabric of ontological existence and experience which explains why God is able to *see all* (omnipresence) and *know all* (omniscience) as one creative event. Apparently, God can see the whole of the superhighway of unified human/divine experience that begins at the gateway of Jacob's ladder and ends existentially at Megiddo (the valley of humiliation and death). This is different from the cosmic ontological ending that is proposed with De Chardin's *Omega Point* and the *Cosmic Christ*. Paradoxically, Megiddo is the final and terrifying gateway down the road of human/divine experience to both hell and paradise, as found in literary imagination of Dante's hell. It is also found in John Bunyan's *Celestial City of God*, a refuge from the *City of Destruction* ("a place that burns with fire and brimstone") entered and left by the "Wicket-gate."³³¹ This same picture is described in the religious imagination of Teresa of Avila. In her, *Interior Castle*, the human person has to travel through seven dwelling places of the spiritual mind and moral development seeking to become a true self by union with God so as to "negate is own nothingness" caused by *Evil*.³³² A theology of evil and the problem of evil should be approached through the doctrine of God's providence and not through a syllogistic statement of God's attributes. The unified field of experience demonstrates how God's providence works, and how God experiences all that happens in the cosmos, and the interiority of being as one creative event. In its cruciform expression God through God's pathos experiences the pain of the human person when bad things happen to good people. I described these experiences of God as God's pathos, or deep feeling of love and care for His creation.

³³⁰ Barth, p. 354.

³³¹ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Pittsburg, PA: Whitaker House, 1973), pp. 7-8.

³³² Teresa of Avila: *The Interior Castle* (Paulist Press, 1979), p. xvi.

The doctrine of providence is grounded in God's omnibenevolence. Above I used both the works of Lacugna and Heschel to demonstrate this truth. Bracken's metaphysics was also helpful in respect to my arguments about the providence of God in relation to the human person. Bracken holds that the human person is the co-creator of this field of activity or experience. I am also sure Bracken does not exclude God when he asserts this. God is the creator of both the cosmic and collective human experience, which I call the *Superhighway of God*. With Bracken, God does not need the human person to accomplish this, but when God does the human person becomes God's co-creator. Barth also added that the human person was God's co-belligerent as well. Using Bracken's metaphysics, I surmise that the *Superhighway of God* is put together moment-by-moment, creative occasion by creative occasion, experience by experience. As God's co-creators, the human person creates their own pathway toward the good and beautiful or toward death and destruction. With that, it can be said that God's superhighway is incomplete, and put together only as the human person experiences more creative occasions toward that end. The *Superhighway of God*, ontologically, is only as real as our last interaction, and only as permanent as our will to maintain its structures of interconnectedness, bridges, and exits into new and creative communities, and communal relationships.

The difference between Whitehead and Bracken on this point is that "Whitehead urges, the world is made up of momentary subjects of experience gathered into 'societies,' or what I call structured fields of activity, for their ongoing interaction," while Bracken believes "the world of creation is made up of an enormous network of hierarchically ordered and overlapping fields of activity for all these created subjects of experiences."³³³ Bracken's highway is not broken up like that of Whitehead's. Whitehead is trying to keep the highway uncluttered to prevent a fixed road that leads in only one direction, where the creative and novel occasions of spontaneity cease in some cul-de-sac of conformity, which is the only true evil for Whitehead. In Whitehead's system there is no metaphysical evil. God's creatures are merely finite and subject to error the errors of which God uses as novel occasions to further the creative process. In Whitehead's system "No evil event is absolutely necessary."³³⁴ What is evil is conformity. It is where life degenerates, and where even evil itself no longer has the "degree of self-creativity (spontaneity or freedom)," to replicate itself or evolve through various grades of demonic experience.³³⁵ Barineau states:

"Life", according to Whitehead, "degenerates when enclosed within the shackles of mere conformation." And further Whitehead states: Whatever ceases to ascend, fails to preserve itself and enters upon its inevitable pattern of decay. It decays by transmitting its nature to slighter occasions of actuality, by reason of the failure of the new forms to fertilize the perceptive achievements which constitute its past history. "Staleness sets in . . . indefinite repetition of a perfected ideal," and the fatigue of such staleness represents "nothing other than the creeping growth of anesthesia, whereby that social group is gradually sinking toward nothingness." Accordingly, "there is no true stability. What looks like stability is a relative slow process of atrophied decay."³³⁶

Bracken's highway of God looks more like those in the great metro poles, which always has movement, and allows each driver to take new roadways in and out of the city, preserving the spontaneity, limited free choice, and creativity on the journey. There is even the possibility of getting

³³³ Bracken, *Christianity and Process Thought*, p. 9.

³³⁴ Barineau, p. 99.

³³⁵ Barineau, p. 99.

³³⁶ Barineau, p. 101

lost or having a wreck on the way. However, I am not sure, we as humans can dismantle or disrupt entirely this intangible spiritual highway, merely because we refrain from interacting, or relating with one another in a positive way. We certainly can-do damage to the Superhighway of God. We create potholes of racism, hatred and mistrust. We divert individuals and even whole societies into *cul-de-sacs* that lead nowhere, forcing others to make half turns around and start all over again. We also create human wrecks along this highway of God, and have head on collisions we call war, causing untold suffering. Yet, while the battle between good and evil rages on this spiritual superhighway, God is still in the driver's seat, luring us in the right direction, and making it all but impossible for us to stand still on this spiritual pathway. *Father Time* in these aspects waits on no one driving on the *Superhighway of God*. Nu Africans understand this truth through *lived-experience* within their black *life-world* as illustrated in the following story:

Adubiifa Questions Father Time

*One day Adubiifa encountered Father Time walking along the Road of Eternity. Adubiifa engaged Father Time in conversation along the way. Adubiifa said to Father Time: "Why do you cut the life of Man short?" He continued, "Man has but a few days upon this Earth of Time, yet those days are full of death and misery. Man has few moments of perfect peace. Man cries for just one moment of respite, yet you do not stop your eternal walk toward the Great Father in the Heavens. Father Time said: "Adubiifa my son, I have been given but one mission, one irrevocable command by the Great Father of Time and Eternity. He commanded from the beginning of Creation that I leave on a journey with Man and not to return without him. But Man is often out of step with me. He is either behind me or attempts in his madness to take giant steps ahead of me. Rarely is Man in harmony with me. This, my son, is the reason for the misery and sorrow of Man. Yet, I cannot stop to introduce him to my sister Sophia so that she may teach him Wisdom, nor will I give Man a moment of peace, for these moments are my children, and when I have given them to Man before, he has abused them or taken advantage, become complacent and gotten into more trouble. You yourself know the old saying that **idle hands are the devils workshop!** Therefore, I must not stop to hear the complaints of Man and must continue on my journey until I meet my Father in Heaven"*

Adubiifa remonstrated with Father Time: "But the Great Father told you not to return to Him without Man! How will this be accomplished if Man falls behind you and loses his way or reaches the Great Father before you do? Father Time said to Adubiifa: "You do not understand my son. Man will never reach the Father before me because his ankle is tied to mine by the great chain belonging to my cousins Fate and Responsibility. Man will either learn to walk with me in harmony, or I will be forced to drag him along the continuum of Time and Eternity until we reach the Great Father. In either case I cannot stop to give Man a moment of peace." Adubiifa looked down at his feet and for the first time began to realize the great weight of Responsibility tied to his ankle, and that Man was not entirely the Master of his own Fate. Because of this, great tears began to well up in Adubiifa's eye's. Father Time said: "Adubiifa my son, you cannot be free until I am freed. The chain will not be broken until we reach the Earth of Eternity, where sits the Great Father in Judgment, on His great throne in the Heptanomis = the Heaven of Heavens, and He turns us both over to my elder brother Eternity. Only then will we both have rest when Time shall be no more."

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Nevertheless, the creative impulse, guided by God's initial aims, is always there to get us back on the right road and lure us toward His end-game along this great road of unified human and divine experience within time and eternity (within geodectic Earth of Time and Earth of Eternity). We have said above that Whitehead, and even Bracken do not see an intangible unified field of human and divine experience, which is in any way permanent, and is not tied to what we, the co-creators of this spiritual highway do or don't do. Neither of them leaves God out of the picture. Bracken wants the collective human person to experience this cosmic journey within a communal interrelatedness of a community of divine persons. But there is an interiority that belongs to both the divine life of the Trinity, and the human person that neither my limited reading of Whitehead, nor Bracken has yet revealed. It is not fair to Bracken to say that he does not mention this spiritual dimension at all. Bracken certainly points out that the ground for the communal relatedness of the three divine persons among themselves (which is growing divine love) and certainly for collective human persons to experience that divine communion he or she must do so in divine love of God. This understanding of God's attribute of benevolence in relationship to the superhighway of unified experience underscores the subtlety and significance of Jesus' statement that not one sparrow falls to the ground without the knowledge of God, and that even the hair on the head of each human person is numbered (Matthew 10:29-30). But there is a psychological, as well as a spiritual dimension within the human person that points to the notion of interconnection. Whitehead presents the notion of spontaneity, and novelty as the motive force, and lure, driving the creative process along the superhighway of unified experience.

Carl Jung, the famous Swiss psychologist, discovers the same notion through the concept of synchronicity. We find Jung's thought embedded in the work of James Redfield. Redfield picks up Jung's idea of "meaningful coincidences," and so formulates the notion that there are no coincidences within the field of human experience. Redfield states:

At about the same time that Einstein was discovering that space and time are relative to a point of reference and not absolute concepts, another great pioneer, Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, was giving serious study to the idea of "meaningful coincidences," and his work has sparked significant inquiries in the past three decades. He called this phenomenon *synchronicity* and believed that it is as natural a connecting principle as cause and effect. With synchronicity, however, we are not able to immediately see the causal link. Nevertheless, coincidence seems to be a primary way that the universe evolves, and many of us have felt this effect in our own lives. Recognizing the importance of coincidence lays the groundwork for the remaining Insights, which inform us that the universe responds to our consciousness and expectations — creating the chance opportunities to move us along. With the awareness of coincidence, we are attuning ourselves to the mystery of the underlying principle of order in the universe. As Jung said, "Synchronicity suggests that there is an interconnection or unity of causally unrelated events," and thus postulates a unitary aspect of being.³³⁷

We claim that in God's wisdom and providential care He cannot prevent *Evil* from operating along the same unified field of cosmic and human/divine experience, without destroying the unified fabric of that experience. In other words, the tares of the created order cannot be uprooted without at the same time uprooting the good wheat. The problem of evil can be seen in Jesus' parable of the wheat and tares. Jesus advises the human person in its struggle with Evil to let the wheat and weeds grow together until the end of the age. This is the *Omega Point*, when the "Son of Man [the *Cosmic*

³³⁷ Redfield and Adrienne, pp. 4-5.

Christ] will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil" (Matthew 13:41, NIV). God cannot (at the moment) destroy *Evil* without at the same time destroying the good. This is why bad things appear to happen to good people and God appears either not to be concerned or cannot do anything about it. Barth says this is not true. God can do something about *Evil* and is doing something about IT. *Evil's* assault on God's *Good Creation* is an indirect assault on God and affront to both God's holiness and to God's sovereignty over His *Good Creation*. Although Barth holds that the human person is a co-belligerent against *Evil*, that is, pursues a path where he or she overcomes evil with good; yet God is the only being that can successfully contend with *Nothingness* in its triune nature of *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death*. Barth states: "God alone can defend His honor, ensure His creature's salvation, and maintain His own and His creature's right in such a way that every assault is warded off and the assailant himself is removed. God alone can summon, empower and arm the creature to resist and even to conquer this adversary. This is what has taken place in Jesus Christ." ³³⁸

So, it is not because God is not all-powerful or omnibenevolent that Evil cannot be (for the time being) destroyed or arrested on God's superhighway. *Evil* has intertwined itself into cosmic and human experience in such a way that only God in Christ can untie the Gordian knot of *Evil*. Nevertheless, IT must be unraveled in a process of co-creativity, co-belligerency, and cooperation between God, human institutions (hopefully with the church at the head), and the human person in and through faith in Christ. This will be done initially by implementing the Pauline moral ethical and spiritual maxim "*Do not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*" (Romans 12:21, NIV). Neither the human person, nor human institutions can do this alone. Only divine intervention and not human ethical philosophies, or societal laws, can separate evil from the good. Overcoming Evil is a divine-human enterprise; but finally separating, and destroying evil, or denying it a pathway on the *Superhighway of God* is an enterprise that belongs to God's *final solution* to the *problem of evil* and the *problem of nothingness* that is in Christ Jesus. It will be God's final "**No!**" that negates *Nothingness*, the evil that has the potential to negate all being in the cosmic order of God's *Good Creation*, all except God Himself, our only guarantee for the continuation of life. *Evil* will not and cannot be uprooted or annulled by human ethical and moral systems. Evil laughs at such devices. Only the supernatural intervention of God can achieve what humankind has failed time and time again to achieve. The so-called "Axis of Evil," created in the minds of people by the Bush administration, cannot be destroyed by one person, or a conglomerate of persons, no matter how powerful, in their delusion of technological triumphalism. This assertion is not a call to succumb to or worship *Evil*. This is a reality check on human hubris in respect of its relative power against a dark spiritual force that the human person has and are trying now to face *without* God and Christ in societal structures and communities. This is saying what *Evil* is, in respect of its dark power of destruction, and death, no weapons of mass destruction can proscribe or apprehend. Rather Evil will use those same weapons against all the human persons that weld them so that the saying of Jesus will become all too true, "Put up your sword back in its place; For those who take up the sword, shall perish by the sword" (Matthew 26:52), a message falling on deaf ears of Americans who both love and worship guns. My whole project with its claims will lead to a better understanding why bad things happen to good people, and why God appears unable to prevent evil, despite being All-good and All-powerful. The answer to theodicy does not revolve around God's attributes, but around God's pathos for the good of the creation.

³³⁸ Barth, p. 355.

The answer to the problem of evil can only be found by obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the doctrine of the providence of God, where both God's power and goodness must necessarily be self-limited to defeat *Evil*. In all of this, God's attribute of holiness, which causes God to oppose absolutely all evil, must never be forgotten as part of the mix as well. Protest theodicy blames God for God's passivity in not preventing what G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), the German philosopher, called "the slaughter-bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of states, and the virtue of individuals have been sacrificed."³³⁹ Yet, Hegel argues against such a protest theodicy and a rebellion against God, which annuls the human person's responsibility for its participation in evil against God's counter demand to the human person to "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16, NIV). Hegel anticipates process thought by centuries, when Hegel says that the aim of all human history is honoring God, and that the ultimate aim of human perfection is holiness in the here and now process of becoming. Hegel says this seed of perfection is sublated in every stage of development of the human spirit, until a final synthesis of the human spirit harmonizes with the Spirit of the Age. Hegel states in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*:

It is sometimes said that goodness is the ultimate end. . . . From the point of view of religion, the ultimate aim is that man should attain a state of holiness. . . . But seen in this light, the end already presupposes a content of a universal kind, i.e. a state in which souls may find their salvation. One might well object that this conception of salvation is no concern of ours, since salvation is a future end whose fulfillment lies in another world. But then we would still be left with existence in this world as a preparation for the future state. . . . From the point of view of religion, the aim of both natural existence and spiritual activity is the *glorification of God*. Indeed, this is the worthiest end of the spirit and of history. The nature of the spirit is to make itself its own object and to comprehend itself. . . . The aim of the spirit is therefore to make itself conscious of the absolute, . . . To become actively aware of this means to do honour to God or to glorify the truth. This is the absolute and ultimate end, and truth is itself the power which produces its own glorification. In honoring God, the individual spirit is itself honoured — not, however, in a particular sense, but through the knowledge that the activity it performs in honour of God is of an absolute nature. . . . In our understanding of world history, we are concerned with history primarily as a record of the past. But we are just as fully concerned with the present. Whatever is true exists eternally in and for itself — not yesterday or tomorrow, but entirely in the present, 'now', in the sense of an absolute present. Within the Idea, even that which appears to be past is never lost. . . . In this connection, it should be remembered that every individual, in his cultural development, must pass through various spheres, which together from the basis of his concept of the spirit and each of which has taken shape and developed independently at some time in the past. But what the spirit is now, it has always been; the only difference is that it now possesses a richer consciousness and a more fully elaborated concept of its own nature. The spirit has all the stages of the past still adhering to it, and the life of the spirit in history consists of a cycle of different stages, of which some belong to the present and others have appeared in forms of the past.³⁴⁰

³³⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Reason in History*, trans. Robert S. Hartman (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), p. 27.

³⁴⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans by H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 149-151.

So, when the human person and human institutions violate their own ultimate end and purpose (as outlined by Hegel) God rightly participates in this “slaughter-bench” of history in God’s own eternal struggle with *Evil*. The human person despite the love of God for all cannot expect not to find a place on this “slaughter-bench” if we become and remain acolytes and devotees of *Evil*. God’s moral attribute of holiness is offended when *Evil* threatens to overwhelm God’s created order in cooperation with *Evil*’s acolytes, and devotees. Part of the human person’s co-belligerency against *Evil* and in honor of God’s moral attributes of holiness is to be holy as God is holy. As Heschel suggested the human person (with the prophets of God as example) should have the same pathos for the good order and preservation of God’s *Good Creation* as God does. If we do not God in His moral nature of holiness must of necessity become our great antagonist when God’s *Good Creation* is threatened to be overrun by *Evil* in a concrescence of demonic experience, which the human person willingly participates in. The human person is warned that it is “*a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of a living God*” (Hebrews 10:31, NIV). God’s pathos can work against the human person as well as for the human person despite the fact that God is constantly trying to save and lure the human person toward their Christian duty of love for God and all mankind. Heschel states that:

Man’s deeds do not necessitate but only occasion divine pathos. Man is not the immediate but merely the incidental cause of pathos in God, the “*occasion*” or “*causa occasionalis*,” which freely calls for a pathetic state in God. There is no nexus of causality, but only one of contingency between human and divine attitudes, between human character and divine pathos. The decisive fact is that of divine freedom. Pathos is not an attribute but *a situation*. On the other hand, the divine pathos is not an absolute force which exists regardless of man, something ultimate or eternal. It is rather a reaction to human history, an attitude called forth by man’s conduct; a response, not a cause. Man is in a sense an agent, not only the recipient. It is within his power to evoke either the pathos of love or the pathos of anger.”³⁴¹

However, even in God’s wrath there is mercy in every judgment. God cares for the human person but will not allow the human person to continue down the destructive paths of *Evil* without due punishment. God has pathos (i.e. feeling) for the preservation of all that He has created. Heschel asks the question:

Is it more compatible with our conception of the grandeur of God to claim that He is emotionally blind to the misery of man rather than profoundly moved? In order to conceive of God not as an onlooker but as a participant, to conceive of man not as an idea in the mind of God but as a concern, the category of divine pathos is an indispensable implication. To the biblical mind the conception of God as detached and unemotional is totally alien.³⁴²

The message that Heschel gives is that even when God is angry, God cares for the human person. God cares when bad things happen to good people. God also cares when bad things happen to wicked people as well. While God does not take delight in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11); it is not beyond God’s “pathos of anger” where God “laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming” (Psalms 37:13, NIV). God’s pathos of anger is invoked and provoked if the human person continues as acolytes and devotees of *Evil* desiring the pleasures of *demonic experience*.

³⁴¹ Heschel, 290.

³⁴² Heschel, 330.

God is irreversibly opposed to all *Evil* and its negation of the good and the beautiful in whatever form or human/spiritual vessel it is found operating. When the human person is overcome by evil, and even goes so far as to become a belligerent against God, then *the left hand* of God's creative power works destruction in defense of His holiness and righteousness. God has just as much freedom to act in His interest as is granted by God to the human person to act in theirs. When the Lord saw "*how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thought of his heart was only evil all the time,*" "*Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain*" (Genesis 6:5-6, NIV). Protest theodicy is incorrect when it says that God is not wholly good when the wrath of God is actuated against the human person that is participating in *Evil*. God is acting within God's benevolence and righteousness to defend God's own holiness and sovereignty over the created order from *Evil*. You can be certain that ultimately God is not going to allow sentient beings to do whatever they very please without consequences. In our defense of God's righteousness we can say "No!" to those that would accuse God of unrighteousness just because bad things happen to good people. We can respond by faith with this word that "*God is light; in him there is no darkness at all,*" (1 John 1:5, NIV). I say with the twenty-four elders of Revelation, the saints, and the angels of God:

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. *The nations were angry; and your wrath has come.* The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great --- *and for destroying those who destroy the earth* (Revelation 11:17-18, NIV).

Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed (Revelation 15:3b-4, NIV).

You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged; for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve. . . . Yes, Lord God Almighty true and just are your judgments" (Revelation 16:5b-6, NIV).

We claimed that within God's economy or plan of salvation for the entire creation, Christ becomes the final solution (within God's *end-game*) to the problem of evil, where all things, whether good or evil, are transformed, redeemed, arrested, or destroyed through a spiritual process of sublation in Christ. In Christian theism being in Christ, being sublated in Christ through a process of spiritual transformation is the ultimate lure to creation. Christ becomes the ultimate goal to which all being, sentient, and non-sentient prehend. In this Christological process of deiform transformation, God does not invade the interiority of being to accomplish the divine purpose for the created order. God merely stands with God's Christ at the heart of the human person and knocks (Revelation 3:20). We have to let the community of three divine persons in our hearts, into our *life-world*, and into our *lived-experience* so that we may overcome evil with good. This is the purpose and aim of the Communitarian nature of the Trinity that I discussed earlier. God through a process of creative novelty lures God's *Good Creation* towards the good and the beautiful, the highest expression of love *in Christ* that converges as at the *Omega Point* of human/divine unified experience.

Further, it is the function of the *Cosmic Christ* (while overcoming evil with good) to also ultimately prevent evil from using the unified field of experience *at will* and *with impunity*; and to finally arrest the actions of its acolytes and devotees to end this cosmic threat. This cosmic threat can only be resolved by the spiritual sublation of all sentient, and non-sentient being into the *Cosmic Christ* (de Chardin) *the arc of safety* for the entire created order. Once this is done *in Christ*, God will become *all in all*, and every power, both good and evil (including the Cosmic Christ) will be brought under subjection to God (1 Corinthians 15:26-28). Evil will finally be overcome by the good, because Evil's acolytes, and devotees will be arrested and cast in the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20-21; 20:7-10). *Evil* will likely become *mute* (i.e. silent) or become *inert* (i.e. inactive, dormant, apathetic) when: (1) all of its acolytes and devotees are eternally arrested, and (2) when God's creation is completed (*finally finished*) at the *Omega Point* of ontological existence, and all being are sublated in the Cosmic Christ. This is plausibly how God will defeat *Evil* in this Christological Armageddon, as the **final solution** to the problem of evil.³⁴³

³⁴³ Father Joseph Bracken in a note suggested to me that Evil is not a reality in and of itself, based on his understanding of Whitehead, but rather "Evil is actual only in its instantiations." I am not sure, but I think Bracken means that Evil does not reside in my so-called "acolytes and devotees" of Evil as part of their nature, but they all have the moral neutral power to do good or evil. This would be more like the Yoruba religious view of moral neutral power, where Evil is not a force with mind, but is only created at the moment or instant that it is done. Evil has no metaphysical reality and merely is the absence of good. Evil from this view would also not have mind, nor purpose or design to defeat the concrescence of Christological experience by concrescence of demonic experience on the superhighway of God, that is, within the unified field of human experience. Then if the Devil is real, then he would merely be the chief angelic spiritual being that chose to use his moral neutral power to do Evil, like Elegba in the Yoruba traditional African religious system. Bracken feels that my own emerging theodicy would be better served if I "defend the sovereignty of God, [and] not the goodness, of God." At least, that is where he apparently thinks my thought is focused. Bracken states:

Note: From a Whiteheadian perspective, Evil can be linked with "creativity" as a morally neutral power to do good or to do evil. Likewise, like Whiteheadian creativity, Evil is actual only in its instantiations, what you call its "acolytes [and] devotee." Where I differ from Whitehead is in claiming that creativity is not a reality independent of God, but God's own nature or divine principle of activity. What in God always work for good can be used by humans [and] perhaps angelic spirits for good or evil. Yet without a principle of creativity to be lent to creatures, God could not create.

Bracken appended some final notes to my thesis (on which Book I of this project is based) that demonstrates the tentative nature of my thought on the ontology of evil, and therefore shows that more work is to be done, especially in developing a "contemporary philosophy or systematic theology," that would support my claims. In his particular comments on my hypothesis, Bracken states:

The author makes a strong case for the reality of Evil as a power operating with human minds and hearts and likewise at work in the cosmic process as whole. What is still not clear is its ontological status before God. If it is not an entity created by God, then it must be an activity which somehow functions independently of God within creation. In this sense, it seems to have some affinity with Whitehead's notion of creativity which is a reality but not an actuality in and of itself; it is actual only in the entities which it empowers to exist. Creativity, however, is morally neutral. It can be used for good or for evil, depending upon the decision of each "actual occasion" or momentary self-constituting subject of experience. Thus to attribute to Evil intentionality or conscious opposition to Divine Providence seems to overstep what is meant by an activity as opposed to an entity. Yet, in that case, what is the ontological status of Evil before God? Likewise, the metaphor of the superhighway between heaven and earth is strained when one has to think of an upper and lower deck that are still somehow interconnected as in Chapter 7. The metaphor of hierarchically ordered fields of activity seems to work better. That is, a more comprehensive, higher level field sets parameters for activity in the lower-level

Finally, we can end our current discussion with John Hick's interesting but speculative **End Game** that we challenge with some of the conclusions and analysis we have already presented and see where his view parts with the Bible and the Egyptian Original view of God's End game that we have suggested throughout. This is all good stuff and Hick's is worthy of examination for his view of God's End Game in respect to *soul-making* which seems solid, but his notion of its postmortem continuation is questioned by both Biblical theology and the *Egyptian Original*. For example, the Egyptians while they conceived of punishment in the Lake of Fire for those who were the enemies of God they could not abide the notion of eternal damnation (i.e. eternal burning in the fires of hell) but rather came up with the notion that the Lake of Fire would be extinguished at some point and all who were being punished within would be *annihilated by the flames*. They would not be saved but also, they would not be subject to eternal torment. While after death the righteous souls would have to pass through the portion of *Amenta* that could be described as hell they would have the power of God's words learned from the *Pert-em-Hru* (so-called **Book of the Dead**) to say *words of power* that would either extinguish the flames or banish demons that sought to devour them along the way to meet with Osiris-Ra in Paradise. For the Egyptians there was no such thing as eternal damnation in hell promoted by Christian thought but also no continuation of soul-making as promoted by John Hick beyond the Osirian traveler passing through the Valley of the Shadow of death to his/her final eternal destination with God and His Horus-Christ.

On the one hand in R. O. Faulkner's (1972) compilation of the *Book of the Dead* you can see in Spell 126 "Four Baboons who sit in the bark of Re squat around a Lake of Fire with flaming braziers between them."³⁴⁴ This scene is found as well in E. A. Wallis Budge's *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*,³⁴⁵ where there is more explanation, where the Four Apes around the Lake of Fire say to the Osirian Traveler, who asks to be let pass "Advance, for we have done away thy wickedness, and we have put away thy sin, and thy sin committed upon earth which merited stripes, and we have destroyed all the evil which appertained to thee upon earth, "so that while there is no prolonged postmortem continuation of soul-making; the deceased still has hope of forgiveness beyond the grave that Christianity denies and finalized at death before the final Judgment before the White Throne of Osiris-Ra and His Horus-Christ who leads the deceased into His Presence. For the unlucky ones who were not allowed past the Lake of Fire they were cast in upside down (both body and soul), where Budge states the following:

The Book Am-Taut (Division XI) shows that, after the enemies of Osiris were beheaded and mutilated, the remains of many of them were disposed of by burning. The bodies were cut into pieces, their spirits and souls were severed from them, their shadows were driven away, their skulls were battered in, and the pieces were cast down into a pit, or pits, of fire. The pictures which accompany the texts leave no doubt on this point, for in them the pits are shown clearly, and we see the bodies, souls, shadows, and heads being consumed. Each pit is under the charge of a goddess, who vomits fire into it, in order to keep the flames renewed, and the knife which each goddess holds in her hand indicates what her functions were.³⁴⁶

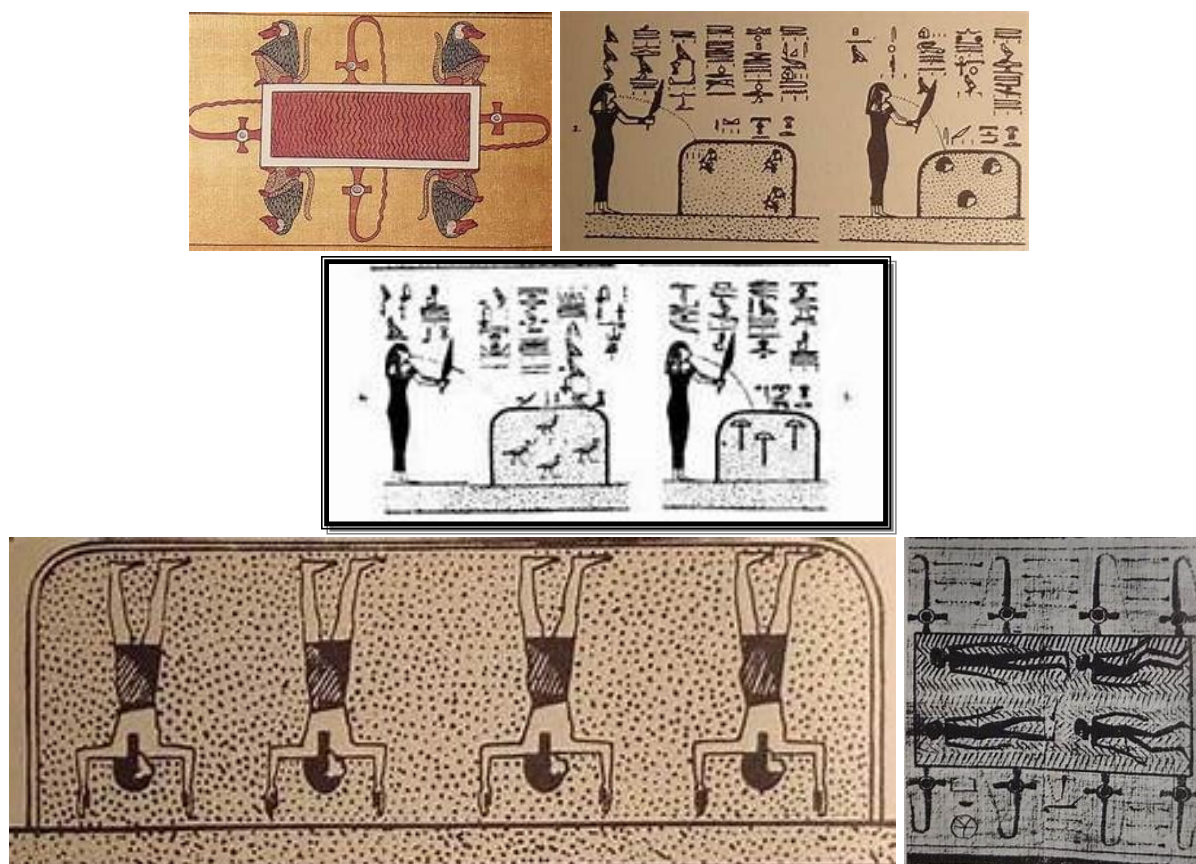
field and yet is itself constrained in its operation by what is happening in the lower-level field of activity (e.g., the mind/body relation).

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³⁴⁴ R. O. Faulkner, Trans. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1972), p. 119.

³⁴⁵ E. A. Wallis Budge. *Osiris & The Egyptian Resurrection*. Vol. 1. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1911), pp. 346-347.

³⁴⁶ Budge. *Osiris & The Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. 1, p. 204.



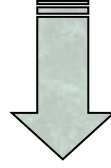
Even the Egyptians could not stand the horror of the scenes they describe for those meeting their fate in the Lake of Fire so they conclude this horror with the idea that once the enemies of Osiris are dispatched and **annihilated** that the Lake of Fire itself will be **extinguished** as in following papyrus

showing the Lake of Fire being emptied as the  [unemit] eight fountains of consuming fire are turned away from the lakes center to flow outside it or away from it presumably by the power of

a **Ur-hekau**  magician with his **Ur-heka**  magical crooked staff of authority in the hands of "one who is great in words of power, or enchantment, a god or man who is a magician"

that needs only speak some of the 14-words of power **Heka**  and the fires of Hell will be quenched.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁷ The Egyptian notion that an angel or a man could use the divine Words of Power to quench the fires of Hell reminded me of a conversation I had with my mother at my home before she passed away. One day while she was visiting us I started talking about near death experiences I had been studying, where people claimed to have been in Hell temporarily. I have no idea now what opened up the conversation, but my mother appeared really interested. She began to tell me about the experience my Uncle Freddie had. It was not a near death experience, but it was more like a trance state in which he claimed to have been in Hell. My mother said Uncle Freddie was at the church intent on building a pulpit and while he was working on it he found himself in Hell and witnessed a number of people on their knees engulfed in fire and being tormented. He told her that they were surrounded by Angels who were doing all they could to quench the flames but with no success since the flames were so hot and intense. He told Mama that he then witnessed one powerful angel move all the other angels back and this angel took the sleeves of his white robe and swung both back and forth like a gigantic fan over the flames until the flames went out giving the tormented humans relief. My uncle said that his wife came in and saw him just bowed before the pulpit he was making like he had fell asleep. She was alarmed because his



While the Egyptians would not go along with Hick's idea of a postmortem continuation of soul-making culminating in universal salvation of all mankind. There will be a horrid punishment for the enemies of God; but nevertheless, they would not go along with the traditional Christian view either of *eternal damnation* [never ending punishment] in the supposedly *unquenchable* Lake of Fire in Hell. In the Egyptian Original a horrible punishment awaits the enemies of God but the end game for them is annihilation after a suitable time of punishment in the Lake of Fire. Jesus' statements give some support to the notion of annihilation when he says: "*What I tell you in the darkness speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in the ear, proclaim on the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who [can] kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna, [ἀπολέσαι ἐν γέεννῃ]* ruin, destruction, smash, terminate the person or object itself, not just the cessation of their function as in injure, but to *annihilate* completely, make into nothing" (Matthew 10:27-28, EOB). While Jesus held the view that God can annihilate both body and soul in Hell, where presumably after a period of suffering the body and soul mercifully will no longer have conscious existence to feel pain resulting in unimaginable suffering. This would certainly be a mercy of God. This view is in line with the Egyptian theology on last things found in the *Egyptian Original*. Yet, Jesus also says that the Lake of Fire is *unquenchable* and that the worm [Ka-soul] of those in it die not, indicating that these souls would be punished in the Lake of Fire for all eternity, which is the traditional Christian view and counter the idea found in the *Egyptian Original* that the Lake of Fire can be quenched by the magical use of the *Words of Power*. Here Jesus states: "*If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life lame, rather than having*

clothes smelt like fire and smoke and she tried to wake him up. When she did wake him up he never told her about his experience but she told him she thought he was on fire and the whole thing with him being sleep scared her to death. He told this story to my mother who told it to me. When I later asked him about it he really did not want to talk about it but did say that he was in Hell and that there were demon-like creatures that caused the fire and that they were the ugliest things he ever saw. When I look at the Egyptian representation of the angel or man putting out the fires of Hell not only with the words of divine power but with a wave of his hand coming out of his long white sleeves it reminds me of my uncle says he experienced.

your two feet to be cast into Gehenna, the fire that will never be quenched, where their worm[σκόληξ, maggots] does not die[τελευτή, “to end”, “to come to one’s end of one’s life” presumably because the maggots have a human host that never dies in the flames, so that the maggots have something really real to eat on for eternity], and the fire is not quenched. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out! It is better for you to enter the Kingdom of God with one eye, rather than with two eyes to go into the Gehenna of fire, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched[σβέννυμι, extinguished, to cause fervent activity to cease]” (Mark 9:45-48, EOB).

This is where John Hick attempts to walk around the idea of punishment in Hell (Gehenna) altogether because for him (as it is for many) it is too horrible to contemplate as *really real*. For to declare “Hell is Real!” is for him inconsistent with God’s divine purpose of *soul-making*, that is grounded in God’s love for mankind and all sentient being within God’s *Good Creation*, even though the Bible is clear that such a place in some dimension within Earth itself is really real based on this saying of Jesus:

Then he will also say to those on his left hand, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire [πῦρ αἰώνιον] which is prepared for the devil and his angels! For I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not receive me; naked, and you did not clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me.’ Then they will answer him; ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not help you?’ Then he will answer them, saying: ‘Amen, I tell you: as much as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ These [ones on the left] will go away into eternal punishment [αἰώνιον, “an unlimited duration of time”, κόλασιν αἰώνιον “unending real punishment” or “spiritual death”], but the righteous into eternal life. [ζωην αἰώνιον “unending real life”, “spiritual life”](Matthew 25:41-46, EOB)³⁴⁸

In this passage Jesus does not mince words. There is a literal Hell, an eternal fire that people on his left will experience for eternity (i.e. in eternal punishment), against the notion of annihilation proposed in the Egyptian Original; but nevertheless in favor of Hick’s notion that God never intended for human persons to end up in Hell, Jesus makes it clear that this literal hell with its eternal fire *was not made for human persons* but “prepared for the Devil and his angels.” However, it is also clear that if human persons follow demonic practices that Jesus lays out as worthy of being sent to this awful place that tragically God will not hesitate to cast human persons into it. Hick’s problem is that he believes because God’s divine purpose was the universal salvation of the human race (which we must agree with) that God in His divine purpose must and will because of His love for humanity make this come about in Soul-Making against our free will (which we do not agree with). According to Hick if this does not happen while we live it will continue into our postmortem existence wherever that realm is or however it is spiritually or materially constituted. Nothing in the Bible directly says that God in His sovereignty and power grounded in His love for us has too or will bring this about against our will, and so if we are never willing (even in our postmortem existence) one cannot say that Hell is not really real as the only choice God we have given Him in respect to our free choice of where we want to spend eternity in our postmortem existence. God’s *End Game* in respect to Good and Evil is

³⁴⁸ Louw and Nida, editors. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. Second Edition. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988/89), 67.96, p. 642.

that all humanity is to be saved, but not all of necessity will be. God does not want anyone lost and takes no pleasure in the death of the *wicked*. God's does will universal salvation for all human persons but God will not circumvent our free choice to be (if we desire) acolytes and devotees of the Trinity of Nothingness, *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death* losing our souls in return for demonic pleasures. What will condemn us is this: part of God's end game is that **Nothingness** or the **No-Thing** that is a **Some-Thing**, which threatens God's *Good Creation* in **IT's** Trinitarian form of Evil, Sin, and Death must come to an end as well. With God's end game there is hardly anyway to have this done but to cast all the agents, acolytes, and devotees of this dark Trinity of *Evil*, *Sin*, and *Death* into the eternal fires of Hell and as the Scripture will later say in Revelation cast **IT** and all **IT** contains, *including Hell* *Itself* into *outer darkness* where **IT** can no longer threaten at the Frontiers of God's *Good Creation*.³⁴⁹ Certainly, then under this biblical scheme Hell is a *really real place* for everyone who qualifies as Jesus describes them in the passage above. All of these biblical notions are illustrated by Jesus in his parable of Lazarus and the rich man, who like those on Jesus' left was so selfish and self-centered that this rich man distained from even giving Lazarus, this homeless, poor, sick-man crumbs from his table. The parable of Lazarus and the richman is told by Jesus to his disciples:

Now there was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting in luxury every day. A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, who desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Yes, even dogs came and licked his sores. It happened that the beggar died and that he was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. In hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far off, and Lazarus in his bosom. He cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue! For I am in agony in this flame!' But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime, you receive your good things, and Lazarus, in the same way, bad things. But now, he is comforted here and you are in anguish. Besides all this, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot [do so], and that no one may cross over from there to us.' He said, 'I ask you therefore, father, that you would send Lazarus to my father's house; for I have five brothers, that he might bear witness to them, so that they would not also come to this place of torment.' Abraham replied to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets! Let them listen to them!' But he said, 'No father Abraham, but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' Then Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone rises from the dead.' (Luke 17:19-31, EOB).

From this parable of Jesus Hell appears real enough. It is described as an is actual place (in what dimension we don't know) and there appears from the story that others are in this place with the rich man, who is desperateto keep his brothers from coming there too. The rich man's brother's

³⁴⁹ We must introduce a caveat here. When we said above that the Omega Christ will somehow sublimate both good and evil within himself and somehow transform it; we are only talking about Barth's notion of the negative elements *within* God's *Good Creation* being sublated; not the sublation of trinitarian aspects of Nothingness, which along with the Lake of Fire, Death, Satan, Demons, and Human acolytes and devotees of Evil will be wrapped up and cast into *Outer Darkness*. Only aspects still remaining in God's *Good Creation* will be sublated by the Omega Christ (reconciled within Himself). Otherwise we would be trap into supporting Hick notion of *universal salvation* since under this scheme the Omega Christ would subsume or sublimate all good and *all evil* within Himself. Unreconcilable aspects of Evil will not be so sublated lying completely outside God's *Good Creation* lying beyond the power of the Omega Christ to reconcile **IT** with God. That is God determinative End Game [God's will].

apparently have the same uncaring attitude for the poor and sick that he had before his death. Yet, despite these words and sayings of Jesus, John Hick is having none of it. And this is true of his position even if one concedes that God intends that all men should be saved. It is especially for this reason that Hick is having none of this talk about Hell because God in His divine purpose cannot help but bring about the universal salvation of all mankind. So, under this view the notion that Hell is real makes no sense and so for Hick there can be no Hell or punishment as proposed in his *Irenaean Theodicy*. If there is a Hell it is precisely what the Bible said it was made for; *the Devil and his angels and not human beings*. Hick's *Irenaean Theodicy* posits the notion of postmortem continuation of the same soul-making process whose outcome is universal salvation of all human persons. John Hick states the following:

If this is the true nature of Christian theodicy---a theodicy that is eschatological in character and can be affirmed only by faith --- it compels us to question the validity of belief in hell, in the traditional sense of eternal suffering inflicted by God upon those of His creatures who have sinfully rejected Him. For there is a tension with Christian thought between the motives that move towards this doctrine of everlasting punishment and the motives that move towards a theodicy. The suffering of the damned in hell, since they are interminable, can never lead to any constructive end beyond themselves and are thus the very type of ultimately wasted and pointless anguish. Indeed misery which is eternal and therefore infinite would constitute the largest part of the problem of evil. Further, the notion of hell is no less fatal to theodicy if, instead of stressing the sufferings of the damned, we stress the fact that they are unendingly in sin. For this is presumably an even greater evil --- a greater frustration of the divine purpose --- than their misery. Thus in a universe that permanently contained sin good and evil would be co-ordinates, and God's creation would be perpetually shadowed and spoiled by evil; and this would be incompatible either with God's sovereignty or with His perfect goodness. For the doctrine of hell has as its implied premise either that God does not desire to save all His human creatures, in which case He is only limitedly good, or that His purpose has finally failed in the case of some --- and indeed, according to the theological tradition, most --- of them, in which case He is only limitedly sovereign. I therefore believe that the needs of Christian theodicy compel us to repudiate the idea of eternal punishment. Does this mean that we are led to universalism, in the sense of a belief in the ultimate salvation of all human souls? The rejection of the idea of a divine sentence of eternal suffering is not in itself equivalent to universalism, for there remains the third possibility of either the divine annihilation [Egyptian notion discussed earlier in this project] or the dwindling out of existence of the finally lost. In this case there would not be eternally useless and unredeemed suffering such as is entailed by the notion of hell as unending torment; and in working out a theodicy it would perhaps be possible to stop at this point. However, even in such a modified version of a 'bad eschaton' God's good purpose would have failed in the case of all those souls whose fate is extinction. To this extent evil would have prevailed over good and would have permanently marred God's creation. This is accordingly a very dubious doctrine for Christian theism to sponsor, and not one in which we should acquiesce except for want of any viable alternative. But in fact an alternative is available : namely, that God will eventually succeed in His purpose of winning all men to Himself in faith and love. That this is indeed God's purpose in relation to man is surely evident from the living revelation of that purpose in Jesus Christ. In his life we see at work in our human history God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.³⁵⁰

³⁵⁰ John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 341-342.

This view leads him to the conclusion that the *end-game* of this soul-making process is *universal salvation*, which is God's ultimate divine purpose that only God can carry out and *will bring* of necessity within the scope of His divine sovereignty and love to a successful conclusion no matter how long it takes. Every person God made will be saved even if this has to continue and occur after their death by necessity of God's loving and divine purpose. After all God has all the time in the world and in the Eternity of the afterlife to get this done and in the meantime since this outcome is certain no human person need be punished in some mythic Hell, which makes no sense considering God's divine purpose and determination. Hick is pressed to show how God will accomplish the saving of all men without violating their free will and choice: He states:

Can we go beyond this and affirm that somehow, sooner or later, God will succeed in His loving purpose? It seems to me that we can, and that the needs of theodicy compel us to do so. God has made us for Himself, and our whole being seeks its fulfilment in relation to Him. He can influence us both through the world without and by the activity of His Holy Spirit within us, though always in ways that preserve the integrity and freedom of the human spirit. It seems morally (although still not logically) impossible that the infinite resourcefulness of infinite love working in unlimited time should be eternally frustrated, and the creature reject its own good, presented to it in an endless range of ways. We cannot say in advance *how* God will eventually free all created souls from their bondage to sin and establish them in love and glad obedience towards Himself; but despite the logical possibility of failure the probability of His success amounts, as it seems to me, to a practical certainty.³⁵¹

In Hick's favor concerning the notion of universal salvation there are at least two biblical texts that suggest God is at least not willing to leave anyone in Hell and that God or His Jesus-Christ can deliver people from the jaws of Hell itself, showing God's desire even if Hell is real to save all human persons. However, none of these texts suggest God is willing to spend Eternity (Hick's "sooner or later") in *continued soul-making in some postmortem existence*. There is no "practical certainty" displayed in these texts and there is more a basis for "a logical possibility of failure" should Hick's *Irenaean Theodicy* hold true that universal salvation is part of God's divine purpose. Nevertheless, there is the Old Testament text "*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*" (Psalm 16:10, KJV). The other text is in the New Testament and states:

Therefore, God says, "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." Now what does "he ascended" mean, if not that he first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the [same] one who also ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things. (Ephesians 4:8-10, EOB).

Many biblical scholars interpret this Ephesian passage to mean that Christ went into Hell itself for three days after his crucifixion and took Hell itself captive in order to lead those millions of persons out of Hell that had been suffering therein for centuries before Christ since at least the time of Noah. The following text in First Peter 3 is thought to support this interpretation, which suggests that God at least one-time *emptied out Hell and could perhaps do it once again* as someone like John Hick

³⁵¹ Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 344.

would hope if it were true that Hell was *really real*. In the *Egyptian Original* Hell is *really real* and they believed that people would go there to be punished but *not forever*. They believed Hell could be extinguished or emptied out through the Words of Power and human persons would suffer there awhile and unredeemable be annihilated. However, the biblical text states:

Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that he might bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh but [made] alive in [the] spirit. *Thus, he also descended and preached to the spirits in prison, to those who in the past had been disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built. In this [ark], a few (that is eight souls) were saved through water.* This is an antitype of baptism, which now saves us. Baptism is not the putting away of the impurity of the flesh but the appeal of a good conscience [in your relationship] toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels, authorities, and powers being subject to him. (1 Peter 3:18-22, EOB).

None these biblical texts suggest the idea of universal salvation as a *necessary outcome* of God's unconditional love for humankind and His divine purpose of soul-making and taken together they speak of eternal punishment within **Gehenna** (Hell), "*the lower parts of the Earth*", or the "*spirits in prison*." Hick is particularly concerned about the direct statements Jesus made in Matthew 25:41-46 about *eternal punishment* in Hell for those people on his left hand (the goats) and so without quoting this biblical text he focuses on one Greek word αἰώνιον; which Louw & Nida have translated to mean "*an unlimited duration of time*" or more simply "eternal." Hick wants to claim some kind of ambiguity in this word and the "uncertainty as to how, if at all, the notion of endless duration might have been expressed in the Aramaic language which Jesus presumably spoke. . . " This "ambiguity" and "uncertainty" gives Hick the opening to suggest that Jesus may not have meant "*endless duration*" of punishment in Hell but concedes that some kind of postmortem suffering has to occur as part of God's divine purpose in soul-making; and further he is willing to concede that there has to be an intermittent existence some place that would fulfill this purpose but it cannot be Hell because eternal punishment does not have soul-making as its end-game and therefore is inimical to God's divine purpose and cannot therefore exist. Hick states the following concerning "**The Intermediate State**" of human postmortem existence (a state of existence that the Egyptians describe so vividly in the so-called *Book of the Dead*, [i.e.  **Per-em-hru**, "Coming forth into the day"] and in other postmortem descriptions of the after-life, which we will have occasions to discuss and illustrate later in this work/project):

There are, however, certain well-known objections to belief in ultimate universal salvation, and these must now be faced. The most serious objection is that the New Testament, and in particular the teaching of our Lord, seems to proclaim an eternal punishment for sinners, in which there is 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' and where 'the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched'. These sayings and others in the same category are, I believe, to be taken with the utmost seriousness. And eschatology that merely ignored them, or ruled them out *a priori* as inauthentic, would not be dealing responsibly with the Bible. It is possible, however, to give the fullest weight and urgency to Jesus's sayings about suffering beyond this life without being led thereby to the dualistic notion of an eternal hell. That Jesus spoke of real suffering and misery, really to be dreaded, which is to come upon men hereafter as a divinely ordained consequence of selfish and cruel deeds performed in this life, is not to be doubted. Nor is it to be doubted that he wanted his hearers to be aware of this inevitable reaction of the moral order upon human wickedness. But that our Lord taught that such misery is to continue through endless time in perpetual torture inflicted by God cannot safely be affirmed. Between us and Jesus' original meaning there stand the ambiguity of the New Testament

word αἰώνιος ; the uncertainty as to how, if at all, the notion of endless duration might have been expressed in the Aramaic language which Jesus presumably spoke ; and evidence of the intrusions of Jewish apocalyptic themes into the developing gospel tradition. The textual evidence must accordingly be interpreted in the light of wider considerations drawn from Jesus' teaching as a whole. If we see as the heart of this teaching the message of the active and sovereign divine love, we shall find incredible and even blasphemous the idea that God plans to inflict perpetual torture upon any of His children. If, then we assume that such suffering are not eternal and hence morally pointless, but rather temporal and redemptive in purpose, we are led to postulate an existence or existences beyond the grave in which the moral structure of reality is borne in upon the individual, and in which his self-centredness is gradually broken through by a 'godly sorrow' that represents the inbreaking of reality. Such an idea is, of course, not far from the traditional Roman Catholic notion of purgatorial experiences occurring (for those who die in a state of grace) between death and entry into the final heavenly Kingdom in which God shall be all in all. . . . If, then, God's purpose of the perfecting of human beings is ever to be fulfilled, it must either be brought to an instantaneous completion by divine fiat, perhaps at the moment of death, or else take place through a continued development within some further environment in which God places us. The difficulty attaching to the first alternative is that it far from clear that an individual who has been instantaneously perfected would be in any morally significant sense the same person as the frail, erring mortal who had lived and died. It would seem more proper to say, not that this previously very imperfect person has now become a perfect individual has been created in his place. But if we are thus to be transmuted in the twinkling of an eye into perfect creatures, the whole earthly travail of faith and moral effort is rendered needless. For God might by an exercise of omnipotence have created us as, or transmuted us into, these perfect creatures in the first place. That He has not done so suggests that the nature of finite personal life requires that man's sanctification takes place at every stage through his own responses and assent, and that the process of man's free interaction with divine grace cannot be bypassed. And this in turn points to the conception of continued life in an intermediated state.³⁵²

To support this view Hick is willing walk right through the biblical teaching that "we all will be changed in a twinkling of an eye" to support his supposition that this teaching makes no sense considering that God's divine purpose is that human persons freely choose to be loving and obedient children of God by God's continued grace or its lure, implying strongly that it is by moral human effort that men are saved and not by God's grace that after we have done all we could that God as the workman completes us in a dynamic spiritual change in a twinkling of an eye. If man could save himself by perfected moral conduct and development he would already had thousands or millions of years to do so and no additional time in an postmortem intermediate state will grant that will happen as the outcome of divine grace no matter how long God works to bring it about since it depends on imperfect human persons that were sinners while they lived and presumably will be so in their postmortem existence. Hick comes close to suggesting that salvation is based on the work of men in the sphere of moral action or development and not through the miraculous grace of God through the redemptive act of Jesus dying on the cross and the fact that Jesus said we "must be born again" to fully experience this redemption that is giving by grace alone, so that it is no contradiction whatever in the sanctification process that God comes in to complete our human transformation into new creatures or new creations even by fiat as affirmed by the following biblical text:

Behold, I tell you a mystery, We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. For what is corruptible must put on incorruption, and what is mortal must put on immortality. But when the corruptible will have put on incorruption and the mortal immortality, then that which is written will come true:

³⁵² John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 345-348.

"Death is swallowed up in victory." "Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! (1 Corinthians 15:51-57, EOB).

Hick is also willing to suggest that such an intermediate place or state of being is close to what Catholics refer to as Purgatory and that what happens in his conjectured intermediate postmortem environment is punishment congruent to what each human persons state or level of sin is (since Jesus is coming back to reward each person in accordance to what they have done); and the extent they need such hardships to finish the continued postmortem soul-making process making them finally loving and obedient creatures of God. Hick does not address the irony of saying that αἰώνιον is "ambiguous" and its use by Jesus is "uncertain" given that this Greek word is an exact translation of this word spoken in Aramaic. How can Hick then assert that Jesus did not really mean "for eternity." If it be true that Jesus was not talking about "endless duration" of punishment in Hell he also could not be talking about "endless duration" for his sheep that will experience "eternal life" for the same Greek word αἰώνιον is used as a reference to both sets of human persons in Matthew 25:41-46. Grammatical analysis would lead one to say that if there is no "eternal punishment" in Hell then there cannot be "eternal life" in Paradise or Heaven, and even worst for Hick's analysis there cannot be an intermediate state of postmortem existence in which God has an "eternity" to engage in soul-making so that all humans will be ultimately saved.

I believe Hick here paints himself in a corner by trying to do away with the idea of eternal punishment in Hell affirmed by the very words of Jesus, who clearly believed Hell is *really real* and that human persons will experience either *eternal punishment* or *eternal life* in their postmortem existence. Hick really needs to give God an "eternity" to carry out His supposed *end-game of soul-making*, because God will never violate our free choice and will to accomplish this. However, suppose there is no such thing as "eternal existence" and it all has to end somewhere before God can carry out His soul-making divine purpose then Evil wins and God's purpose fails because God ran out of time. Hick thinks God needs an "eternity" to carry out His soul-making divine purpose not because God cannot change humans into loving and obedient creatures in a "twinkling of an eye. What God needs an "eternity" according to Hick, because there are some human holdouts that for whatever reason or love of demonic pleasures just will not be convinced to come over to God no matter how hard or long God tries. Hick believes God cannot lose the end-game of universal salvation of all humans if He just had an eternity to do it. Hick's thoughts along these lines are by no means exhausted here but we have sufficiently presented the kernel of his thought and justifications (however contrived) for a postmortem universal salvation continued by God whose divine purpose remains the same and still pursued in some intermediate state of human existence that would induce human persons to freely accede to become loving and obedient children of God (given enough time) via God's divine lure of never ending grace and unconditional love. Pain and suffering are still apart of Hick's postmortem intermediate existence is still vital and necessary for soul-making even though the biblical vision stands contrary and in contrast to this notion (i.e. Hick's "purgatory" for those who will be eventually saved); a view denied in the Book of Revelation:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with people! He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them! He will wipe away every tear from their eyes! Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, crying, or pain anymore, For the first things have passed away. (Revelation 21:1-4, EOB).

Here it is clear in the postmortem existence for saved human persons there is no more pain or suffering, crying, or death even though it says nothing about them being perfected in order to qualify for such a blissfully state of existence. We have therefore sufficiently looked at John Hick's vision of God's *end-game* for good overcoming evil within material moral structure that uses suffering

as the means to illicit from the human person the willingness to change from creatures that live wickedly lured by demonic pleasures too creatures that willingly through moral ascent become loving and obedient children of God though God's never ending lure of love and grace poured out on them even too some postmortem intermediate state culminating in universal salvation where every child of God will be saved. Hick sums up his view of God's **end-game**:

Christian theodicy claims, then, that the end to which God is leading us is a good so great as to justify all the failures and suffering and sorrow that will have been endured on the way to it. The life of the Kingdom of God will be an infinite, because eternal, good, outweighing all temporal and therefore finite evils. We cannot visualize the life of the redeemed and perfected creation, for all our imagery is necessarily drawn from our present 'fallen' world. We can think only in very general terms of the opening up before us of new dimensions of reality 'which eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor the heart of man conceived' ; a new intensity and vividness of experience ; of expanded capacities for fulfilment in personal relationships, artistic and other forms of creativity, knowledge, wonder, the enjoyment of beauty, and yet other goods and kinds of goods at present beyond our ken.³⁵³

Ending with this summary statement by Hick we can now move beyond his construction of an *Irenaean Theodicy* into a deeper understanding of what the Egyptians believed God's *end-game* is provided in the *Egyptian Original* at the level of the human psychic-mind and what that means for our purpose in understanding the nature of Evil, that is, *what is Evil and whence it came* (i.e. **ITs** origins, etc.). We have already pointed out that Hick can accept as a partial solution provided by the Egyptian Original, which is the idea of annihilation if there just has to be a place called Hell. We have already said that Hick outright rejects that this place is really real; even if it serves its purpose and then is extinguished where humans no longer suffer. This is because the annihilation of the human person does not serve God's redemptive purpose of universal salvation through soul-making where finally no human person. Hick, however, is not far from the *Egyptian Original* (although he believes any post-mortem suffering has to be redemptive, not punitive, and certainly not *forever*).

In the *Egyptian Original* suffering of some kind is part of the the postmortem experience of the deceased human person. In his/her postmortem existence the Osirian Traveler necessarily experiences certain terrors that he/she must transverse although not alone but with the help of the Horus-Christ as his/her Shepherd. At the beginning of the state of being each traveler (i.e. deceased person) are challenged as they walk through the *Valley of the Shadow Death*; each facing demons who want to devour their immortal souls. In the *Egyptian Original* the time for suffering these terrors is thankfully short-lived and have little if any redemptive purpose except for the Osirian Traveler successfully using words of power and citing the 42 negative confession in order to come through these trials and so stand before the Great White Throne of Judgement of Osiris-Ra for Final Judgment. This is where he/she bows down with exclamations of praise for his/her deliverance from what appeared at first certain death in the fire pits of Hell; even with the Utterances of Words of Power he/she learned all of his/her life from *Pert-em-Heru*. The purpose of the words of power in this document was to dispel or quiet the demons before him/her. Confronted with the words of power the demons blocking the Osirian Travelers way finally and grudgingly let the traveler pass from gate to gate into Paradise (Amenta, the "the Hidden Land) where his Savior Osiris is seated.

The Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church has its own tradition about the terrors of Hell. In the EOTC Hell is *really real* and they provide Ethiopian religious art that depict the Arch-Angel St. Michael as the one who would rescue the lost souls in Hell, so that one could presuppose that the Ethiopian tradition believes that the mercies of God extend even into to Hell where there is no permanent punishment for those that repent in their postmortem state or existence. After suitable punishment for their sins the lost souls who repent are rescued by St. Michael. There is yet a chance because of the mercies of God for men to be saved even after they past from this life into the next,

³⁵³ Johns Hick, *Evil and the God of Love*, p. 350.

so prayers said too affect this purpose or to bring about this outcome. In the EOTC tradition St. Michael plays an important part in depicting this belief. In three icon paintings below St. Michael is seen in **Fig. 1** with the three Hebrew boys Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego miraculously rescuing them from the heat of the fiery furnace (10 times hotter) after they were thrown in there on the orders of King Nebuchadnezzar for refusing to bow down and worship his giant golden statue. (Book of Daniel, Chapter 3). In **Fig. 2** this is presumably St. Michael dressed for battle and vanquishing (by pushing with his foot on Satan's head) into the fiery pits of Hell in the final judgment as represented with the power of his sword in his right hand and the scales of justice in his left hand. This painting is likely inspired by scenes described in the Book of Revelation. The painting in **Fig. 3** is "Leaf from a Gondar Homiliary: St. Michael Rescues the Faithful from the the Flames of Hell" with explanation below the Ethiopian iconography:



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

The establishment of a permanent court at Gondar by the Solomonic emperor Fasilädäs (reigned 1632-67) marked the beginning of a period of tremendous cultural productivity. The region became one of the most important artistic production centers of Ethiopia, particularly in regard to painting. Featuring nearly fifty full-page illuminations, this manuscript is a pristine example of the lavishly illustrated books commissioned by both private and institutional patrons during this period. The archangel Michael, whose cult first emerged under the patronage of Emperor Zär'aYa'eqob, remains the most venerated archangel in Ethiopia, largely due to his role as an intercessor on behalf of the faithful. This manuscript combines the monthly liturgical commemoration of Michael with narrative scenes of his miracles. Successive portions of the book, essentially a compilation of sermons, were read aloud on particular feast days. In this folio Saint Michael rescues the faithful from the flames of hell, while those already saved are depicted in paradise on the facing page (fol. 11r). The minutely rendered textiles in these pictures suggest a connection with the fashions of the Gondarine court and indicate that the painters depicted their scriptural subjects using a visual language rooted in contemporary culture. The neutral ground of these paintings is characteristic of early Gondarine manuscripts. Unlike their predecessors, the painters did not blind-rule their pictorial compositions, rather, the horizontal lines visible throughout the pictures indicate that they worked on parchment sheets originally prepared for writing.³⁵⁴

While Ethiopian art (icon painting) does offer some measure of hope for those human persons that repent even after they are thrown into the Lake of Fire; a hope centered in the belief that God will permit St. Michael to rescue such people from torment in the flames; yet the Ethiopian biblical text and ancient commentaries need to be consulted to see if that idea or notion is present within these as well. It is in the *Andemta Commentaries*[AC] written and compiled over a few centuries is

³⁵⁴Artifact in Fig. 3 & description from The Walters Museum, art.thewalters.org

where one must look to make any comparisons and arrive at any conclusions on the above supposition. Fortunately we have the *Andemta* on the Book of Revelation where most of the comments made on certain sentient beings, i.e. the Beast, Satan, the False Prophet, and those humans that have accepted the Mark of the Beast either on their hands or forehead, are cast into the Lake of Fire. The work of Roger W. Cowley in his *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church* (1983) is essential here because he provides the English translation of the *Andemta Commentary* on the Book of Revelation.

First, we present the relevant biblical texts on this subject from the Orthodox Bible and then the AC explanations given by the Ethiopian doctors, scribes, and scholars that over the years compiled and interpreted these texts in their commentary analysis. However, first we give both the Greek and Amharic phrases for the “Lake of Fire.” In the Greek “The Lake of Fire” is τῆν λίμνην τοῦ πυρὸς and in Amharic it is አሳት ባሕር literally translated as [the] “Sea of Fire.” In Revelation 19:20 the Amharic Bible (the *Millennium* Edition, 2007) has the phrase ወደ አሳት ባሕር ተጣሉ *“Into the Sea of Fire they were thrown.”* The use of the Amharic term for “fire” [አሳት] carries the idea of የአሳት something “incendiary” that is, can be *burnt up* and so does the Greek [πυρὸς] carrying the idea of a “consuming” or “destroying” fire, so that one could say that the objective of the being cast into the Lake of Fire or the Sea of Fire is *annihilation* and not burning and torment *for eternity or for ever and every*.

There are at least four main points we can glean so far from the analysis of Ethiopian iconographic painting involving the Arch-Angel St. Michael via the Greek and Amharic grammar for the Lake or Sea of Fire: (1) Hell is real or at least the Lake or Sea of Fire is real, which has always been placed by apocalyptic literature in a place called Hell, Hades, or Gehenna; (2) the Ethiopians have hope that even if they end up in Hell and experience the torments for a while in the Lake or Sea of Fire when they die and begin their postmortem existence that God in His mercy will send St. Michael to rescue them if they sincerely repent and the proper prayers are made for them by living relatives and priests uttering from texts (in the ancient Egyptian mode of the Book of the Dead) the appropriate Words of Power; (3) Even those Ethiopians who are too stubborn or evil to repent right away; still believe (and their relatives too) that eventually after a suitable time for punishment based on what sins they have committed they too will escape the eternal flames through annihilation; and (4) all of this is consistent with Jesus’ remark that the Lake of Fire cannot be extinguished, that is, it is “unquenchable” as the Egyptian hieroglyphics show some mighty angel trying to do. In any case it appears the Ethiopians do not want the Fires of Hell quenched but reserved for the eternal punishment of the Beast, the False Prophet, and Satan, and really bad irredeemable members of the human race that have done horrendous damage, and horrific crimes, and so as Jesus says in Matthew 25:30: *“Throw out the unprofitable slave into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth;* and Matthew 25:46: *“These [ones on the left] will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*; and Matthew 13:50: *“This is how it will be at the end of the age the angels will come forth and separate the wicked from the righteous; they will cast them into the furnace of fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”* (EOB). Finally, given all of these grim, and horrid possibilities that Jesus promises will happen at the end of the age; even if you can repent and be delivered (after a time of suitable and just punishment) by St. Michael from the torments of Hell fire; or be finally mercifully annihilated; why would anyone in their right mind want to end up in the Lake or Sea of Fire even for a second or a moment? Below we shall see if the Ethiopian AC confirms or denies or is cogent with any of these suppositions:

Revelation 19:17-21

Then I say an angel standing in the sun. He cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the sky, “Come! Be gathered together for the great supper of God! You may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and riders, and the flesh of all people, both free and slave, small and great. I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against the one who sat on the horse,

and against his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked the signs in his sight and by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who expressed adoration to his image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword of him who sat on the horse, with the sword which came forth out of his mouth. And all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh.(Revelation 19:17-21, EOB):

Note: (1) The Beast and False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire; (2) Nothing is said in this passage about the Beast and the False Prophet being tormented for eternity in the Lake of Fire. (3) Nevertheless, the rest of their human followers (i.e. kings and their armies) are killed [annihilated] by the sword of the rider on the white horse;

Andemta Commentary: In the AC the Beast is regularly called the “false Messiah.” The “false Messiah” used the “mark of the Beast” to identify those who worshiped the image of the Beast. According to the AC the “false Prophet” did the miracles before men and “by the authority of the devil” with the purpose to deceive the human persons who willingly received the “mark of the Beast” elsewhere we see either on their forehead or on their hand. According to the AC both the “false Messiah” [i.e. the Beast, also called by the AC the “false Elijah” because he used miracles to deceive men] and the “false Prophet” were thrown into “the fire of Gehenna in which is intense torment” and interprets “being thrown alive” in Gehenna to mean “complete with their flesh”, which is why the AC also suggests the “Beast” is corporeal [flesh] by calling IT the “false Messiah” identifying him as human or suprahuman, displaying greater powers that are “supra” *above and beyond* that of normal human beings, i.e. “beyond the limits of normal human beings.”³⁵⁵

Revelation 20:7-10

And when the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released from his prison and he will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog. He will gather them together to the war, and their number is as the sand of the sea. They marched over the breath of the land and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Fire came down from God out of heaven and they were consumed. The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are also. They will be tormented day and night, unto ages of ages. (Revelation 20:7-10, EOB):

Note:(1) The Devil is thrown into the Lake of Fire; (2) *They will be tormented day and night for eternity*; (3) The human armies that came to attack the City of God are burnt up [annihilated] by the Fire of God the fell out of Heaven.

Andemta Commentary : Gehenna in the AC is a place of “intense torment.” In Gehenna Satan, the deceiver, the “false Messiah”, the “false Elijah” that is, the “false Messiah” that does miracles to deceive people, who have received the “mark of the Beast”, and the “false Prophet are thrown to “receive their punishment by day and night, forever” and then states in an odd fashion the “false Messiah” [i.e. the “Beast”] “is the main assignee of the fire of Gehenna” because the biblical text states “in which was” suggesting that because the “Beast” or the “false Messiah” was already cast into this fire before Satan that the “Beast” was primarily prepared [made for him] and not primarily for Satan. To modern Christian ears this would be considered an odd interpretation; accept some universalist scholars would suggest what is meant here is the view that even Satan could be saved and that here indicated is God giving him a chance to do so before he was finally thrown in with the “false Messiah”, the “Beast”, the “Deceiver” that in all likelihood deceived Satan as well.³⁵⁶ This view is probably too much for this AC interpretation to bear but in John Hick and his *Irenaean Theodicy* this priority of who was thrown in

³⁵⁵ Roger W. Cowley. *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*. (London: University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 33, 1983), pp. 349-350

³⁵⁶ Cowley. *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, p. 354,

the fire first would make sense given God intentions to save all mankind and there is still enough grace and mercy left for even the likes of Satan himself, even though Hick would avoid asserting this because it would lead to a dualistic theodicy. One of the Church Fathers, the prolific theologian Origen (184-263 A.D.) of Alexandria, Egypt proposed that “universal salvation was merely a possibility and not a definitive doctrine” and in his *Letter to Friends in Alexandria* he says “that Satan and his demons would [not be] included in the final salvation” even though Catholic theologians like Jerome “quotes Origen as having” implied this very thing, and other modern scholars say the same about this notion based on Origen’s “Theory of Volition.” Robin Parry [who described himself as a “hopeful dogmatic universalists” and author of *The Evangelical Universalist* (2012 under the pseudonym Gregory MacDonald and *Universal Salvation: The Current Debate* (2004) in a blog (August 2009) called *Theological Scribbles: I am the Evangelical Universalist* writes:

Did Origen believe in the salvation of the devil? He clearly believed that all rational souls were able to be saved [*Contra Celsum* 4.99] and this would, on Origen’s view of the nature of demonic forces, have included the devil and his demons. So the accusation was stirred up [by Jerome] that he taught the salvation of demons. But, in a letter to his friends in Alexandria he *explicitly denied* that he thought the devil and his demons would be saved.

Perry goes on to note that other Church Fathers were not so cautious and that:

Gregory of Nyssa was even more bold than Origen on this issue: He maintained that “the originator of evil himself [i.e. Satan, the Devil, the Old Serpent, Set] will be healed” (Catechetical Orations 26, *The Catechetical Oration of Gregory of Nyssa*. Edited by James H. Srawley. Cambridge, 1903,, p. 1011.

Revelation 20:11-15

*Then I saw a great white throne, and the one seated on it. The earth and the sky fled away from his face: no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. Books were opened, and another book was opened: the book of life. The dead were judged according to what was written in the books, according to their works. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and hades gave up the dead who were in them. They were judged, each on according to his works. **Then death and hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death! Anyone who was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.** (Revelation 20:11-15, EOB):*

Note:(1) In the final judgment all people (i.e. the resurrected dead) are judged out of the record books compiled by the Angels of God; (2) Those resurrected dead not found in the Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire; (3) Nothing is said about the resurrected dead humans being tormented for eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Andemta Commentary: The **Gehenna** [Ge’ez term ግሃንም *gāhannām* meaning Hell, or the infernal region] of fire [የአሳት ባሕር *ya-əsat bahr*, i.e. “a destructive Sea of Fire”] is the second death [ሁለተኛው ሞት *hulatnnaw mot*]. Both Sheol and Death will be thrown into this “pit of fire” interpreted to mean that “Death and the Grave into Gehenna in which is intense torment, referring to the fact that Death ceases to kill, and the Grave ceases to receive [its dead].” Also “They will throw into Gehenna, where there is intense torment, everyone who is not written *in the book of life* [በሕይወት መጽሐፍ *bä-həywätmäshäf*], “(meaning) ‘everyone who is not known for good in the heart of God’, where the *book of life* is interpreted to mean “in God’s heart He recognizes this person for their good work that mirrors the heart of God and those who do not *do such work God does not recognize*. The AC cites *Matthew 25:41* in support of this view which says “Then he will also say to those on his left hand [those he did not recognize because of their evil work or failure to do good works]. *Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels!* Verse 42 follow to show who “those” are *For I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no*

*drink; I was a stranger and you did not receive me; naked, and you did not clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me.*³⁵⁷

Revelation 21:5-8

The one who sits on the throne said to me, "Behold, I am making all things new!" He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true!" He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who is thirsty, I will freely give from the spring of the water of life. To the one who overcomes, I will give these things. I will be {a} God to him, and he will be a son to me. But as for the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic, idolaters, and all liars, their part is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death. (Revelation 21:5-8, EOB):

Note: (1) God describes those worthy of being cast into the Lake of Fire (i.e. cowardly, unbelieving, vile, murderers, sexually immoral, practitioners of magic arts, idolaters, and all liars); (2) Nothing is said about them being tormented for eternity in the Lake of Fire; (3) However, the meaning of "their part" in the Lake of Fire needs to be made clear. In the Greek New Testament "their part" is τὸ μέρος αὐτῶν, where μέρος in Louw & Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* means "part," "aspect," "feature", that is, "the part that belongs to me." This is a crucial distinction for in Revelation 20:10 the "part" that is apportioned to the Devil, the Beast, and the False Prophet is to be tormented in the Lake of Fire *for eternity*. The "part" apportioned for the human being described above is not specifically noted but what is clear is "they will be judged out of the books *according to their works* and so only God knows what "their part" means in this passage; but the implication is that it is not the same "part" as that apportioned for the Devil, the Beast, and the False Prophet. We only conjecture that each kind of sinner will be apportioned "their part" in the Lake of Fire; but however long that torment who can definitively say *it is not forever* or for *eternity*. The question still remains: However long it is why would anyone in their right mind want to have any "part" in such a profoundly horrible place that was not made for human beings in the first place but "made for Satan and his angels."

Andemta Commentary: The AC interpretation of Revelation 21:8 is revealing. It is a specific description of those of whom it is said "their punishment will be Gehenna in which is intense torment", which again is described as the *second death*. These are those "Who pollute their bodies with sin – reading '(while) they do not believe' – who do good and virtuous deeds without believing [could be describing hypocrites]; with another *Andem* reading 'while they believe' who believe, but do not do good and virtuous deeds, . . . who do all kinds of falsehood . . ." Here the AC presents a dichotomy between *orthodoxy* meaning "right belief" and *orthopraxy* meaning "right works." The AC writer suggests that doing good works without believing is sin or leads to sin that pollutes the body and believing without doing good works is sin. In order to avoid the torments of Gehenna one but have a *orthodox belief that leads to doing good works*, presumably to avoid the "pollutions" of the body as described in the text as being *cowardly, unbelieving, vile, a murderer or liar*. This interpretation is similar to the Letter of James in the writers *faith and works* dichotomy: "Show me your faith by your works, and by my works, I will show you my faith." (James 2:18, EOB).³⁵⁸

ANDEMTA COMMENTARY& REVELATION TEXT MAIN POINTS

1. Hell (i.e. *Gehenna*) is a real place
2. Those cast into *Sea of Fire* or the *Gehenna of Fire* (i.e. the *Lake of Fire*) are **corporeal**. They have real bodies of some kind that can be tormented, *however long*.
3. God in His mercy does not cast everyone in at the same time: **First** to be cast into the Lake of Fire are the Beast (characterized as the *false Messiah* or the *false Elijah* named this way

³⁵⁷ Cowley. *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, p. 356

³⁵⁸ Cowley. *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, p. 358-359

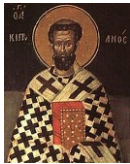
because he uses miracles to deceive human beings. This being is *supranatural* meaning IT has powers that go beyond the limitations of human powers. **Second** to be cast into the Lake of Fire is the *false Prophet* who also did “illusory miracles” by the authority of the Devil; and **Third** Satan himself is cast into the Lake of Fire. In another text (Revelation 20:2) the AC commentator states that Satan is a “demon” and that ‘*demon*’ means ‘*stripped, fallen*’ ‘*Satan*’ means *opponent, adversary, contender.*’ Devil’ means ‘*flying bird, burning flame, desirer of divinity*’ . . . ³⁵⁹

4. The Beast (i.e. the “false Messiah” , the “false Elijah); the False Prophet, and Satan will “*be punished day and night for ever and ever.* We note here that this statement is not applied to human beings in any of the texts that follow.
5. Three divine punishments are meted out to human beings that receive the *Mark of the Beast* either in their hands or on their foreheads. They are (a) gorged on by birds, (b) killed by the Sword of Christ (meaning by the Word of Power that proceeds from His mouth), (c) burnt up in a fire from Heaven that comes down from God, and finally cast into the Lake of Fire that was “made for Satan and his angels” and not for human beings. Human beings don’t belong there but choose to be there because they are willing either through believing the lies of the Devil (receive the *mark of the Beast* on their foreheads; or because they don’t necessarily believe the lies told to them but want to receive the benefits of the *demonic pleasures* promised, that is, *MONEY, POWER, SEX.*
6. God does not take any pleasure in the death of the wicked but if it just has to be through their own choice God metes out punishment that culminate mercifully in *annihilation* rather than *eternal punishment in Hell.* However, God has shown Himself willing to mete this horrible punishment out as well. There is no indication of how long human beings will experience this *second death* with some indication that this punishment *will not be for eternity but meted out according to the persons evil works,* which infers that everyone *will not* receive the same kind or length of punishment described in Revelation 21:8. Punishment is meted out based on what each person actually did while they lived.
7. The Lake of Fire will *never be put out* and the indication why is because the punishment of the Beast, the False Prophet and Satan are for eternity in the *Gehenna of Fire.* Also cast into this place is both Hell and Death (i.e. the Grave) and so this is another reason why the Lake of Fire will never be extinguished [contra the Ancient Egyptian idea] because Jesus in Matthew 25 said it could not be extinguished and second because God promises in the creation of His *new heaven and new earth* there would be no more death, pain, or sorrow. There is indication that human beings in the Gehenna of Fire will experience it *proportionally* to their evil works but there is no attempt by the AC like in Catholic catechisms to suggest how long based on ones sins a person must suffer in Purgatory. *Annihilation* in the Lake of Fire seems to be God’s intent for human persons in Gehenna because both the Bible and the AC emphasize that the Lake of Fire was *made for Satan and his angels* and by inference *not for humans.* However, human persons do go there of their own accord.
8. Finally, Jesus indicates in Matthew 25 that the Lake of Fire and all who are in it will be *cast into outer darkness where they will be crying and gnashing of teeth.* Death, Hell, Satan, those with the Mark of the Beast, the acolytes and devotees of demonic pleasures will suffer *intense torment* as the AC says but it is clear from what Jesus said that this will culminate well beyond God’s *Good Creation* and so in God’s *End Game* the Trinitarian

³⁵⁹ Cowley, p. 351.

dark principalities and powers of *Nothingness, Evil, and Sin* will no longer be able to operate on *God's Superhighway of Human Unified Experience*.

It is for certain the Church Father's believed Hell was Real specifically because a human person's body still somehow remained *corporeal* therefore could really feel pain and agony in the Lake of Fire that God prepared for the Devil and his angels, but not human persons. How the body of a human person can remain corporeal or tangible in such a supernaturally charged fire is beyond anyone's human imagination but the Prophet Muhammad explained it this way in *Sura An-Nisaa* (or The Women) 4:56: "*Those who reject our signs, we shall soon [be] cast into the fire: as often as their skins are roasted through, we shall change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the penalty: for God is exalted in power, wise.*" (*The Holy Qur'an*, translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. (Elmhurst, New York: TahrikeTarsile Qur'an, Inc., 2008), p. 197. In *Sura Ta Ha*, 20:74 it says "*Verily he who comes to his Lord as sinner (at judgment)---for him is hell: therein shall he neither die nor live*"; and finally in *Sura Al-A'la* 87:9-13 it says "*Therefore give admonition in case the admonition profits (the hearer). The admonition will be received by those who fear God): But it will be avoided by those most unfortunate ones, Who will enter the great fire, In which they will then neither die nor live.*"



Corporeality of the human body was never a question in Islam as these Sura's show but neither will you find any doubt about it in the early *African* Church Father's like **Tertullian** in his *A Treatise on the Soul* found in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. And if the body is somehow corporeal so that it can feel real pain and torment then Hell itself must be just as real. Tertullian states the following:

So far as the philosophers are concerned we have said enough. As for our own teachers, indeed, our reference to them is *ex abundanti* ---- a surplusage of authority: in the Gospel itself they will be found to have the clearest evidence for the corporeal nature of the soul. In hell the soul of a certain man is in torment, punished in flames, suffering excruciating thirst, and imploring from the finger of a happier soul, for his tongue, the solace of a drop of water. Do you suppose that this end of the blessed poor man and the miserable rich man is only imaginary? Then why the name of Lazarus in this narrative, if the circumstances is not in (the category of) a real occurrence? But even if it is to be regarded as imaginary, it will still be a testimony to truth and reality. For unless the soul possessed corporeality, the image of a soul could not possibly contain a finger of a bodily substance; nor would Scripture feign a statement about the limbs of a body, if these had no existence. But what is that which is removed to Hades after the separation of the body; which is there detained; to which Christ also, on dying, descended? I imagine it is the souls of the patriarchs. But wherefore (all this), if the soul is nothing in its subterranean abode? For *nothing* it certainly is, if it is not a bodily substance. For whatever is incorporeal is incapable of being kept and guarded in any way; it is also exempt from either punishment or refreshment. That must be a body, by which punishment or refreshment can be experienced. Of this I shall treat more fully in a more fitting place. Therefore, whatever amount of punishment or refreshment the soul tastes in Hades, in its prison or lodging, in the fire or in Abraham's bosom, it gives proof thereby of its own corporeality. For an incorporeal thing suffers nothing, not having that which makes it capable of suffering; else, if it has such capacity, it must be a bodily substance. For in *as far as every corporeal thing is capable of suffering also corporeal*.³⁶⁰

³⁶⁰ Tertullian. *A Treatise on the Soul*. In *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*. Translated by the Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Vol. III. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), Chapter VII, pp. 186-187.

So, if the spiritual body of the human person is still somehow corporeal in its' postmortem existence (as held by **Tertullian**) then what of the soul? We can answer in support of our claims that it is the emotive psychic-mind of the human person. *What is the soul?* Tertullian above asked this question in a different way. He asks: "But what is that [i.e. the soul] which is removed to Hades after the separation of the body?" Below the *Egyptian Original* will answer to a remarkable extinct both Tertullian's and our question on this subject. We need answers to these questions because from here on we shall be looking at the notion of the *psychic-mind* in the *Egyptian Original* that is another expression for the soul and we shall see that the "psychic-mind" is an exact equivalent in Greek thought for the *soul*. Where did the Greek get this understanding from? While we cannot go into that fully in this work we can say without hesitation that the Greek understanding is the soul and the human psychic-mind are one and the same; and they got it from the *Egyptian Original*.

We will see below however that the Egyptians describe the nature of the soul having at least *nine corporeal and spiritual essences* (i.e. the **Khat, Sahu, Ab, Ka, Ba, Khaibit, Khu, Sekhem** and **Ren**) of which the Greeks only needed two (body and soul) for their two-dimensional philosophy. Briefly, these corporeal and spiritual essences that make up the totality of the nature of man, including his psychic-mind are described below. We present these notions here, because until we have some idea of what the nature of man is we will not understand how the Trinitarian Dark Powers of *Nothingness, Evil, and Sin* impact or influence men in their *psychic-mind* [Ethiopian *rational heart*] to either capture, mutate, or destroy his *soul*, on *God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* within *God's Good Creation*:

1. **Khat** () "The physical body of man considered as a whole. . . a word which seems to be connected with the idea of something which is liable to decay. The word is also applied to the mummified body in the tomb. . ." Evidently this hieroglyphic word is indicating a corporeal body, that is, a *dead rotting fish* ; a nose  *determinative for something that smells bad* ; and mummified *corpse on his death bed*.³⁶¹ This is likely why God say our corporeal bodies are made from the *dust* of the ground within which the life given Spirit of God is breathed (Genesis 1); and in the Qur'an where it says we are "sounding clay (i.e. men of made from the earth of clay with rational mind, able to think and express those thoughts in word).
2. **Sahu** () where the **Khat** that "germinates" by prayers (i.e. utterances of Words of Power) "changes into a *sahu*, or spiritual body . . . indicates a body which has obtained a degree of knowledge and power and glory whereby it becomes henceforth lasting and incorruptible. The body which has become a *sahu* has the power of associating with the soul and of holding converse with it. In this form it can ascend into heaven, and dwell with the gods, and with the *sahu* of the gods, and with the souls of the righteous. Here we notice the biblical saying "flesh and blood [i.e. the *khat*] cannot inherit the Kingdom of God", however, according to the *Egyptian Original* the *sahu* because it is a spiritual body can inherit it.³⁶²
3. **Ab** () the "heart", that is, "the seat of the power of life and the fountain of good and evil thoughts." The "heart" of the human person is usually what the Old Testament and New Testament addresses as the crucial part of the man in that (like the Egyptians say) is the fountain-head of good and evil thoughts.(ixi) The O.T. wisdom literature talks a lot about the heart and Jesus did so as well for as Jesus says: "*Do you still fail to understand? Do you not*

³⁶¹ E. A. Wallis Budge. Translation & Transliteration. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), p. Iviii.

³⁶² Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. lix-lx.

yet understand that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things which come out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile the person. Indeed, it is from the heart that evil thoughts, false witness, and blasphemies come forth. These are the things which defile a person; but to eat with unwashed hands does not make anyone impure.” (Matthew 15:16-20, EOB). Apparently, the Unholy Trinity of *Nothingness, Evil, and Sin* knows this about human nature as well and focuses **ITs** attack there. Yet the Egyptians describes additional parts of the human nature that might influence the emotive psychic-mind of the human person both while alive and in their postmortem state of existence.

4. **Ka** (), “And in addition to the natural and spiritual bodies, man also has an abstract individuality or personality endowed with all of his characteristic attributes. This abstract personality has an absolutely independent existence. It could move freely from place to place, separating itself from, or uniting itself to, the body at will, and enjoying life with the gods in

heaven. This was the *Ka*, , a word which at times conveys the meaning of its Greek equivalent εἰδωλον, *image, genius, double, character, disposition, and mental attributes*.³⁶³ The dark powers and principalities need not worry too much about the human individual human character of a person, that is, “who you are. According to Wallis Budge the Coptic word for this concept of “soul”, “spirit” is *BΩ* meaning “character,” “double,” “vital strength.” In Egyptian hieroglyphics it is difficult to speak of the Ka-soul without reference to the Ba-soul and Coptic picked this nuance up.³⁶⁴ Coptic does not use Ka or Kai for the soul or spirit. It exclusively uses as noted above or according to W.E. Crum in *A Coptic Dictionary* (1939) by the Coptic word *BΔ* meaning “spirit” or “soul.”³⁶⁵ Coptic also has the phrase *NEB BΔ* “Lord of the spirits.” Conceptually then we have a supernatural spiritual guide that waters over the development and state of our inner spiritual being.

Here the dark spiritual powers are at work as well. All **IT** needsto know is “how you are made up” that is, “your character” whether you are easily influenced to do what Evil the**IT** suggests do or not do. That is why Satan in Job makes the somewhat curious answer in Job Chapter 1 and 2 when God asks him where he had been and Satan answers “I have been walking to-and-fro throughout the Earth” presumably looking for easy and susceptible human prey “like a roaring lion to see whom he could devour.” That is the reason for Satan’s answer evident in God’s retort “*Have you considered my servant Job*.” Satan had considered Job but considered it a waste of time since God had Job completely under His protection and blessing (i.e. hedge around by the Power and mercies of God). It is apparent that Satan understands the weakness of human nature and seeks those (even the strong) whose weak defense’s gives him an opportunity for a direct attack, in terms of introducing illness, misfortune, or misdirection, etc. This is based on Satan’s knowledge of human nature and each person’s specific character that looking for each their emotive *Achilles heel*.

5. **Ba** (), “To that part of man which beyond all doubt was believed to enjoy an eternal existence in heaven in a state of glory, the Egyptians gave the name *ba*  , hitherto translated as “soul.” The *ba* is not incorporeal, for although it dwells in the *ka*, and is in some respects,

³⁶³ Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. lxi-lxii.

³⁶⁴ Budge, *The Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. 2, p.782.

³⁶⁵ *A Coptic Dictionary*, compiled by W.E. Crum (Oxford Press, 1939), p. 28.

like the heart (the principle of rational life in man, that makes him a *thinking-thinking being* that can choose right from wrong) still it possesses both substance and form : in form it is

depicted as a human-headed hawk , and in nature and substance it is stated to be exceedingly refined or ethereal. It revisits the body in the tomb and *partially re-animated it*, and conversed with it; it could take upon itself any shape that it pleases; and it had the power of passing into heaven and of dwelling with the perfected souls there. It was eternal.”³⁶⁶

6. **Khaibit** () , “In connection with the *ka* and *ba* must be mentioned the *khaibit*  or shadow of the man, which the Egyptians regarded as part of the human economy. It may be compared with the $\sigma\kappa\iota\acute{\alpha}$ and *umbra* of the Greeks and Romans. It was supposed to have an entirely independent existence and to be able to separate itself from the body; it was free to move wherever it pleased, and like the *ka* and *ba*, it partook of the funeral offerings in the tomb, which it visited at will.”³⁶⁷
7. **Khu** () , Another important and apparently eternal part of man was he *khu*  , which judging from the meaning of the word, may be defined as a “shining” or translucent, intangible casing or covering of the body, which is frequently depicted in the form of a mummy. For want of a better word *khu* has often been translated “shining one,” “glorious,” “intelligence,” and the like, but in certain cases it may be tolerably well rendered by “spirit.”³⁶⁸
8. **Sekhem** () , Yet another part of man was supposed to exist in heaven, to which Egyptians gave the name *sekhem*  . The word has been rendered by “power,” “form,” and the like, but it is very difficult to find any expressions which will represent the Egyptian conception of the *sekhem*.”³⁶⁹
9. **Ren** () , Finally, the *name*,  *ren*, of a man was believed to exist in heaven . .³⁷⁰

Budge then summarizes all these human essences by stating: “Thus, as we have seen, the whole man consisted of a natural body, a spiritual body, a heart, a double, a soul, a shadow, an intangible ethereal casing or spirit, a form, and a name. All these were, however, bound together inseparably, and the welfare of any single one of them concerned the welfare of all. For the well-being of the spiritual parts it was necessary to preserve from decay the natural body ; and certain passages in the pyramid texts seems to show that a belief in the resurrection of the natural body existed in the earliest dynasties.”³⁷¹ Any discussion of the “psychic-mind” or “soul” of the human person in respect of its struggle against the phenomenon of Evil certainly cannot be understood without a knowledge of what human nature consists of. Thanks to Egyptian speculative theology we have such knowledge. The Greek took a lot from the Egyptians, enough too making folks believe they developed this philosophy from scratch. Course this claim is just one of the great lies of history so that what is contrary to that presupposition is passed by in silence, and if spoken is thought to be incredulous, and even preposterous. Nevertheless, we dare to speak of them here. The Greeks could not understand

³⁶⁶ Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, p. lxiv.

³⁶⁷ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, p. lxvi.

³⁶⁸ Budge, p. lxvii.

³⁶⁹ Budge, p. lxviii.

³⁷⁰ Budge, lxix.

³⁷¹ Budge, pp. lxix-lxx.

much of these Egyptian notions but what they could understand or acquire, they stole. The philosophy the Greeks did have they stole from the Egyptians, that is, stole from African People, from the Black Man. George G. M. James makes this very clear in his *Stolen Legacy* (1972), saying from the very beginning of his work that “The Greeks were not the authors of Greek Philosophy, but the people of North Africa, commonly called the Egyptians.” James states:

The term Greek philosophy, to begin with is a misnomer, for there is no such philosophy in existence. The ancient Egyptians had developed a very complex religious system, called the Mysteries, which was also the first system of salvation. As such, it regarded the human body as a prison house of the soul, which could be liberated from its bodily impediments, though the disciplines of the Arts and Sciences, and advanced from the level of a mortal to that of a God. This was the notion of the *summum bonum* or *greatest good*, to which all men must aspire, and it also became the basis of all ethical concepts. The Egyptian Mystery System was also a Secret Order, and membership was gained by initiation and a pledge to secrecy. The teaching was graded and delivered orally to the Neophyte; and under these circumstances of secrecy, the Egyptians developed secret systems of writing and teaching, and forbade their Initiates from writing what they had learnt. After nearly five thousand years of prohibition against the Greeks, they were permitted to enter Egypt for the purpose of their education. First through the Persian invasion and second through the invasion of Alexander the Great. From the sixth century B.C. therefore to the death of Aristotle (322 B.C.) the Greeks made the best of their chance to learn all they could about Egyptian culture; most students received instructions directly from the Egyptian Priests, but after the invasion by Alexander the Great, the Royal temples and libraries were plundered and pillaged, and Aristotle’s school converted the library at Alexandria into a research centre. There is no wonder then, that the production of the unusually large number of books ascribed to Aristotle has proved a physical impossibility, for any single man within a lifetime.³⁷²

Therefore the so-called Greek understanding of the soul and the psychic-mind that we present from the both the Greek and Egyptian horizons of understanding is nothing if not the Egyptian understanding itself, presented on the one hand through the mind of White People, called Greeks, and though the mind of Black People called Egyptians, the original creators of this vast knowledge base that white and some black scholars keep calling Greek “Philosophy.” In my doctoral dissertation on the *phenomenology of suffering* within the context of *Clinical Pastoral Education* I state the following:

The human science disciplines of psychology and medicine borrowed the root term for soul, and as such began depriving it of its original meaning. Before this cooption the *soul* in its *physical, emotional* and *spiritual* nature was never thought of as separate aspects of the human person that could be understood, cared for, or healed without reference or consideration of all aspects together until of late. Louw and Nida (1988/1989) show that the Greek term for *soul* refers to the whole person. Under the domain of *psychological faculties* the Greek term $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ and $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ (i.e. *psuche* and *psuches*) are the root words from which we get *psychic*. The Greek terms refer to the human *soul life, and being, essence of life* in terms of *thinking, willing, and feeling*. These terms also refer to the *inner self, mind, thoughts, heart and desire*. (Louw & Nida, 1988/1989, p. 321, Sec. 26.4). Under the domain of psychological faculties, the root word *soul* is broken down into two aspects of human nature (i.e. spiritual and material), which unfortunately in the human science discipline of psychology and psychiatry are generally thought of as separate, if not unrelated. The two aspects of the *soul* are as follows:

- (1) *Sum-psuchos* ($\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\mu\psi\upsilon\chi\omicron\varsigma$) is the *spiritual nature* or aspect of human nature that connotes harmonious, united being on one spirit. (Louw & Nida, 1988/1989, p. 322).

³⁷² George G. M. James. *Stolen Legacy*. (London, England: The African Publication Society, 1972), p. 1.

- (2) *Sarchos*(σαρχός) is the *flesh nature, natural, human being*, or aspect of the *human person*, which according to Louw and Nida (1988/1989) is “the psychological aspect of human nature which contrasts with the spiritual nature; in other words, that aspect of human nature which is characterized by or reflects typical human reasoning and desires in contrast with those aspects of human thought and behavior which related to God and spiritual life. . .” (p. 322).

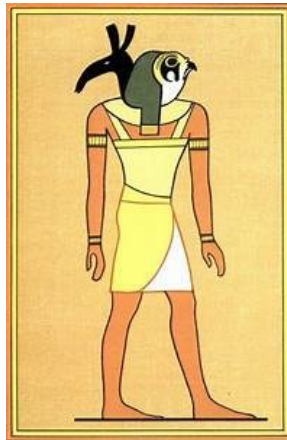
The human science disciplines with the exception of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) have lost the necessary connection between these two aspects of human nature. Traditional theology as a discipline has done just as badly in understanding these grammatical distinctions. Theology as a discipline has generally lost the connection within its God-talk on human nature and so is focused on *saving the soul*, by shepherding the soul back into a relationship with God. In order for theology to truly understand its mission, aim, and goal it would have to reestablish its original understanding of the two aspects of the soul in human nature in order to do its saving work related to the whole person. In a sense theology saw its own disciplinary deficiency and its order to cure this deficiency and also at one an[d] the same time save its theological identity [coopted] in creating the CPE Movement, allowing its seminarians who wanted a clinical theological perspective to branch off into the realm of caring for and curing of the soul rather than saving the soul. Thus the theological discipline cleverly spun off itself a new disciplinary horizon of understanding, which in some respects it no longer recognizes as one of its children that it gave birth too as a new discipline. . . . Theology was at one time called the *Queen of the Sciences*. It was during the High Middle Ages that theology took this academic seat of authority. For a time it became the premier discipline to which the others, specially philosophy was allied How strange a turn of events that in these modern times all of these university disciplines, including the seminary discipline of theology have forgotten the interdisciplinary nature of theology and it's God-talk that is so interested in human nature in all of its aspects, body, mind and soul Psychology and psychotherapy have lost the necessary connection with emphasis on being *theorists of the soul* or *healers of the soul* (the object being only the human emotions and the mind). Practitioners of this human science discipline would need to regain the etymological origins and grammatical understanding of the root word for its discipline if it wishes to be a *healer of the whole human person*. Even the words *theory* and *therapy* hold clues to reclaiming this old horizon of understanding and should lead to proper diagnosis of human maladies so that the proper therapeutic approach can be taken, whether spiritual or psychological.

- (1) *Theoria* (θεωρία), is the Greek word for *contemplation, speculating, or looking at things* by means of *comprehension of consciousness or nous* (i.e. the *eye of the soul*). Within the root word is *theo* that according to *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (1968, p. 1510) means “God” reflected in the Greek combined form *θεος* (i.e. *theos*). Certainly the old form of *theoria*(theo-ri) and its connection to the root *theo* (God) has been lost to all the human sciences that use the word, but may be recovered by recovering the syllable *ri* from Egyptian hieroglyphic word *re* (i.e. , word symbol for things done with the mouth by means of the intellect or rational mind), which means *speech, words, opinions* (Budge, 1968, p. 416, Vol. 1). If this etymology is correct then *theory* would have originally meant “God's speech,” or “God's utterance,” or “God's talk,” which *would* be the divine source by which *nous* or *human consciousness* understands itself. *Theory* then would be the *divine/human* means by which understanding of the maladies of the whole human nature could be understood, so that *caring of the soul* could take place, and *curing of the soul*, as understood in CPE praxis, would be made possible. The process of

curing of the soul, which includes accessing the nous or eye of the soul with divine assistance, would lead to clinical pastoral therapeutic practice, where:

- (2) *Therapeuo*(θεραπεύω) or therapy means “to cause someone to recover health, often with the implications of having taken care of such a person – to heal, to cure, to take care of, healing” (Louw & Nida, 1988/1989, p. 269, 23:139). . . . Clinical Pastoral Education has somehow retained the kernel, if not the whole fruit pod, of the old etymological and grammatical forms, expressed in its praxis, which sees the soul as composite but unified human nature. CPE still recognized that these human maladies must be addressed from a spiritual horizon of understanding, even though it is overly captivated by the views and methodologies of allied human and social sciences it thinks can provide it the tools to advance its human science project of *caring for* and *curing the soul*.³⁷³

In the *Egyptian Original* the Egyptian explains the outer shell or cosmic origins of Evil and its properties but they also explain the *inner space of the psychic-mind* based on the phenomenological experiences with Evil explaining more fully the nature of Evil, which is one of the goals of this work. We shall pursue this line of thinking and analysis in **Part Two** of this work.



The Ancient Egyptian Twin god's Horus/Set represented as two heads one one body interlocked in an apparent inextricably eternal (never ending) spiritual struggle of mind and body between Good and Evil.

³⁷³ Dia Sekou Mari-Jata. *Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and the Phenomenology of Suffering in the Lived-Experience and Life-World of Clinical Pastoral Care Educators and Practitioners in Hospital Clinical Organizations (HCOs)*. Dissertation, Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education with a Specialization in Higher Education. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Union Institute & University, 2012), pp. 87-91.

BOOK TWO

EVIL AND PSYCHIC-SPIRITUAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

(THE OSIRIAN TRAVELER AND THE CONCRESENCE OF *EVIL*
IN THE LIGHT OF EGYPTIAN COMOSGENESIS)

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE ACTUATION OF EVIL WITHIN THE PSYCHIC-SPIRITUAL BEING

In **Book One** of my project, I focused on the *macro-cosmic* aspect of how *Evil* operates at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* and somehow with the cooperation of the human person who in seeking to be rewarded with various demonic experiences allows *Evil* to enter onto *God's Superhighway of unified human experience*. We examined the views of various theologians that have dealt with this macro-cosmic aspect on the question "What is Evil?" In **Book Two** of my project, I will examine the *micro-cosmic* aspect of this same question in an attempt to explain how *Evil* operates within the *interiority of the psychic human mind and emotions* of the human person as **IT** impacts the human person's *life-world* and *lived-experience* of *Evil* from a phenomenological horizon of thought. We already began to approach this micro-aspect of the psychic spiritual anthropology of the human person in an examination of Paul Ricoeur's (1967) phenomenology of evil within the *lived-experience* of the human person using symbols of human sin that involve feelings of guilt, fault, the need for confession, repentance and pardon. We take note here that the human person feels these things as a result of sin (i.e. rebellion) against God's holiness and commands and because of God's primordial interdict of "NO!" against "Nothingness" of which sin, death, and evil are triune aspects. Because of God's primordial "NO!" against sin beginning with the **Fall of Angels** promoted and led by **Satan-El** (See Revelation 12:7-17) we tend to feel this way beginning with the **Fall of Man** (again led by Satan-El) because innately within the interiority of the human person (our human-divine consciousness) being made of the dust of the earth into which humankind God breathed the spark of human-divine lifewe cannot escape that we are made into the image of God and to rebel against Him is to rebel against our own human-divine conscience. The human person innately knows when they are doing Evil and so are violating God's holiness and His eternal being and divine purpose for Man. No rational, man-made law, or false identity against God's rational and moral order of things can change this fact.

Because of the divine interdict that says "No!"; the human person feels empty and nothingness until they repent and as a result receive divine pardon. Paul Ricoeur's (1967) phenomenology in his *The Symbolism of Evil* viewed the question from a philosophical and phenomenological rather than a cosmological horizon of thought which this section seeks and envisions. Here we are more focused on the psychic mind than human emotive categories and/or symbolic representation of various human feelings as men face the phenomenon of evil in their *life-world* and *lived experience*. The Ethiopian philosophical notion of the "six doors of the rational heart" will later reconcile these two notions that appear irreconcilable; *but for now*, I will follow the same procedure of examining the ideas of various theologians on the question but will also include another approach using Egyptian theology and cosmology as our frame of reference. I believe this aspect of my approach will be novel, plausible and compelling. First, I want to try and get a preliminary understanding of how evil is actuated within psychic-spiritual human person or personality using Egyptian logic symbolism. This is where Irenaeus's work on why Evil is in the world is valuable. His theodicy is about Evil in the world as some objective

phenomenon and how that objective phenomenon impacts the psychic-mind of the human person that God is trying to make deiform before the human persons' postmortem experience of the terrors and torments of Hell where some will escape it through Utterances of the Words of Power and others will not escape and be cast into the fires of Hell for either eternity or annihilated (depending on your view) of the short (not eternal) postmortem continuation of soul-making (bringing everyone into account for their deeds good or bad) as they approach the Great White Throne of Judgment.

We have inferred that Hick has put the wrong emphasis on what Irenaeus said. Irenaeus is not focused on this temporal and later the postmortem impact of Evil necessary "as a good" for the soul-making process in the human purpose serving the divine purpose of God so that all humans will eventually experience salvation (i.e. universal salvation of all mankind) but Irenaeus' true focus was on the transformation of the *psychic-mind* of the human person that has to experience being "*born again*", where men "have to be, they must be born again" before they can serve God in faith and that with a good conscience. So, men will as a result experience the phenomenon of both Good and Evil within God's *Good* Creation. Noting here that the Sovereign Lord (to my knowledge) has never offered an apology for subjecting us to such experiences as He had with Job in all the nearly 40 chapters of complaints and challenges Job made. Job, nevertheless, finally (in awe, humbleness and shame) said after he saw for himself the Presence of the Glory of the Lord "*I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eyes see You* [i.e. my psychic-mind comprehends you clearly]. *Therefore, I depreciate myself, and I waste away. I regard myself as dust and ashes.*" (Job 42:5-6, The Orthodox Study Bible).

Job finally came to the awareness through mindfulness by directly experiencing the phenomenon of the Glory of the Divine Presence that he (like all of us) were made precisely for God's Glory (for which God need not apologize nor offer us an explanation through our complaints) as His divine purpose in *soul-making* trumps are incessant complaints as the human person becomes a "new creation" or a "new creature" in Christ Jesus. Nevertheless, suggesting that while this process is important and does not end quite yet after death, all men experiencing a short postmortem continuum of change, God must finally change men in a "twinkling of an eye" to complete the process at the peak of our failed attempts that we have pursued by faith in this life with the help and transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Here is what Bishop Irenaeus really said:



God had power at the beginning to grant perfection to man; but as the latter was only recently created, he could not possibly have received it, or even if he had received it could he have contained it, or containing it, could have retained it If, however, anyone say, 'What then? could not God have exhibited man as perfect from the beginning? Let him know that

inasmuch as God is indeed always the same and unbegotten as respects Himself, all things are possible to Him. But created things must be inferior to Him who created them, from the very fact of their later origin; for it was not possible for things recently created to have been uncreated. But inasmuch as they are not uncreated {being}, for this very reason do they come short of the perfect. Because, as these things are of later date {not from the beginning}, so are they infantile; so are they unaccustomed to, and unexercised in, perfect discipline also it was possible for God Himself to have man perfect from the first, but man could not receive this [perfection], being as yet an infant. . . . This, therefore, was the [object of the] long-suffering of God, that man, passing through all things, and acquiring the knowledge of moral discipline {by the impact of the phenomenon of good and evil on the human psychic-

mind} , then attaining to the resurrection from the dead, and learning by experience {through the emotive experience of good and evil on the psychic-mind that changes and perhaps transforms a person from childhood to manhood “when was a child I acted like a child, I thought like a child, and I did childish things; now that I am a man I have put away childish things} what is the source of his deliverance, may always live in a state of gratitude to the Lord, having obtained from him the gift of incorruptibility {reborn incorruptible}, that he might love Him the more ; for he to whom more is forgiven, loveth more (Luke vii, 43) By this arrangement, therefore, and these harmonies, and a sequence of this nature, man, a created and organized being, is rendered after the image and likeness of the uncreated God – the Father planning everything well and giving His commands, the Son carrying these into execution and performing the work of creating, and the Spirit nourishing and increasing [what is made], but man making progress day by day, and ascending towards the perfect, that is, approximating the uncreated One. . . . Now it was necessary that man should in the first instance be created ; and having been created, should receive growth {emotive maturity though growth of his psychic-mind, that is, the growth of his soul via God divine purpose of soul-making} ; and having received growth, should be strengthened ; and having been strengthened, should abound ; and having abounded, should recover [from the disease of sin] ; and having recovered, should be glorified {deified} ; and being glorified, should see his Lord how {with the mixture of good and evil in the world} , if we had no knowledge of the contrary, could he have had instruction [of] that which is good? . . . For just as the tongue receives experience of sweet and bitter by means of tasting, and the eye discriminates between black and white by means of vision, and the ear recognizes the distinctions of sounds by hearing ; so also the mind {i.e. psychic-mind, the soul through phenomenological experience of good and evil} , receiving through experience of both the knowledge of what is good, become more tenacious of its preservation, by acting in obedience to God. . . . But if any one do shun the knowledge of both kinds of things {good and evil things} , and the twofold perception of knowledge, he unawares divests himself of the character of a human being {as his eyes have been opened, that is, his psychic-mind awakened by eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil}.³⁷⁴

Hick himself makes a crucial distinction that Irenaeus makes about the nature of man and how God’s breath formed him should in itself show God’s divine purpose of soul-making. Man was made in such a way (e.g. fragile, that is, breakable, weak of body and mind) that his weak physical constitution and malleable emotive psychic-mind up against his hard environment that will not yield its precious goods without exertion of extreme amounts of energy that seems out of all proportion to the yield (e.g. a ton of coal under extreme pressure that costs perhaps a quarter of million dollars to get a one caret diamond) and perhaps even the exertion itself in terms of human health and peace of mind is out of all proportion to the final goal achievable or even possible. This hard environment (at least according to Hick) is God’s prescription for molding the character of this Hu-Man (i.e. Humus-Man, this Earth-Man made of clay) into some kind of hoped for deified being that resembles the character of its Divine Creator. It would seem that his whole schema of soul-making is laughable and even tragic given the level of death and destruction brough about by both natural and moral human Evil, even with the promise that in the end all human’s will be saved and experience at some point eternal bliss for our sorrows, tears, and troubles, where “man’s life if full of woe and his days a fleeting end for all he hoped for!” making the preacher in Ecclesiastes exclaim “*What a heavy burden God has*

³⁷⁴ John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 212-214.

laid on mankind! I have seen all the things that are done under the sun: all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind. What is crooked cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted" (Ecclesiastes 1:12:18). Yet, Hick explains the two-fold nature of man which may be key to understanding the nature of Evil and its hold on man. For John Hick this is one way of understanding God's divine purpose of soul-making that will (according to him) lead to universal salvation of all mankind. Hick gives the following as coming directly from Irenaeus' thinking:

It was in Irenaeus (c. 130-c. 202), Bishop of Lyons and author, in response to Gnosticism, of the Church's first systematic theology, that there comes clearly to light the point of view that was to characterize the Greek as distinct from the Latin Fathers. Irenaeus distinguishes between the image (εἰκὼν) of God and the likeness (ὁμοιωσίς) of God in man. This 'image', which resides in man's bodily form, apparently represents his nature as an intelligent creature capable of fellowship with his Maker, whilst the 'likeness' represents man's final perfecting by the Holy Spirit. For 'the man is rendered spiritual and perfect because of the outpouring of the Spirit, and this is he who was made in the image and likeness of God. But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he who is such is indeed of an animal nature, and being left carnal, shall be an imperfect being, possessing indeed the image [of God] in his formation, but not receiving the likeness through the Spirit. {not being born of the Spirit according to Jesus own words, where he says "A man must be born again"}'. This distinction can, I think not unfairly be presented in more contemporary terms by saying that man's basic nature, in distinction from the other animals, is that of a personal being endowed with moral freedom and responsibility. This is the divine εἰκὼν in him ; he is made as person in the image of God. But man, the finite personal creature capable of personal relationship with his Maker, is as yet only potentially the perfected being who God is seeking to produce. He is only at the beginning of a process of growth and development {sanctification process} in God's continuing providence, which is to culminate in the finite 'likeness' of God. {i.e. soul-making, remaking of the emotive psychic-mind} This whilst the image of God is man's nature as personal, the divine likeness will be a quality of personal existence which reflects the life of the Creator Himself.³⁷⁵

Because the view held by Irenaeus and substantially because of our horizon of understanding seen in the Egyptian Original we suggest here that *Evil* has its seat and home within the psychic-spiritual human nature, whose εἰκὼν is a gift from the breath of God that made the man a "living soul" where it lives and has its being; but it is the ὁμοιωσίς "likeness" of God held within the emotive psychic-mind or soul that is being shaped or deified into a new creation or creature by the challenges of the phenomenon of Good and Evil within God's *Good Creation*. It is not the εἰκὼν that Evil or the dark powers and principalities can effect or change, because that is God's immutable gift to men; but rather it is mankind's potential for ὁμοιωσίς, that is, man's potential for being "like God" or deified is what the dark powers and principalities in heavenly places are trying to corrupt, defeat, and/or distort at all cost too prevent the deification of men, so that become gods. This whole scenario began in the Garden of God when the Serpent suggested to Eve (*Isha*, the "Wild Woman") that the reason God did not want her and Adam (*Ish*, the "Wild Man") to eat from the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* is because they would become "like God" knowing Good and Evil, that is, *become deified*. The potential in man that is fully released by the operation of the Holy Spirit in making them born again resides in the *emotive psychic-mind* that the church

³⁷⁵ John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*, pp. 211-212.

fathers, theologians, and religious scholars have for years called the *soul*. *Evil* gives itself positive embodiment as Carl Jung, the psychologist and psychiatrist himself held in the soul or emotive psychic-mind of human persons and that is what in Part II we have set out to show and demonstrate, especially this notion that if the attack on man by the dark Trinity of Nothingness, Evil and Sin, which the Bible describes as the “dark powers and principalities in heavenly realms” with **ITs** foothold at the frontiers of God’s Good Creation begins anywhere it is within the emotive psychic-mind of man, we are wont to call the “soul.” The attack is direct here but the **IT** requires our ascent from our own free will to participate in exchange for the *demonic pleasures* of MONEY, POWER & SEX and attempts through our current PC *culture of disrespect* to influence collective human persons to act in ways that are *rude, crude, and lewd*, even celebrating turning God’s *Good Creation* into a carnival and playground, for which despite all of our protestations, scorn, laughter, ridicule, and disbelief we shall pay for in the torments of Hell and the Lake of Fire. Jesus had said once during his earthly ministry while refusing to put his trust in men that “*he knew all men. He did not need man’s testimony about man for he knew what was in a man.*” John 2:24-25, NIV. And later John, the author of the book of Revelation, has Jesus the Christ, the risen Amen (*Amen-Ra* in the Egyptian original) and the , **Maa-Kheru**, that is, the one *true of voice, true of word, or truth-teller* (“he who searches the hearts and minds”) saying to the church of Pergamum that he knows where they “live” the same place where “Satan has his throne,” [Revelation 2:13a] that is, within the psychic-spiritual nature of humans, e.g. in the heart or mind, where *Evil* (once **IT** is allowed to enter onto the lower deck of the *Superhighway of God*) lives and has its being. Here *Evils* given expression within the moral, cosmic and social fabric of human society, and human institutions as *demonic experience* in various forms (e.g. war, genocide, psychotic behavior, lewdness, immorality, racism, the push with the notion of identity to change the very nature and man and female, etc.). In the above verse where Jesus is pictured as the apocalyptic Lord or *Cosmic Christ*, the word in the passage (i.e. periscope) ΣΑΤΑΝΑΣ or *Satanas* is properly translated from the Greek as the “prince of evil spirits,” and while not being evil incarnate himself, Satan apparently has given himself completely over to demonic experience and seeks to influence the hearts and minds of other spiritual beings, especially humans, introducing them to desire the “**deep secrets**” of Satan describe as such by the resurrected Christ in Revelation 2:24. Here we call **IT** *demonic experience*. Christ speaks to the church of Thyatira. Christ, the *Amen* (i.e. the *Hidden One*) tells the church at Thyatira “*that I am he who searches hearts and minds*” (Revelation 2:23, NIV). And in the *Egyptian Original* the *Horus-Christ*, calls himself the *Amen* as well, that is the *truth-teller* that lives and has his being in truth and that he is the Lord of hearts, i.e. knows them. In the “Papyrus of Ani,” Horus states in Utterance 27 (expressed first in **Medu Neter**, that is, Egyptian *hieroglyphics* and then in translation):

³⁷⁶ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc,

Just as the seat of Christological experience resides in the heart, meaning rational mind [i.e. *the kingdom of God is within you*] so also the Kingdom of Satan [as Jungian proposition for the coincidence of opposites within psychic-spiritual human nature] resides in the same place and is given expression within the personal and social fabric of human existence as *demonic experience*. Egyptian logic symbolism (meaning the way ancient Egyptians as Africans would think and use hieroglyphics picto-graphs to give expression to the combination of the logical as well as the imaginative faculties of the mind) will help the reader understand this even more as we proceed. The analysis of Alfred North Whitehead and others will give us a contemporary philosophic and theistic grounding of the nature of evil as *phenomenological experience*, that is, how this destructive force whose aim is to undermine Christological experience impacts the emotive psychic of the human person engaged in a struggle against IT. Understanding the phenomenology of the suffering human person in this emotive psychic struggle will reveal a paradox that Svetozar Stojanovic (discussed in Book One) explored in reference to human nature in conjunction with technological advance that has inherent in it both destruction and creativity *at one and the same time*. To say this about Christological experience is to say that the coincidence of opposites if indeed both good and evil is encompassed in the creative act of God then *Evil* has to be operative within Christological experience as well.

On the surface of things this appears to be a heretical statement. However, it gives one pause to think that if the solution to the *problem of Evil* and/or the *problem of Nothingness* lies within understanding the phenomenological experience of humans suffering under the onslaught of *Evil* then Christological experience that assists in this struggle when applying the coincidence of opposites could likely be responsible for the concrescence of *Evil* in the *life-world* and *live-experience* of the human person. The more the human person seeks to experience the joys of Christological experience the more intense the struggle with *Evil* becomes. In this human/divine struggle between good and evil the human person alone is no match and paradoxically may have to suffer defeat in death in order to claim ultimate victory.

The Egyptian ideas on this topic that follow are: (1) that evil can never be destroyed and (2)



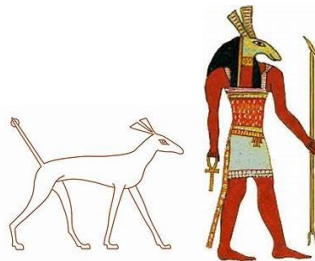
humans can only achieve what the Egyptians call , *maa-t*, that is, a *balance between good and evil* achieved in the realms of *truth, integrity, uprightness, justice, the right, verity, genuineness, and law*. There is no pure or absolute victory of good over evil in any of these human realms. The most that can be hoped for in Egyptian cosmological thought is *balance* between the two forces so that continuation of human life is possible. When an imbalance occurs with either force the cosmos is paradoxically out of order. More evil than good brings about the devolution and corruption of the moral foundations of human civilization where essentially all authority is *disestablished* so that “every man [does] what is right in their own eyes” (Judges 17:6). When there is more good than evil (for too long a period in time) then a pacific inertness threatens human growth and creativity that adversity otherwise has the potential to engender [Whitehead]. As some suggest God expiated *Evil* and or demonic experience from himself (where God as God has no darkness in Him at all) on to a demonic spiritual being, who was then cast to Earth, where the war between good and evil continues on God’s Superhighway. Since Evil cannot reside in God and it has no place in heaven (where God’s will is perfectly carried out by His angels and other Powers) it must reside within contingent sentient beings (human and dark spiritual powers) willing to cooperate in return for the temporary pleasures of various demonic experiences. Satan was one such being willing to encompass all evil within his being

1967), p. 99.

as the Chief acolyte and devotee of Evil; but since that is not possible all sentient being can participate and bring about untold suffering to millions. How this has played out on the human level in one tragedy after another is to scapegoat the *Other* (e.g. women, minorities, racial groups, etc.). These minority groups become the embodiment of evil so that anything you might do to these persons or groups to protect oneself and “make the world safe for democracy” upholding the “rule of law” under the clarion call for “law and order” *per se* is justified, including ethnic genocide and murdering unarmed Black men and black young adults *under the color of law*. This expiation model of using scapegoats to expiate Evil in oneself is dangerous as a solution to the *coincidence of opposites* for the above reasons.

This project will show that the Egyptian solution of achieving balance between good and evil is likely the *best of all possible worlds* until a New Heaven and a New Earth become a reality at the Omega Point of human/divine history. We will note in respect that Whitehead would disagree with this Egyptian model of achieving a balance between good and evil and strongly suggest that such a “stable perfection are merely a prelude to decadence,” and in the end is the root of all evil that seeks to prevent creativity and the concrescence of the good and the beautiful which requires occasions of novelty in experience which is opposed to uniformity and the status quo, whether good or bad.³⁷⁷

Whitehead has a point. But his philosophy begs the question. Has there in reality ever been any society, including the Egyptian, which has ever achieved *stable perfection* or *balance between good and evil*? Is not the Egyptian theodetic solution merely an intermediate utopia between total chaos and the promise of an eschaton where all evil has been destroyed and only the good and the beautiful are left? Even the promised eschaton in the theodicy of Whitehead, where the Cosmic-Christ or the Omega Christ of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin has brought about the staple perfection as pictured in Revelation 22:3 where: “No longer will there be any curse. Throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him,” could not be philosophically encompassed because the process God and creation itself is involved in a constant process novelty of occasions going toward the good and beautiful, a process that on the surface and by the logic of Whitehead’s thinking theoretically has no end and requires as a condition a tension between occasions of good and evil in order to advance. This is Whitehead’s own version of the coincidence of opposites within the created order and would deny any stable perfection as given in the *Egyptian Original* or given by the speculative propositions in the theology of the *Omega-Christ*. We will speak more about this when we examine Whitehead’s philosophic theodicy that deals with demonic experience.



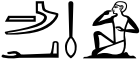
³⁷⁷ Barineau, *Theodicy of Alfred North Whitehead*, p. 102-103.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

EVIL IN EGYPTIAN COSMOGONY AND PSYCHIC MIND OF THE OSIRIAN TRAVELER: A PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDING

In Egyptian cosmogony Evil is *really-real* and often personified as a god or gods among all other gods grouped into a triune system called the *Company of the Gods*, a *paut of three's up to nine gods*. From a *Uni-Theological* perspective this triune system of gods will be referred to as *The One and the Many* to demonstrate that the Egyptians held to and advance the concept of the *One Eternal God* as a *Trinitarian Deity*. In Egyptian cosmogony there is an array of both evil and good gods. The aim of this chapter is to describe some of them and their roles within the cosmic struggle between good and evil. I want to describe the role each one plays in the struggle to bring about balance between good and evil within the cosmic human/divine created order and how this struggle affects the psychic mind or rational heart of the human person.

The god **Anpu** , that is **Anubis**, the *Gate Keeper of Time and Eternity*, the *Dog of Time and Eternity*, the *Watcher*, is the god who stands guard between the visible and invisible world of celestial spirits and the visible world of terrestrial spirits, i.e. Spirit-Man. No one from the visible world may cross into the invisible world unless his soul is conveyed by Anubis before **Osiris**, the *Conqueror and Lord of Eternity* through the *Keeper, Recorder of Deeds*, **Tehuti**, the second member of the *Three-in-One celestial God-Head*, i.e. the Egyptian or *Kamau Trinity*. A person so conveyed is led by the **Horus-Christ** to the scales of Anupis so that the heart of that person may be weighed in the balance which is in the Hall of Maat to determine if they have lived truth, i.e. a right and just life, so achieving the

title of  **maa-kheru** (lit. *true of voice, truth teller*) that is, one who is justified by truth or justified by a life of truth and stands justified and innocent before Osiris, the highest psychic-spiritual level for an Osirian, that is, the spiritualized Osirian in their doctrine of transformation from time to eternity. The goal of the Osirian is to be found or declared justified before **Osiris**, *Conqueror and Lord of Time and Eternity, Giver of Life Everlasting*, that is, Osiris on the cosmic level, the *Everlasting Night Sun*, which in the mythos represents the soul of **Ra**, or **Osiris-Ra**, the one that gives life and light to the dead in Amen-Ta, meaning the Hidden Land the Egyptian heaven. Osiris is Lord, the Eternal and Judge of the Dead (Spirit-Man) and he is known as the *Soter* or **Εωτηρ** in the Greek, and in Egyptian

meduneter hieroglyphics, , *Suter*, the Savior God, the "Purifier" (with fire and water) the **Mesi temuemuhem**, , lit. "He that makes Man to be Born Again a Second Time" completing the process of his deiform transformation during his post-mortem travel from the Earth of Time to the Earth of Eternity (Paradise, *Amenta* = "The Hidden Land.")

Anupis is then the Egyptian god who saves the Osirian from all evil as the psychic-spiritual traveler transverses the dark caverns of *the valley of the shadow of death* within his rational mind, heart and soul. The Osirian traveler is led by the *Horus-Christ*, who asks the Lord of Amen-ta to protect the Osirian traveler through the Earth of time and Eternity with his rod and staff of power. The same notion can be found in Psalms 23 when the spiritual traveler prays with assurance of divine protection: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Psalms 23:4, NIV).

The New Testament mimics the Egyptian original as well when Jesus teaches his disciples to pray: “*Lord deliver us from evil and the evil one.*” (Matthew 6:13), that is, from *πονηρος* (*poneros*) from which we get our English word “pornography.” This Greek word (among other meanings) carries the notion existentially of “evil things” or “evil experiences” in the natural order or ontologically the embodiment of *demonic experience* in the soul or rational heart or mind. The requested protection is from the Evil One or Satan the Devil, so that a translation could read “*Lord deliver us from the trials of demonic experiences*” or “*deliver us from the one who is the prince of demonic experience.*” While the first goal of the Osirian psychic-spiritual traveler was to be brought into the presence of Osiris justified, the second major concern was to get there safely. In the *Pert-em-hru* (the so-called *Book of the Dead*) there is almost a psychotic obsession with getting past the fiends that lurks in the dark caverns (e.g. of the psychic mind) and even past the gods who test the right of the Osirian traveler to pass by that way or through the next gate. Although these fiends who would in our imagination take on embodiment, the Osirian psychic traveler fully understood that much of what was found in the dark caverns of the soul was a result of their own sins so this spiritual traveler could be found praying:

Ra make to advance right and truth belonging to Neb-er-tscher [Osiris], who is the judge of my weakness and my strength, the one who pacify the gods by the flame of your mouth, who gives divine offerings to the gods, and sepulchral meals to the shining ones [the blessed dead], who live upon right and truth, without deceit, they abominate wickedness and destroy evil; blot out my offenses and may the wounds I received upon earth be removed, and may all evil belonging to me be destroyed.³⁷⁸

The Psalmist speaks in the same vein and in addition speaks of the psychic-spiritual condition and nature as the “inner parts” and the “in most parts,” meaning the psychic-spiritual core or dwelling place of the true personality or psychic interiority human person described here as the Osirian traveler:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions, Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin, for I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost parts . . . Psalms 51:1-6, NIV.

This of course is the interpretation that says that the source of evil and demonic experience comes from within the human person. However, the psychic-spiritual nature tends to justify itself and therefore must expiate evil found in the interiority of the *Self* onto the *Other*. This is done in order to exorcise or cast out the demons embodied within the Self so the human person so possessed can deal with the reflective guilt of desiring the pleasures of demonic experience. This expiation of *Evil* from the *Self* is a temporary solution to the coincidence of opposites that is found in emotive psychic aspect of human nature. The embodiment of *Evil* within the human person must be dealt with by transferring IT to another cause, person, or dark principality (such as the Devil) so a person can give some plausible or rational explanation for their evil behavior (e.g. “*The devil made me do it!*”).

³⁷⁸Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. 224-225, paraphrased rendering.

Today when a person does some kind of diabolical deed the explanation given is that “they have some kind of mental disorder” which is nearly one hundred percent of the time accepted by judges and juries in courts of law because humans just can’t deal with the idea that sane and rational people can do some of the diabolical deeds that are more frequent than ever within American society. Such persons are given an automatic legal defense prior to hearing any evidence to the contrary and such a *prior* defense mutes any evidence in the minds of jurors that shows the person was sane and did the diabolical deed purely because they enjoyed doing it. To admit that a person is sane and is just evil is unacceptable and even more unacceptable is the notion that such a person is possessed by the Devil or the IT that dark homicidal power influencing the person within the interiority of their emotive and psychic mind to commit such atrocities (e.g., serial killings, mass murder of children, etc.). We recoil from the idea that Evil or Satan or the IT as a homicidal dark power can be embodied within the psychic mind (i.e. heart, persona) of the human person and influence their actions to carry out the *thanatic* aims and purpose of *Evil* on the *Superhighway of God*.

In Whitehead’s philosophy he would not be opposed to such an embodiment of evil as the devil who is the progenitor of demonic experience, but he would interpret the chief activity and goal of the Evil One as promoting a deadening uniformity and thus decadence leading to a moral decay, which for example, eventually brought about the fall of the Roman Empire. Barineau describes Whitehead’s answer to the question ‘Does the devil exist or is he merely loathsome?’ Barineau states that during his college days as a member of the Apostles of Cambridge: “Whitehead was one of two whose vote affirmed the reality of the devil, and Whitehead followed the register of his vote with, ‘He is the Homogenous.’ Interpreted considering Whitehead’s later years, the devil represents a deadening conformity to the past which leads toward decadence.”³⁷⁹

Generally, people have the wrong conception of the devil or Satan and think of this spiritual being as the embodied and source of *Evil IT-self*, that is, *Evil incarnate*. That is one of the great deceptions that has prevented a correct understanding of the nature of Evil as transcendent and prior Satan for he is a created and contingent spiritual being. *Evil* as a triune aspect of *Nothingness* seems to have been coeval with God from the very beginning of the creation. To say that Satan is *Evil incarnate* is to make him coeval with God and to give him more power and authority than he actually has. This fact does not absolve Satan from sin and guilt, nor does this say that he has not imbibed or allowed the embodiment of the totality of *demonic experience* within himself because Jesus said of him that “*he was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies*” (John 8:44). Yet this was not always the case. Before the creation or beginning Jesus implies in his statement that Satan had possession of the truth but did not hold to it. Something happened at the beginning of creation to change Satan’s character as we will see in two Old Testament scriptures cited below. The New Testament scriptures state that both God is a spirit [John 4:24] and that Satan as ruler of the kingdom of the air is a spirit [Ephesians 2:2]. Both God and Satan are *really real*. However, God and Satan are two different orders of spirit. *God is a non-created, non-contingent spiritual being*, while *Satan is both a created and contingent spiritual being*. The devil or Satan does have embodiment as a spirit, but you find an anthropomorphic description of Satan in the Old Testament which shows him to be a holy angel who fall from grace. Satan did not create evil but lent himself to participate in demonic experience based on his own evil passions, ambitions and pride. In a few places Hebrew sacred scripture describes the creation of Satan (i.e. Set in Egyptian cosmology) as a fallen angel who

³⁷⁹Barineau, *Theodicy of Alfred North Whitehead*, p. 102.

was *perfect* as in Ezekiel 28:11-19 but whose fall from heaven was caused by unwarranted ambition as a created being to challenge God on his throne as in Isaiah 14:12-17. Ezekiel says of Satan in a sort of parody that:

You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor, So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. [NIV]

Isaiah the prophet had the following to say about Satan after his fall from heaven and that the demonic experience occurred in his psychic-spiritual being or “heart” meaning the mind of Satan when he had another name, that is **Lucifer** or *Son of the Morning and the Dawn*, an angelic appellation of perfection and divine power:

How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High. (Isaiah 14:12, NIV)

It is clear in each one of these passages that Satan imbibed evil as demonic experience within his psychic-spiritual being which had a certain perfected order when he was first created. However, he made a free choice to give himself over to evil and apparently he made that choice while standing as the supposed guardian of Adam and Eve in the “garden of God,” where reflectively we can look back to Genesis to see that Satan rather than being the spiritual overseer of the Garden of God of man (as he was assigned to be) he turned and made himself a deceiver and in the *beginning of creation a murderer and the Father of lies* according to Jesus Christ, for his object was the death of Adam as progenitor of God’s divinity made in his image within the realm of ontological and existential being by using deceit and appealing to human passion and pride. He lied to Eve in Genesis 3:4-5 and said: “*You will not surely die,*” . . . *For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*” Here we need to pause for a moment and look at the Egyptian cosmological original to ascertain that Satan or Set (the *god of evil* represented in the

Egyptian hieroglyphics by the *Okapi* sacred animal  in various names as  , *Setesh*, and/or , is in fact not *Evil incarnate* but merely **ITs** Chief acolyte and devotee as is his “red fiends” or “red ones” , the *Tesheru*, the wicked gods or red devils associated with Set in his schemes and aims opposed to the creative advance of God’s *Good Creation*. According to E. A. Wallis Budge the West African “evil spirit” “Sasabonsum is a monster of human shape and red colour, and lives

either in or upon red earth; he is cruel and malevolent, and lives as far as possible upon human beings. His attributes are those of the Egyptian god Set and his “red fiends,” and both he and Set were regarded as the makers of earthquakes, hurricanes, tempests, storms, and destruction and disorder of every kind.”³⁸⁰]. Hill (2010) describes the nature of Set who has various powers of destruction as seen in the story of Job, however, he affirms that Set was not always thought of as *Evil* in Egyptian cosmology as the Hebrew Bible affirms. Hills states:

Set (Seth, Setekh, Sut, Sutekh, Sety) was one of the most ancient of the Egyptian gods and the focus of worship since the Predynastic Period. As part of the Ennead of Heliopolis he was the son of Nut and Geb and the brother of Osiris, Horus the elder, Isis and Nephthys. He was a storm god associated with strange and frightening events such as eclipses, thunderstorms and earthquakes. He also represented the desert and, by extension, the foreign lands beyond the desert. His glyph appears in the Egyptian words for "turmoil", "confusion", "illness", "storm" and "rage". He was considered to be very strong but dangerous, and strange. However, he was not always considered to be an evil being. **Set was a friend of the dead, helping them to ascend to heaven on his ladder**, and he protected the life-giving oases of the desert, and was at times a powerful ally to the pharaoh and even the sun god Ra. (Hill, Ancient Egypt Online, 2010).

From Hill’s comments note the powers of Set (i.e. to bring about eclipses, thunderstorms, and earthquakes) the correspondence with the powers of the *ha-satan* in the Book of Job we have already discussed at length. At one time in Egyptian history Setwas looked on favorably by the Egyptians because he once used the same powers we associate with *Evil* to benefit mankind as seen in this pictograph where he as the twin god with Horus is suppressing (double hands down just like Horus)

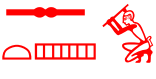


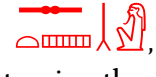
over the head of the Trinity of Evil represented by the three headed serpent  on each side of the two serpent gods associated with destruction in God’s *Good Creation*. Nevertheless, note Set’s lordship and association with the desert and the frightening imagery of “turmoil”, “confusion”, “illness”, “storm”, and “rage.” To the Egyptian emotive psychic mind his power would come to signify horror and evil. You can see this horror and fear displayed by the Pharaoh and his officials when Moses asked permission to go out into the desert and pray to their “god.” In the Egyptian mind this could be none other than Set which portended disaster for the Egyptians that in fact (for them) became a reality with the ten plagues that Moses’ “god” unleashed on the Egyptian people. The Ancient Egyptians made a clear distinction between *Evil* as an autocephalous primordial spiritual being and the created angel who became the *god of* (“belonging to”, “possessed by”) *Evil* which is Satan. The word used for *Evil* in

Egyptian hieroglyphics is  *Setekh* or *Setesh*. This is the *God Evil* and not the *god of Evil* as with Satan. This **God Evil** has no discernable beginning or end, which suggests the possibility that this “God of Evil” could be “coeval” with the “God of All Goodness.” We know God created *Satan-El* as a perfect angel so we know his beginning and who created him. However, the *God of Evil*’s primordial and autocephalous in character and nature. You can only know the nature and demonic character of this *God of Evil* by examining the nature of IT’s Chief acolyte and devotee Satan who is described as

³⁸⁰ E. A. Wallis Budge. *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., Vol. 1, 1973), p. 372.

the *god of Evil*. The Egyptians call Satan in the hieroglyphics as **Set** in three forms of transformation:

(1) , **Set** who has chosen to become *khefti*, the enemy of God, the one who is willing to murder his own soul signified by the determinative of a man putting an axe through his own head in order to participate fully in the demonic experience of slaughter and homicide;

(2) , **Set** who is in repose (i.e. satisfied) with the decision to be *god of Evil* with the aim of turning the moral order of God upside down. We know this because **Set** sits in repose

before one of the four pillars of Heaven that is upside down  which hieroglyphic means “calamity”, and “disaster”. Upright this hieroglyphic signifies (with the other three upright pillars of Heaven in

the hieroglyphic  holding up the sky) the foundation of God’s moral order representing “morality”, “justice”, “righteousness” (i.e. right thinking), and “holiness”, and

(3), , **Set** fully embodied as the *god of Evil* represented by the fact that the hieroglyphic is the African headdress worn by Satan on his head to signify his total commitment to the spiritual

essence or soul of the *God Evil* represented by the hieroglyph  (i.e. the true face of Evil) a red being with a *forked tail* that can spear *both* the body and the soul of the human person or any sentient being at one and the same time. Satan gives a subtle hint as to his understanding of God’s nature in terms of the coincidence of opposites where the nature of God encompasses both good and evil, but fails to reveal the nature of the death Adam would suffer obtaining the knowledge of good and evil without the associated perfected divinity that would allow one to expiate evil or demonic experience from one’s being. Adam as representative of the human person had not quite begun his psychic-spiritual journey in process toward the beauty of that perfection that Whitehead suggests is the aim of creativity. Whitehead suggests that this is a cosmic/spiritual journey that will never end because if it did then as a stable perfection the good and the beautiful would tend toward evil. This may have been the objective of Satan within the Garden of God to cause the *arrested development* of *ha-Adam* (“the Man”, see Genesis 5:1-2) from enjoying the concrescence of the good and the beautiful which is the object of deiform transformation within the process of creativity. The psychic-spiritual journey begins in the life of the Osirian traveler while on Earth, according to the Egyptian original, and is completed or brought to consummation after death, a process of continued salvation anticipated in the theodicy of John Hick, who according to Joseph F. Kelly, professor of religious studies at John Carroll University:

[Hicks] believes in universal salvation, so that if God cannot attract individuals in this life, then the process will continue in a postmortem existence until God has won all intelligent creatures to the good. This is not a variation on purgatory. Hick argues not for postmortem restitution for earthly sins but for a continuing process that was uncompleted in earthly life.³⁸¹

The Osirian traveler or interior traveler (as is given expression by Teresa of Avila) enjoys continued existence beyond death and still has the hope of salvation. For Hicks this is a continuous postmortem journey of salvation, while Teresa of Avila has this psychic-spiritual journey completed in

³⁸¹ Joseph F. Kelly, *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition: From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2002), 223.

community with the Trinity and consummated in the *Seventh Dwelling Place* of the emotive psychic mind on this side of eternity. For Teresa of Avila it is a journey of the emotive psychic mind of the human person within the existential context of the contingencies of time and place. Teresa's *Seventh Dwelling Place* of the soul would merely be the **Heptamosin** the Egyptian original turned on its head as the emotive psychic dwelling place of the god **Sut** or **Set** or **Satan** before the fall who failed as the proprietor of the seven stars to keep proper time within the context of eternity. **Set** then becomes the progenitor of chaos read as disorder and disaster in the heavens (already mentioned above in our

discussion of the Four Upsidedown Pillars of Heaven  rather than pillars upholding  the Heavens). When you transfer this notion as analogous to the interior psychic-spiritual journey of the human soul IT represents a *disordered soul* that finally finds peace. God casts out all evil and demonic experience from the mind by increasing Christological experience so that the human person finally finds peace in Communitarian union with the Trinity in this final resting place of the soul or emotive psychic mind. Hicks and Teresa in my view are merely giving two sides of the same emotive psychic journey of the soul in its struggle with *Evil* and *demonic experience*. Teresa describes this emotive psychic journey *on this side of eternity* that is called in the Egyptian original the **Earth of Time** and Hicks describes this journey on the other side of eternity which is called **Earth of Eternity** in the *Egyptian Original*.

I will attempt here to fully present this notion of two halves of the interior journey of the soul (i.e. the emotive psychic mind) from the Egyptian original with text and pictorial illustration of this hypothesis. But first I need to present Teresa of Avila's view of the interior journey and struggle evil and demonic experience more fully since her view has existential implications for how *Evil* works within the psychic-spiritual capacity and condition of the human person in our contemporary existence while on this side of Eternity. Hicks view about postmortem universal salvation while interesting and is supported in part (absent the notion of the necessity universal salvation as God's *end came* in the struggle to overcome Evil) has already been explained in this work. We have not yet fully contrasted Hick's understanding the *Irenaean Theodicy* with the Egyptian Original to show good and evil has ontological qualities, purpose advanced against the human person beyond the vale of this present life. In this contrast we shall demonstrate God's *end game* in the struggle against Evil modifying Hick's view with the Egyptian Original focused on the post-modern journey of the *Osirian Traveler*. Here, however, we must deal with the now of the ontological journey which has existential implications for the question "What is Evil?" and perhaps what may be done about it now as we gain a better understanding.



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE STRUGGLE WITH EVIL IN TERESA OF AVILA'S "FOURTH DWELLING PLACE"



In the "Fourth Dwelling" place of the soul in Teresa of Avila's work *The Interior Castle* (A.D. 1577) makes a curious statement that is easy to pass over, but I have noticed this characterization of the interior journey of the soul or mind from the Egyptian Original textual tradition makes clear what Teresa is talking about as the interior traveler of the soul seeks God. She presents a psychic-spiritual struggle of the mind or soul and there are dark passages in the corridors of this and other dwelling places in the castle (i.e. emotive psychic mind) that seek to prevent the concrescence of union between the psychic-spiritual traveler and God. That is in fact why the journey and the entry into each interior dwelling is a matter of opening and enlarging the heart in preparation to receive God's free grace.

Years ago, in writing my original MA thesis on this topic I experienced a psychic-spiritual struggle of the mind/soul in dealing with my struggle with institutional powers determined that I would not complete my graduate degrees. The spiritual struggle I had could have contributed to my physical struggle with cancer which happened in the interval of time the events took place. I place the narrative of this struggle in a note below because it is relevant to this topic to show the struggle with dark principalities and powers can result in psychosomatic damage (i.e. *a physical illness or other condition caused or aggravated by a mental factor such as internal conflict or stress*) to the those who resist its power and demand that IT be worshipped.³⁸²

³⁸² There is a sad human story behind my original research on Teresa of Avila's "Fourth Dwelling Place." My original research that led to this project was my Master of Theology thesis at Xavier University entitled *What is Evil? Implications for the Doctrine of God, the Human Person, and the Problem of Evil* (2007). It literally took years beyond the traditional two years for me to get my MATHdegree in 2007. I had successfully finished all my course work by Fall of 2003/2004 with a cumulative GPA of 3.68 and my thesis should not have taken more than another year. Rather it took three years after to find a Xavier graduate school professor willing to supervise my MA thesis. Most "for one reason or another" begged out. I literally went through five theology professors (two white female, two white males and one black male) trying to finish my thesis in order to earn the final credits to graduate. The first female professor was my teacher in the course Gospel of Mark. She did me the courtesy of at least reading my entire manuscript but came up with *her* writing plan that was really (in my mind a *re-writing* plan) that would have added at least three more chapters and turned my thesis into a work on comparative religions. She suggested that my thesis was not balanced because it did not take into consideration other religious perspectives on the topic even though it was the western protestant view on the subject that was predominate. As I devolved from this situation my query and search became more pathetic and less academic in nature. The next request made to a white female professor was the strangest of all. I personally went to this professor office and requested that she consider supervising my work. She never answered me and while she was sitting at her desk took out a box of tissue and began crying. This meeting was so weird that I just left without saying another word. Even to this very day I had no idea what that was all about. I was entirely discouraged at this point and so at the beginning of the next fall semester I began to try again. This time I went to a white male professor that I believed taught the Doctrine

of Man (a course I had taken). Actually he agreed to supervise my work but I was later disappointed when he called me in and told me he was not qualified to supervise my work because after reading my manuscript he found it had too much "Egyptian stuff" in it, which he was not familiar with and in addition to that he did not want me to include any interpretation and or analysis of Teresa of Avila in my thesis because it was not relevant to my thesis and it personally disturbed him that I would choose a Catholic saint as one of the subjects in support of my claims. I sensed some religious bias in his stated reasons for not wanting to go forward with my supervision since at the time I was Protestant and African-American Baptist. I had just about enough at this point and went to the graduate theological department to talk with the chairman of the department at the time. I detailed my frustrations at not being able to graduate because I could not find a supervisor willing to help me and therefore could not submit my thesis credit needed to graduate. I made no claim about racial or even religious bias, but the chairman assigned me a black male supervisor that had been newly hired to Xavier to teach some courses in black theology which at the time and would give the university a better look since they were courting more black students. I had actually taken one of his classes and made a class presentation on James Brown and how some of his music played into the rhetorical narrative of black theology and black pride cultural ethos, based on one of his songs "Say it Loud-I'm Black and I'm Proud" published in 1968 right at the beginning of the black power and black theology movement. I remember this black professor for some reason being taken aback when I played part of this song in class as part of my presentation, but I was received well by the students (mostly black). But now herein his office we were forced together because no white professor would supervise my work. I was sure that this time I would get someone who would be empathic with my situation being denied graduation for a number of years for no good apparent reason. He was after all a graduate student of Union Theological Seminary working on his doctorate and had studied under James Cone who was the academic father of the black theology movement. I was mesmerized by this fortunate circumstance that would allow my work to be examined fairly and on top of that benefit from his insight and research into black theology from one of the premier theological seminaries in the United States and a student directly taught by James Cone. I was in for a shock. In our first and last meeting he began criticizing my style of writing that had nothing to do with the content of my thesis. He went on and on about one redundant phrase I used which he said right out annoyed him. He went on and on about this one phrase until I began to understand that he was not a bit interested in the content of my work. It was then I remember that he had expressed some facial annoyance during my James Brown black power/black theology presentation in his class about three or four semesters of so ago. The meeting got so heated that I knew his supervision of my work would not end successfully. Well, that ended that for another whole academic year. By this time I had used my Master of Divinity Degree to begin doctoral work (D.Min) in Chicago in the ACTS program (i.e. *Association of Consortium of Theological Schools*, headquarter at the **Lutheran Theological Seminary**, which included my school **Northern Baptist Theological Seminary**). In 2006 I was diagnosed with cancer (the type of which I will not mention here except to say it was deadly and if not for God I would likely been dead within a year). There were some who said that I should postpone my doctoral work and start again after my treatment. But I doubled down (like a fool some would say) and not only refused treatment until I finished my doctoral thesis but went back to Xavier and successfully found a white Jesuit S.J., Father Joseph Bracken, who was a recognized scholar in the field of Process Theology and who in the first place had inspired me to write a thesis on the topic of "What is Evil" after I had earlier taken his class on "The Problem of Evil" using the primary work of Joseph F. Kelly, *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition: From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics* (1989). Finally, God blessed me. God takes care of babies and fools and since I was not a baby the other appellation applies. Father Bracken was so gracious, and he shepherded me through the writing and research to produce something worthy of the name MATH Thesis that is now bound and catalogued in Xavier Universities Library. He told me from the beginning that he was going to help me produce a work I could be proud to defend before himself and two other professors. I was successful at my defense achieving a score of A minus, the minus because I was a little too defensive in the oral exam. This was likely because one of the examiners turned out to be one of the white female professors that tried to change the direction and content of my work. I discovered what that was about in the oral exam and it had more to do with a tragic personal experience in her life than my thesis. "What is Evil" was too stark and real for her to deal with as my supervisor. It had to do with a suicide in her family of which the Catholic faith has in the past made some doctrinal statement about the destination for persons who commit this "sin". I finally understood why she wanted to move my thesis away from my topic on Evil that I was bound and determined to drill down to get to the answers that St. Augustine and others had left unanswered. Finally, I got both my first doctorate and at long last my Master Theology degree in the same year (2007). Now I submitted to the ordeal of cancer treatment which was successful and here in 2022 I count myself blessed. One legacy I have carried from my original thesis to this project based on my experience with human institutions as creatures of the IT is how evil comes in all forms even seemingly benign ones; and how they can

William Stringfellow also reports in his writing that such a thing happened to him. With his book *A Second Birthday* (1970), an autobiographical book concerning his struggle against a rare and nearly fatal illness. His overall work is acclaimed to be that of “an American C. S. Lewis.” He wrote this book after seven years struggling as a lawyer and activist on behalf of African-Americans and Puerto Ricans in Harlem, New York. In this work he tells the story of a puzzling illness, the precipitous decline of his health, his brush with death, surgery, and recuperation that suggest Christianity avoids a theology of pain and suffering (has no phenomenology of suffering in connection with a theology of evil). Stringfellow states in the chapter “Ordeal”:

Given the dignity of the mystery of pain, it is very surprising that so little has been uttered, since Job himself, concerning the theology of pain. American religiosity (as distinguished from biblical faith or theology), meanwhile, remains so hapless and absurd that, generally, it denies the reality of pain or else treats pain as a punishment for immorality. It is such religious attitudes about pain that explain the profound, and primitive, indifference of institutional religion in America to human suffering occasioned by social injustice.

One way to describe Avila’s psychic journey of the mind is “Ordeal” that describes Stringfellow’s experiences; however separated from any apparent exterior phenomenon of oppression or threat (e.g. such as a struggle with institutional creatures for social justice) that would induce the traveler to begin psychic-spiritual interior journey of the mind leading to some kind of psychosomatic damage for refusing to do obeisance to the IT represented by the institutional creature made in ITs image. Avila’s notion of the enlargement of the heart is like the Egyptian original and perhaps are mystical fragments from this original that have been shared down through the ages among mystics, and that the transmission might have been possible since Spain at the time of Teresa was still living in the intellectual afterglow of the former Moorish occupation that lasted nearly 800 years from A.D. 711 to A.D. 1492. These Moors transmitted what they knew of the learning of the Greek textual tradition which contained much of the intellectual debris coming from their contact with Egypt.

harm you through their servants, ministers, and other acolytes, sometime with tragic personal illness to boot, which all seems like an attack from dark principalities and powers (for some reason) to try and stop you from achieving one’s life goals. That feeling of mine is summed up in a phrase that I attached to my thesis and this work:

“I have seen the face of evil, and lived!”

This is where I began to understand that the struggle against Evil on God’s *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* within God’s *Good Creation* is just as much of a psychic one as anything else within the inner space of the human person dealing with physical and emotive phenomenon on that spiritual highway, e.g. where institutional creatures suppress individual descent from without and within by dismissing complaints, defensive measures to protect their own agents and acolytes even when they are clearly in the wrong, and such measures as turning the complaint upon its head against a person daring to Speak Truth to Power counter-claiming that the person has a personal vendetta or is public pest. It is one thing these institutional creatures will never do and that is apologized for anything they do and to anyone they do it too. They will stand stone face and mum in their own self-righteousness and express no humility and remorse whatever because to do so (they think) is to diminish their supposed image and “integrity” and it at the least implies that they are “guilty as hell.” My own experience with institutional creatures and IT(s) moves to defend IT(s) honor, mission, purpose and whatever necessary is why I now know that my research and inclusion of Teresa of Avila’s work is essential to my original thesis and current project despite the protestations and objections of one of Xavier graduate professors who felt offended that I would dare write about and subject; a beloved Catholic Saint to examination in an academic paper, of all things by a black theological student, who from his perspective has not intellectual right to delve into that sacred tradition.

Yet this cannot be known for certain if there was a direct link at least with the popular understanding of the interior journey of the Egyptian Osirian traveler as they pass through dangerous caverns of the psychic-spiritual inner-space of the mind. From Teresa's perspective one must not enter the fourth dwelling place without the grace of God, nor should one linger too long as there are temptations of the mind that she calls poisonous creatures that are apt to enter in. She states:

Poisonous creatures rarely enter these dwelling places. If they enter they do no harm; rather, they are the occasion of gain. I hold that the situation is much better in this stage of prayer when these creatures do enter and wage war, for the devil could deceive one with respect to the spiritual delights given by God if there were no temptations, and do much more harm when temptations are felt.³⁸³

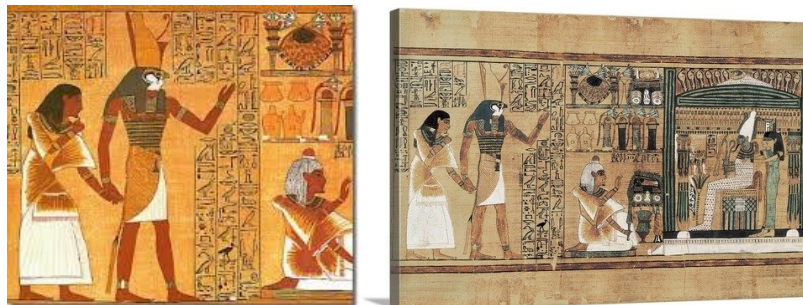
Within the Egyptian religious textual tradition certain works are still extant that describe the interior psychic-spiritual journey of the Osirian traveler who is seeking redemption from God. In this case God would be called *Osiris-Ratheir* Supreme Being. The primary text that describes this psychic-spiritual journey is called (incorrectly) by scholars in Egyptology the *Book of the Dead*. The *Medu*

Neter or Egyptian hieroglyphic name , **Per-em-Heru**. This ancient African text carries a different view than that conjured in the Western mind that once a living being is dead it is dead indeed (i.e. non-existence, non-being, etc.). *Per-em-Heru* (meaning "Coming forth into the Day or into the Light") refers to the Osirian traveler who has come out of his earthly home *for the last time*

(signified by the door of the house situated so that the Osirian traveler [who is walking ] makes

a *left turn* toward the West  [the *Land of the Dead*] going toward the *Earth of Eternity* rather than

coming from the South  from the *Land of the Gods* and making a *right turn* signifying being born into the *Earth of Time*). After this *left turn* (or what I will later call *the U-turn of death*) the Osirian traveler is led by the **Horus-Christ** through the *Valley of the Shadow of Death* (were the fiends lay waiting to devour his soul) into the Light of Life toward his Lord Osiris-Ra, who sits waiting on the Great White Throne of Judgment where the Osirian traveler must give an account of his stewardship in the *Earth of Time*.



³⁸³ Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 68.



The Horus-Christ leading the male Osirian traveler toward the Judgment Throne of Osiris (above) and the female Osirian traveler is led toward the Judgment Throne of the Sun god, Ra.

The Western mind has autocratic propensity to name things however they want but naming the **Per-em-Heru** the *Book of the Dead* a misnomer because this psychic-spiritual journey for the Osirian traveler does not just take place *after death* but also in the interiority of the emotive psychic journey (as suggested by Theresa of Avila) while yet in the land of the living. This includes (if they are financially well off) preparation of the tomb and the papyrus writings that have the *Forty-two Negatives Confessions* in the *Per-em-Heru* (Chapter 25 being the most important) where the Osirian traveler can say and or confess before Osiris that “I have given water to the thirsty, food to the hungry and a boat to the shipwrecked”). This final step completes the spiritual preparation for the journey before death in the Earth of Time. This is why the texts were written for study, meditation and contemplation so that the utterances or prayers needed could be remembered and spoken. The Osirian traveler believed there was life after death as signified by their “Bible” calling it “Coming forth into the Day” and that in this new life there was real danger and pain that was *really real* if they mistakenly got off the pathway that led to life and ended up in the caverns of fiends or demons. This is one of the reasons that the Osirian traveler (as we will see) was greatly concerned that their memory of what they had learn would not be taken away from them as they transversed the dark caverns occupied by fiends as they crossed from this vale of life into the next. So, there were utterances as well to fight against a condition we will call here **psychic-spiritual amnesia**. This condition would leave the Osirian traveler helpless against the fiends or poisonous creatures one would find lurking there. Later in this project we will explain from the Egyptian texts how the ancient African authors of these understood this psychic-spiritual condition within time and eternity.

Suffice it to say, the Egyptians regarded *psychic-spiritual amnesia* as one of the great evils impacting human nature as it entered the spiritual realms of immortality. The whole goal of the utterances of the so-called *Book of the Dead* was to avoid the *second death* [the first being the death of the body/mind and the second being the death of the rational mind or soul being cast into the *Lake of Fire*] mentioned in Revelation 20:14. One way evil or the agents of evil accomplished this is causing the Osirian traveler going from death to life eternal to *forget his way or path* so that he or she cannot reach port safely.

The impact of going through the portal of death from the Earth of Time to the Earth of Eternity apparently has an impact on the emotive psychic mind of the human person which is the reason the Osirian traveler needs the assistance of the Horus-Christ to travel through the Valley of the Shadow of Death where this forgetfulness occurs a condition we have called *psychic-genetic-spiritual amnesia*. The Egyptians emphasized the effect of *Evil* on the psychic-spiritual condition of the human person or spiritual amnesia after their death; but we will demonstrate later in this project

the plausibility that as a special order of spiritual beings clothed in flesh, that is, having a composite physical-spiritual nature that human persons experience psychic-spiritual amnesia both at birth and at death, at both the entry into this life and exiting from this life into our postmortem existence. And further we are given a spiritual genetic encoding prior to birth in the *Earth of Eternity* (the place where we came from and to which we must return). Prior our arrival to this temporal existence God told us what our mission would be in the *Earth of Time*. Once we are here in the *Earth of Time* the only way to recover the memory of that mission or what we came here to do is through our struggle with *Evil* where we must endure ITs presence in our particular *life-world* and *lived-experience*. We pass through a number of vales that feels something like *déjà vu*, the French term for “already lived”, that is, “and intense, but false, feeling of having already lived through” the present situation, event, circumstance, or experience. I do not like applying the word false to this concept because in our view what we are experiencing (and I have felt this way and mark the actual time) is a feeling of dread or *evil foreboding* as we “recollect” the memory of what God whispered in our ear prior to our being born into the Earth of Time. We will explain all of this later. Whiledark powers or agents of *Evil* are not the cause of this psychic-spiritual condition on the Superhighway of God located spiritually, cosmically, and ontologically within the *Earth of Time*; yet *Evil* and/or its acolytes and devotees attempt to forestall theconcrecenceof God’s *encoded plan oflife* impacting our *lived-experience*. The aim is to prevent the Osirian traveler from benefiting from God’s divine deiform plan.

This whole idea is not as far-fetched as it might seem when considered as an isolated thought because both modern and ancient writers have put forth similar notions for the spiritual anthropology of the human person. I will discuss the views of the ancient Greek writers, especially Plato later with his philosophy of *recollection* and its relationship to the immortality of the soul. Now however we want to examine the remarkable views of a modern Christian writer Richard Nelson Bolles, a Christian Career Counselor found in the “Epilogue” of his book *What Color is Your Parachute?* (1996). Bolles describes our human anthropology as both physical and spiritual and talks about what effect the birth and fusion of what composite human-spiritual nature has on the memory or recollection of the human person in terms of their purpose and mission in life. He states:

We are not some kind of eternal, pre-existent *being*. We are *creatures*, who once did not exist, and then came into Being, and continue to have our Being, only at the will of our great Creator. But as creatures we are both body and soul; and although we know our body was created in our mother’s womb, our soul’s origin is a great mystery. Where it came from, at what moment the Lord created it, is something we cannot know. it is not unreasonable to suppose, however, that the great God created our *soul* before it entered our body, and in that sense we did indeed stand before God before we were born In light of this larger view of our creatureliness, we can see that *religion* or *faith* is not a question of whether or not we choose to . . . “have a relationship with God.” Looking at our life in a larger context than just our life here on Earth, it becomes apparent that some sort of relationship with God is a given for us, about which we have absolutely no choice. God and we *were and are* related, during the time of our soul’s existence before our birth and in the time of our soul’s continued existence after our death. . . . One of the corollaries of all this is that by the very act of being born into a human body, it is inevitable that we undergo a kind of *amnesia* — an amnesia which typically embraces not only our nine months in the womb, our baby years, and almost one third of each day (sleeping), but more importantly any memory of our origin or our destiny. We wander on Earth as a amnesia victim. To seek after Faith, therefore, is to seek to climb back out of that amnesia. Religion or faith is *the hard reclaiming of knowledge we once*

knew as a certainty.³⁸⁴

We will show that the Egyptians well understood this human-spiritual anthropology but put emphasis not on what happened to the psychic-spiritual traveler before they were born and as they came into this world but what happened to them while here and immediately on their departure from this world. It is implicit in the Egyptian understanding of the human-spiritual nature that psychic-spiritual amnesia was the condition of the human person both on coming into the world, that is making a “right turn”  from the Land of the God's and when they left this world making a “left turn”  back into the Earth of Eternity (i.e., Paradise or Hell). It is reasonable to suppose that it was from the former understanding that the Egyptians gained knowledge of the latter. It otherwise would not make sense how they obtained this knowledge about what would happen to them after death.

However, they put the emphasis on the departure of the Osirian traveler (that final left turn) as a practical application of the pre-understanding of the human-spiritual nature in light of the dangers they faced, which is great evil by losing their way back to God. Not remembering the way back to God or how to arrive at the Judgment Hall of Osiris would represent a second “living” death, perhaps like Alzheimer victims experience today that engender fear, anxiety, and loneliness, and maybe even terror. Egyptians prepared in this life (through study of the texts and prayer) how to make the proper utterances and have the attitude and aptitude of mind to complete the journey to the Judgment Osiris or Osiris-Ra, the God of the Dead.

The real title of the so-called Egyptian *Book of the Dead* is , *Pert-em-Hru*, variously translated as “Coming Forth Into the Day” as we have already shown. However, here we give another interpretation of its meaning for the Osirian traveler. When you know that the *meduneter* or hieroglyphic symbol  *Per* means “house,” that is, the “earthly house” or “spiritual dwelling place” where resides the personality of the Osirian traveler, and that  is the symbol for “walking feet,” which at last arrives at the , or **Het** the architectural symbol for “divine house” or “enclosure” or “dwelling place” encompassed in the word **Hru**[Horus] as it is associated with  the symbol for “sun” or “time and eternity.” One then can surmise that the Egyptian priests who wrote this text were trying to get the Osirian interior traveler to use the *meduneter* as a way of visualizing their psychic-spiritual journey from one dwelling place to another until they reach safe port at the Judgment Hall of God, that is, from the earthly dwelling place of the body and mind where the psychic-spiritual personality is housed to that eternal home where the Horus-Christ lives.

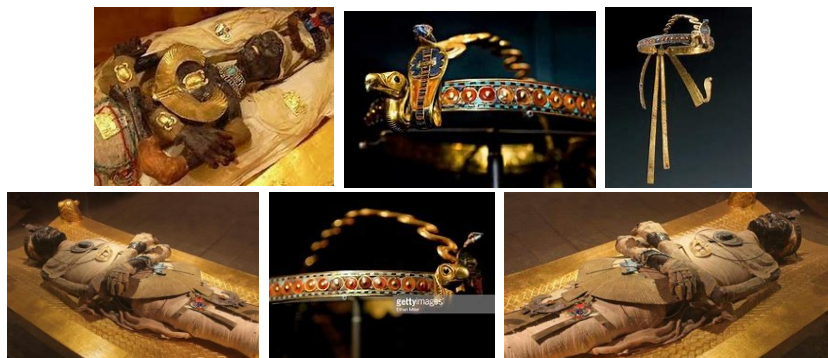
However, there are fiends, , in the various dwelling places, symbolized by a man who is so psychotic and dedicated to demonic experience described as crushing his own head with an ax, e.g. representing destruction of the psychic personality. We note if they are willing to do that to oneself then doing that to others becomes no problem. The Osirian traveler will encounter these fiends in various guises along the way and will need certain mystic utterances or prayers taught by their god

³⁸⁴ Richard Nelson Bolles, *What Color is Your Parachute* (Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, 1996), pp. 451-452.

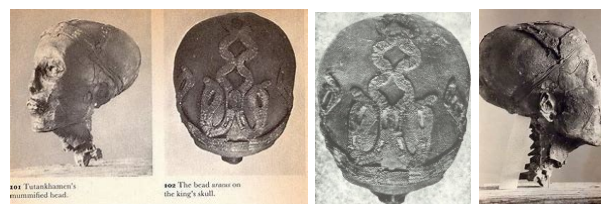
Horus, who in the textual tradition leads the Osirian traveler by the hand from one dangerous dwelling place of the mind to the other until they reach port or home in the presence of God. To help with “recollection” of the Words of Power the Egyptian mummies were buried with the Pert-em-Hru scrolls between their legs and inside their coffins were inscribed the hieroglyphic texts reminding them of what words of power to use at every juncture of their journey. These are called the coffin texts.



There is also speculation that that some Egyptian mummies of wealth and power wore psychic diadem's not to assert royalty but as “protection” against the emotive, mental and psychic onslaught of fiends and demons as they passed through one gate after another.



The “Twin Serpent” casing of fine linen covering the cranium of Tut-Ankh-Amon suggest the same desire on the part of the Ancient Egyptians to to protect the mind of the Osirian Traveler from psychic attacks from fiends and demons as they journeyed to arrive at the Great Judgment Throne of Osiris-Ra. The Egyptian mortuary practice and procedures of course removed the brain so it was the psychic-mind of the soul of the mummy that was the object of their concern.



Twin Serpents: "The casing of fine linen covering the cranium of Tut-Ankh-Amon's mummy. Embroidered gold beads and semiprecious stones delineate the double uraeus, which indicates the scissure between the two hemispheres of the brain (Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amon*, II, PLXXXII). The single royal uraeus appears on the diadem and on the crown.

“Attested as early as the Old Kingdom, the cap crown is most commonly associated with the [Dynasty 25](#) Kushite kings, who are frequently depicted wearing the crown with two uraei.^[11] In that era, the crown was referred to as a *sdn*.^[12] The remnants of what appears to be a cap crown (JE 62699) were found on the [mummy](#) of [Tutankhamun](#).^[13] Tutankhamun's crown consisted of a band of gold wrapped around the king's temples that secured a linen skullcap, which had mostly decayed by the time of the tomb's

excavation. The gold band was itself kept in place by a ribbon tied into a bow at the back of the head. Still remaining and mounted on the skullcap are four uraei made of gold beads and red and blue glass beads. In the center of each uraeus is a gold cartouche containing the name of the [Aten](#). The skullcap portion of the crown resembles, and was likely associated with, the skullcap worn by the deity [Ptah](#)."

These illustrations in the Egyptian textual tradition makes me understand that Teresa of Avila was a true mystic theologian. She had come some distance in understanding the nature of the interior journey and perhaps understood the ancient tradition that this grand metaphor of the mind was built on if not having in her possession the actual Greek popular writings themselves from which the metaphor could have been drawn. The Greeks certainly knew the oral tradition of the Egyptian original and captured it in their own popular writing and stories which were transmitted for entertainment and the idle curiosity of those who could not travel to the mysterious lands and places where these stories were re-told and popularized. Diodorus and Plutarch were two such Greek writers, but Plutarch was the most famous for his piece on *De Iside et Osiride*, that is, "Isis and Osiris," which was written by the middle of the first century after Christ and there after circulated among the nations surrounding Egypt. The late Egyptologist, E. A. Wallis Budge stated: "The fame of Osiris extended to the nations around, and it is to the hands of foreigners that we are indebted and connected, through short, narratives of his history. These, though full of misunderstandings and actual misstatements, are of considerable interest and value, . . ." ³⁸⁵ I will not overly burden this section of my project with the full hieroglyphic texts themselves but merely give the two English translations from the textual tradition that relate to the above quote from Teresa of Avila. As the Osirian traveler begins or is in the midst of their journey they make this utterance: *"Let not come near me the fiend(s) that would do harm to me, may I walk through the house of darkness, may I the feeble one clothes myself and hide . . . therefore, doing even as they."* ³⁸⁶ It is apparent (as Teresa implies) that these poisonous creatures are lurking, hiding in the caverns of the mind and heart as temptations, and where the Osirian traveler or the interior traveler in Teresa prays or makes utterance just as the Psalmist said: *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you [e.g. Horus-Christ] are with me; your rod and your staff [of power, i.e. , they comfort me." [my insertions in the text, NIV, Psalm 23:4]. And finally, the interior psychic-spiritual traveler arrives safely and declares: "I have made my way, I have traveled, I have arrived at those who live in their caverns guarding the house of Osiris, I speak to them of his power, I make them to know the fearful power of him provided with horns against Sut."* ³⁸⁷

The caverns are the dwelling places of the soul and the interior traveler who makes his or her way from one dwelling place to another speaks to those who have arrived at each stage declaring the power of God [Osiris-Ra,   ] against  Set, Sut, or Satan, the god of *Evil*. I have no doubt that Teresa of Avila herself made the psychic-spiritual journey through the caverns of the soul and was describing in *The Interior Castle* her phenomenological emotive experience and meaning of the journey for her and what she perceived as the primary characteristic, benefit and or danger in each dwelling which she reached in a series of stages of prayers [utterances] and meditations. What according to Teresa is the greatest danger in the fourth dwelling place? Her thought anticipating

³⁸⁵ E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*. Vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), pp. 1-2.

³⁸⁶ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), p. 155.

³⁸⁷ Budge, p. 163.

Whitehead by centuries the great danger of evil is *inertness*, standing still, being in “one continual state” where the interior traveler stops in this stage of prayer and meditation to contemplate the fiends or poisonous creatures which are a metaphor for the temptations of the mind brought forth by Satan in the Christian textual tradition and Set in the Egyptian textual tradition. Teresa of Avila says that:

The soul would not gain so much; at least all the things contributing to its merit would be removed, and it would be left in a habitual absorption. For when a soul is in one continual state, I don't consider it safe, nor do I think it is possible for the spirit of the Lord to be in one fixed state during this exile.³⁸⁸

This is precisely the position of Alfred North Whitehead in his understanding of evil in the context of creative novelty. He believes stable perfection or things that do not change and are not active are in fact evil noting that what is inactive or inert cannot lend itself to the concrescence of the good and beautiful, and if it is not doing that it is by default lending itself to evil and demonic experience. This reflects an old saying: “Idle hands are the Devil's workshop.” R. Maurice Barieau says of Whitehead's position that “just as perfection's are unstable, so also the realization of a given good. The ‘good life,’ Whitehead writes, is unstable: the law of fatigue is inexorable.’ As stable perfection's are merely a prelude to decadence, so also stable goodness.”³⁸⁹ Teresa evidently held that the soul this is in “one continual state” is in danger of temptation to evil because instead of going forward in the fourth dwelling place it is tempted to become involved in “habitual [self] absorption,” by reflecting too long on either one's past sins or the delights of the past sinful way of life. Teresa does not consider this habitual self-absorption in this stage of prayer and meditation or this stage of the interior journey safe. The Egyptians also feared psychic-spiritual inertness as is illustrated in one

stage of the journey of the Osirian traveler in which he or her is called  the “feeble one”, “weary one”, “weak one”, or “inert one” signified by the human person with *hands and arms down in inactivity*. Apparently, the human person (in this case the Osirian traveler) in an inert weak state of inactivity subject themselves to the temptations and terrors of the psychic-spiritual journey and they become unable to handle what is found in each dwelling place of the soul or psychic mind. So the Osirian interior traveler prays that they go into the “secret cavern” or dwelling place of the soul that they

like Osiris , the *Inert One* will have their heart revived and they will become an “equipped spirit” who shall not be “restrained” in the realm of the blessed dead.³⁹⁰ The scripture gives expression to this same notion “*Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you*” (Ephesians 5:14b, NIV).

³⁸⁸ Teresa, p. 68.

³⁸⁹ Barineau, pp. 102-103.

³⁹⁰ R. O. Faulkner, *Book of the Dead* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1993), pp. 86, 181.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE EGYPTIAN DOCTRINE OF SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION



Pharaoh Ramesses II, (Ramesses, The Great)
19th Egyptian Dynasty 1279-1212 B.C.E.

"Ramses II was a Black. May he rest in peace in his black skin for eternity"

Tribute by Dr. Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegalese Egyptologist and Scientist
Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology (1981, 1991 p. 67)



Father, Pharaoh Seti I, and Mother, Queen Tuya
(18th Egyptian Dynasty)

The Egyptian doctrine of transformation is comparable to the Christian view of the new creature in Christ, who in the struggle with evil overcomes it with good through the power of Christological experience as the Overcoming One cited in Revelation 3:21 (i.e. "the one who overcomes"). In the *Egyptian Original* the Osirian spiritualized one, that is, *spirit-man* pays homage and praise forever to Osiris, his lord and savior and makes confession through the *declaration of innocence* in chapter 125 in the *Pert-em-hru* which can be read in the *Papyrus of Ani*. These are the so-called *Negative Confessions* of the interior traveler, the words of which have to be said in the Judgment Hall of Osiris. In one of the Re's [⊖] I, that is, chapter utterances the Osirian traveler states that *"I have appeased God by [doing] his will. I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, and a boat to the shipwrecked."*³⁹¹ This utterance is in the Egyptian textual tradition an authorized version written by the Egyptian priests of the *College of Anu* no later than the middle of the sixth Egyptian dynasty, that is, by 2350 B.C.E.³⁹² This is well before the time of Abraham, 700 years before the traditional date for the time of the Exodus led by Moses, that is, around 1450 B.C.E., and of course 2,342 years before the time of Christ [8 to 4 B.C.E.]. Curiously enough this formula for innocence and justification finds its way into the New Testament on the lips of Jesus, who says:

³⁹¹ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, p. 205.

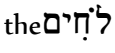
³⁹² Budge, p. xxvii.

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Matthew 25:34-36, NIV.

Once the Osirian has made the declaration of innocence in the final stage in the presence of his/her God they are declared innocent and become completely transformed as , *maa-kheru*, one who is declared "true of voice," "truth teller" and judged to be innocent and justified by God and given the "crown of innocence," or "garland of triumph", that is, , the *Stephanos* crown of righteousness (i.e. ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΣ) or "wreath of eternal blessedness" (used to crown the victor in the Greek and Roman games at the Coliseum). This same crown is given to those in Revelation 2:10 who are the *overcoming ones* and faithful unto death. This crowning is a culmination of a life that has been through a process of spiritual deiform transformation. In the Egyptian original the , the Khepera "beetle of transformation" is the creative principle of life, the pathway to God, the *Principle of Transformation* working in the psychic-spiritual personality of the Osirian, guiding them from death to life eternal, that is, luring him/her toward Osiris-Ra from the *Earth of Time* to the *Earth of Eternity* (i.e. *Amen-Ta*, the "Hidden Land"). This aspect of Egyptian cosmogony or cosmogenesis which produced the later Egyptian theological doctrine of transformation clearly shows how the Egyptians perceived and understood human destiny within the context of *Time and Eternity*. Further studies will reveal that Egyptian theologians actually wrote the  *Metcha-t Neter* or *Sacred Book of God* (i.e. books of the words of the gods) from reading *celestial history* by a method of uranographic representation, i.e. reading the *Heptonomis*, the "Seven Heavens," the original cosmic *seven dwelling places* later advanced as an explanation for the *seven dwelling places* depicting the soul of the psychic-spiritual personality by St. Theresa of Avala, whose ideas we have already presented in this project. The Egyptian theologians and doctors in fact produced a **Uni-theology** from *natural revelation* by means of this uranographic representation or geodetic symbolism in the heavens. There is a direct relationship between the *signs in the heavens via natural revelation and special revelation as the written word* (i.e. γράφη, "grapha") in the compilation of New Testament sacred scripture. The Hebrew Bible demonstrates this same connection found in the Egyptian Original:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth words; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their sound is not heard. Their words go out into all the earth, their voice to the ends of the world. Psalms 19:1-4.

The genius of the Egyptians is that they were the first to *read the heavens*, then give expression to that *reading* via uranographic representation with the use of a special sacred language, *meduneter*, the hieroglyphics. Finally, they turned this *natural revelation* using exegetical tools of the imagination into *special revelation*, i.e. the written word of God or *sacred texts*. From here, as some scholars like the late Gerald Massey held, they created a complete systematic theology of God which was later adopted and transmuted by Moses into the Hebrew scriptures. It is upon this Egyptian textual

tradition Judaism, Christianity and Islam are based.³⁹³ From the perspective of the Egyptians there was no Word given "by the inspiration of God" *before the First Time*³⁹⁴, that is, before , *Sep-Tepi*, meaning the time when men first became self-conscious spiritual beings clothed in flesh. And even before then to the period of the creation of the celestial heavens and the creation of the  *elohim*, the "gods" by the *Un-Created* Eternal God of Heaven, the period of which Genesis 1:1 gives only a hint: "In the *beginning* God created the *heavens* and the earth." The story of the creation of the heavens and heavenly creatures such as Angels is not given in Genesis. Only the story of the creation of the earth is given and only incidentally is any celestial history revealed because it cannot be explained in purely temporal terms. This knowledge was (according to the Egyptians) first vouchsafed to them by the *Finger of God* (i.e. via divine revelation or Inspiration) coming by means of uranographic representation in celestial heavens. From there the Egyptians wrote down the *Celestial History* in *Medu Neter* language and fashioned the final eschatology and theology of the Osirian faith. It was an eschatology and theology of salvation through time and eternity for humans as followers of Osiris. Thus the Egyptian religion is depicted as the *original religion* (i.e. the *Old Time Religion*) described and advanced within the context of time and eternity. If one accepted this perspective the Egyptian religion would be the first and only "*revealed religion*." It would be the religion that began the tradition and doctrinal transmission that stands behind the "religion of the book", e.g. the Bible and the Qur'an.

Along with celestial history and the psychic-spiritual understanding of time and eternity the Egyptians also created the first calendrical time-dated system to give expression to this religious cosmology. I have reproduced this calendrical system elsewhere under the title the *Nu African Calendar* and so will not reproduce it for this work because it lies outside *per se* our concern to give an ontological understanding of *Evil* in terms of the Egyptian conception of time, even though their calendrical system is wedded to their notions of the conjunction of time and eternity. However, we have already discussed in some detail this conjunction of time and eternity that we call *Jacob's Ladder*, because it demonstrated from the Egyptian original how all of the created and un-created spiritual actors of the universe are engaged in the ontological struggle between good and evil on the Superhighway of God.

³⁹³ Gerald Massey, *A Book of the Beginnings* Vol. II (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1881, 1995), pp. 176-179.

³⁹⁴ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1996), 92-93.

CHAPTER TWENTY

EGYPTIAN-HEBREW SACRED TEXTUAL TRADITIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

The Egyptians never relied on just one method or one source for arriving at the spiritual crossroads of *time and eternity* and even gave impetus to the understanding of this celestial phenomenon and its meaning through the special revelation of sacred books long before the writing of the Hebrew scriptures, which γράφα, that is, *grapha* often serves to explicate the African understanding of God through Hebrew experiential phenomena of divinity, (e.g. experience of the Holy during the liberation of the Exodus period, the burning bush, etc.). The Egyptians would not disparage the use of knowledge of God in *any* sacred text nor will we, for despite the difficulties presented by higher criticism, canonical fiat by ecclesiastical bodies and the general exclusivist claims of Western Christianity, Judaism and Islam that currently constitute *their* scriptures (i.e. their determination of what should and should not be in the canon of Scripture) and how what is accepted should be translated (e.g. necessarily from a Western perspective, its *life-world* and *lived-experience*). *Theirs* is the *only* Word of God, which however is different from the authentic source declared by the Hebrew writer who said: “*In the past, God spoke to the fathers through the prophets at many times and in various way. At the end of these days, he has spoken to us in his Son whom he has appointed heir of all thing through whom he [had] made the ages. His Son is the radiance of his glory, the exact counterpart of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power*” (Hebrews 1:1-3a, EOB).

Therefore this project must assume because of histo-socio presuppositions Western cultural theological filters that govern *their* scriptures and translations, and interpretations; our project must presuppose a wider latitude as to what constitutes the *Oracles of God* which must in fact include the sacred books of the Jews (Hebrew Bible), Christians (including the full 81 books canon of the [EOTC] Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedo* (ተዋሕዶ) Church) and Muslim Qur’an, *and* with no hesitation whatever the sacred writings of the Egyptian people, that is, various religious, theological and cosmological text traditions (we have called here the *Egyptian Original*) so that God’s pronouncement through the Apostle Paul that “*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness*” [2 Timothy 3:16] will for the *first time* have its full meaning.

When the implications of what Paul said is widen beyond the traditional Christian canon of sacred writing, I believe there will be a Copernican revolution in theological and biblical thinking that may break through the impasse that now exists in ecumenical theological circles of understanding. What Paul said above actually has relational meaning to all works that claim their origins from *the Finger of God*, i.e. *by divine inspiration* including the sacred texts of the Egyptians. The Egyptians certainly made this claim *contra* the opinion of Siegfried Morenz in his book on the *Egyptian Religion*.³⁹⁵ The Egyptians used the precise language *Finger of God* to state that their sacred writing was *inspired directly by God*, using the strongest possible expression that their sacred writing (i.e. **Medu Neter**) was done by God Himself *needing no man as intermediary*. We already described this process above showing that the Egyptians used uranographic representation by observing the Heavens in relationship to the Earth of Time and later created a Celestial History of the gods and even later committed these cosmic observations to sacred writing. Afterwards they constructed various theological schools of thought from the sacred writing but all of this began with them being able to

³⁹⁵ Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1973), 216.

read God's Word in the Heavens.³⁹⁶ Paul in his *Letter to the Romans* affirms that all human persons have the capacity to know God in His divinity, eternal nature and power even without special revelation provided by the written Word of God, purely by means of common observation of created things and how they operate in God's *Good Creation*. Paul states:

However, the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness, because what is known of God is revealed in them, for God revealed it to them [the human person, my insertion]. Indeed, since the creation of the world, his [God's] invisible things are clearly seen. They are perceived through created things, even his everlasting power and divinity. This is so that they may be without excuse, because knowing God, they did not glorify him as God or give [him] thanks. Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless heart was darkened. (Romans 1:18-21, EOB).

However, it is obvious in all sacred writing including the Egyptian that God used men to write down His Word and so such sacred writing by definition would be regarded as *inerrant since God would not allow these men to err in writing down the inspired word that came to them from God* (according to Hebrews) *in various times and in various ways*. The above scripture *sunderstood* cannot be received by the Western Church and will shock the religious sensibilities of religious exclusivist. However, it will illuminate God-men using Egyptian terminology of the *Metu Neter* in this new age of the Spirit imbuing them with new spiritual and intellectual understanding. With this new horizon of understanding they will be able to harmonize the truth of God wherever it is found. Those understanding the *Metu Neter* will dare think for themselves [Kant] taking the risk of formulating a new theological paradigm putting trust in their Christian consciousness with total dependence on God (Schleiermacher).

Perhaps these new thinkers in every field will bend time or material reality towards God's moral and spiritual universe affecting even God's deiform new world that *shall have no end* [i.e. **heh**  "millions of years" "eternity" "endless time"] and so bring about *once again* , **Maat**, that is, balance between good and evil. In mankind's infancy at the beginning God had not intended that men should be engaged as co-belligerents with Him against Evil. Mankind's only job and role at that time was to ***"be fruitful, multiply, replenish and subdue the Earth"*** (Genesis 1:28, KJV). Men were to be conservators and co-creators in God's Good Creation taking it from its infancy to its maturity. The Egyptians (our black ancestors) understood all of this *from the beginning*. They put together concepts using hieroglyphics to give expression to these views and pass them on to posterity. For example the

hieroglyphic phrase  **qes-qes** (the first word *qes* expressed in the genitive) means *"to tie, to fetter, to bind"* followed by the second word *qes* meaning *"time, period, always, every time, time of the ancestors."* In the first word *qes* we see a man standing on the back of two giraffes pulling ropes to "constrain" them. The giraffes are representative of animals and lower living things belonging to the natural order of things; therefore we can express this idea to mean "to bring the natural order within time underconstraint, under control, *to bring cosmos out of chaos*, that is, to "subdue the Earth" by

³⁹⁶Theological textual evidence and doctrines came from ancient black theologians from the various schools of Egyptian theology, that is, **Junu Theology** [Anu, On of the Bible, Heliopolis of the Greeks], **Heliopolitan Theology** [in the Pyramid Texts], **Heliopolitan Theology** [in the Coffin Texts], **Hermopolitan Theology**, **Waset Theology**, **Sabaka Theology** [Memphite], **Theban Theology** [Thebes], or **Amarna Theology** [Aten or Sun-god worship], all **ancient black theologies**.

God's command. It was not until the Fall of Man instigated by Satan-El and the subsequent War in Heaven (Revelation 12:7-17); and after Satan-El and his angels were cast out of Heaven down to Earth that mankind was called upon to engage (as a matter of survival) in the battle between good and evil, ostensibly as God's co-billigerents in this cosmic, spiritual and temporal struggle of life and death. Again the Egyptians understood this *from the beginning* as well and they gave it expression

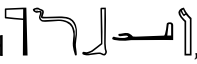
with the same word phrase **qes-qes**.  However, this apparent similar phrasing had just one important modification, which was used to describe the nature of this new level of struggle men were now being called upon to engage in. This second word *qes* meaning *time, period*, or during the *time of the black ancestors* is the same as above. However the first word or pictograph shows a man standing on a *serpent with two heads*. The man is not only standing on this terrifying creature; he is *holding them by their two heads and putting them under constraint*. We can safely say that the two-headed snake is not part of the natural order of things and that this man is struggling against a dark spiritual being in the form of a two-headed serpent, who is wreaking havoc on the Earth within the

order of time. We can then say that this double word phrase *qes-qes*  with this particular hieroglyphic pictorial expression means that *the man is struggling with spiritual evil within time*, that is, within the Earth of Time. God is now saying to mankind not only must he subdue and replenish the Earth, but now it is incumbent on him also to subdue Evil (1) on the Earth, (2) within ourselves and (3) in our human institutions. We note here that we of course not in this struggle alone but our role is co-billigerancy in a Christological struggle against the Thanatic aims of the Trinitarian Powers of Nothingness (i.e. Evil, Sin, and Death). This of course was the goal and aim of the ancient Egyptian

Pharaoh as the Horus King, , to establish harmony between time and eternity, between cosmos and chaos. The ontological and existential categories that make up *celestial history* as a collective process of being working in conjunction with one another would then fulfill the prophesy of Isaiah in our contemporary time that *"Every valley shall be raised up and every mountain and hill made low; the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it."* (Isaiah 40:4-5, NIV). Egyptian priests, prophets and scribes viewed their writings as sacred because they believed they came by means of the *Finger of God* (i.e. the *Power of God*). This phrase originated in Egyptian culture and was later borrowed by the Hebrew sacred writers. This phrase was used by both Moses and Jesus in nearly the same way and with the same meaning. The above phrase is used by the ancient Hebrews and by Jesus at least four times in scripture. It was used once by the Egyptian

Heka Masters,  (magicians) from whom Moses could hardly be distinguished being one of them. According to Flavius Josephus (37/38 – 100 C.E.), ancient Jewish writer, Moses' Osirian name was Osarseph, who was a priest of Anu (i.e. the **On** of the Bible, Greek Heliopolis = City of the Sun). "His story was recounted by the Ptolemaic Egyptian historian Manethos in his *Aegyptiaca* (first half of the 3rd century BC); Manetho's work is lost, but the 1st century AD Jewish historian Josephus quotes extensively from it." The Bible also makes it clear as well that Moses was a well-educated Egyptian priest. In the Book of Acts, it says: *"Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action."* (Acts 7:22, NIV). The Hebrew scripture makes no effort whatever to show that the "magic" of the Pharaoh's magicians was in any way qualitatively different from the same "magical" feat or feats done by Moses in terms of genuineness as seen in Exodus 8:19. Yes the texts do say that the Pharaoh's heka masters did it by their "secret arts" but regardless of the methodology

it says the result was just as real because the biblical text says that the Egyptian heka masters “did the *same things* by their secret arts.” Moses just appears to have more power than they had from a different source. Nevertheless, the Pharaoh’s magicians performed *tit for tat* everything Moses did until the last so-called plagues. The Egyptian *Heka masters* pointed out in this scripture that the power behind Moses was from the *Creator-God* Himself and therefore unbeatable. The most feared *Heka master* from the Egyptian cosmological view was one who could use “*words of power*,” that is, merely speak a word and whatever they said would happen. In respect to the power of Moses the Pharaoh’s magicians were mere junior practitioners and they finally recognized that fact by the fourth plague of gnats when they failed to produce them as Moses was able to do. They lamented “This is the *finger of God*,” meaning God’s power is behind the words and actions of Moses. Again, this phrase is used by Moses in Exodus 31:18 and Deuteronomy 9:10 declaring that the Ten Commandments were written on the stone tablets *by the finger of God*. And lastly by Jesus in Luke 11:20 where he pointed out that the evidence that the Kingdom of God had already come was his driving out demons by the *very Finger of God*, that is, by God’s Holy Spirit Power, His *Shikinah* glory and regenerating power that overcomes *all* death and *evil* and brings *shalom*, that is, *the peace of body, spirit and mind that surpasses all understanding* (Moltmann); so that we can say with the Prophet Zechariah, “*Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit says the Lord Almighty*.” “The *Finger of God*” is without doubt Egyptian in origin and has priority over its usage in the Hebrew Scriptures.

In fact, this can be seen in the comparative grammar. The *Finger of Gods* אֶצְבָּעֵי־אֱלֹהִים, *etsbaelohim* in Hebrew and , that is, *Neter tcheba* (in the plural “Two Fingers”  i.e. *tchebui*) in Egyptian. However, notice the similarity of Hebrew *etsba* to the Egyptian term *tcheba*. In addition, the Egyptian phrase has the same meaning and usage as the Hebrew except that the Egyptian usage has priority being found in their sacred texts, namely the *Pyramid Texts of Pepi* written in the Old Kingdom period (2686-2181 B.C.E.) and therefore was extant some 1430 to 730 years before the writing of the Book of Exodus where the term first occurs in Hebrew. In the *Pyramid Texts* is where Pharaoh Pepi states (while climbing *Jacob’s Ladder*, more precisely  *Maqet*, or the same , with the determinative ship mast  signifying “stand up”, which is the *Ladder* whereby Osiris ascended into Heaven) that: “*Pepi hath gone straightway into heaven by means of the two fingers of the god who is the Lord of the Ladder*.”³⁹⁷

Christians and Jews are not the only “People of the Book” or even the first “People of the Book.” This assertion is of course contrary to the view of many Western scholars that hold that the Egyptians (especially when regarded as an African people) did not have a “scriptural religion” that is based on sacred religious texts. This view is held by Siegfried Morenz in his work the *Egyptian Religion* (1973). This whole question has a bearing on whether or not the *Egyptian Original* as I have been calling the sacred textual tradition of Egypt has equal value with the sacred texts and textual traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in respect to the questions raised on the problem of evil and theodicy. For the questions raised themselves has its origin within that the Christian tradition *per se*. But does that mean Christian theology and its tradition has the answer to the problem? In this project I suggest that it does not have the complete answer because it is working with doctrinal debris from the Egyptian original without its content that could explain the basis for the Christian doctrines it holds. Some scholars like Morenz recognize the implications of this and are desperately fighting to deny

³⁹⁷ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), p. lxxi.

the Egyptian original equal status with the Christian textual tradition. They want to especially deny that the Christian textual tradition could possibly have its foundation in the Egyptian original. If this is true, then there is no need to suppose that such a tradition has any relevance in answer to the problem of evil. For Morenz, himself the Egyptian religion was merely a “cult religion” and had no sacred scriptures. He defined *scriptural religion* as a religion where the “sacred writing, deemed to be the word of God, occupy a focal point in the divine service and, what is more, are supposed to determine the way in which the faithful lead their lives.”³⁹⁸ What Morenz and others are forgetting is that the Jewish religion was not primarily a religion of the book at its beginning. It was a religion of cult, temple and ritual and only much later after the exile, a religion of the book beginning with the ministry of Ezra. It was only after A.D. 70 with the final destruction of the Jewish temple by the Romans was the temple cult and ritual completely supplanted by *word religion* or *scriptural religion*. The Yahweh cult of the Hebrew faith did not devolve into its purely scriptural phase until the time of Ezra as we have said. Before then it was primarily focused on the Yahweh temple cult and ritual until after the exile as Morenz must admit.³⁹⁹ So, what in Morenz’s mind places the Hebrew religion of the book above the Egyptian religion of the book? Both focused on temple cult and ritual as well as developing a corresponding sacred theology of the book. Is it not a fact that for much of its history the Hebrew religion was a temple cult religion of Yahweh combined at times with a prophetic tradition which was aimed of not supplanting the temple cult but correcting it. Did not this prophetic tradition (in support of the Temple cult and ritual) continue down to the time of Jesus as he operated within the same prophetic tradition to *cleans the Temple*? Did not Jesus say (as he used force to drive everybody out of the Temple doing business there including turning over the tables and seats of the money changers): “*It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of thieves!*” (Matthew 21:12-13, EOB). Jesus frequented that temple as was his custom and often taught from within its precincts until the crowds listening to his message got too large and his message appeared to be too radical for the priests and scribes to bear. There is a literary connection between the Hebrew and Egyptian religion that would support the idea that the Egyptian original is not irrelevant to the discussion of problem of evil since the Jewish sacred scriptures themselves and its textual tradition is closely linked with the modern and contemporary study of theodicy. The Book of Job (probably written by Moses) is the earliest biblical theodicy to tackle the question of “*Why do bad things happen to good people?*” The religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam are all founded on the covenant story of Abraham and so everyone assumes the biblical story starts with Abraham who lives sometimes around 2166-1991 B.C.E., that is, between 716 to 541 years before the Exodus. Yet this story (which does not appear to have a preceding oral or written tradition) has its beginnings around 1450 B.C.E.; sometime after the Exodus and should be viewed as the story of Moses’ family line conceived by Moses and perhaps rehearsed in Egypt in order to give the Hebrew slaves a national history. Moses *needed to establish a national genealogy and ancestral history for a people that had been enslaved for more than 350 years if not more*. In fact this history had to be a *celestial history* of the covenant that God between Hm and Abraham the ancestral Father of the Jews. Moses likely wrote all five of the books attributed to him (including the Book of Job and Psalms 90) while wandering in the Sinai desert for 40 years. That would certainly be enough time to complete these sacred books (i.e. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). Thereafter the Hebrews would have a

³⁹⁸ Morenz. *Egyptian Religion*, p. 214.

³⁹⁹ Siegfried Morenz. *Egyptian Religion*. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. 214-216.

noble and divine history that explained why they had been enslaved and that in fact they were a holy nation chosen by God to be a light to the Gentiles. The scriptures support this interpretation. Both in Exodus 6:14-26 and in Numbers 1:20-3:1 the writer (i.e. Moses) is careful in listing the generations that came out of the loins of Abraham to end with Moses and Aaron. In Numbers 3:1 the purpose is made quite clear that *"This is the account of the family of Aaron and Moses at the time the Lord talked with Moses on Mount Sinai."* Moses created a whole new identity for himself and a national history for the Hebrews that had its beginnings with his supposed Hebrew ancestor Abraham. I heard one of my Old Testament professors say that in writing Genesis Moses must have had an Egyptian original or textual tradition available to him to create his personal and national identity. This professor suggested that Genesis seems to be part of an literary genre of Egyptian story telling similar to the Egyptian fictional story *The Tale of the Two Brothers: An Egyptian Fairy Tale* written around 1320-1200 B.C.E. but likely older going back to Twelfth Dynasty (1955-1780). According to Charles E. Moldenke, the editor "the papyrus we now possess is only a copy of some even more ancient manuscript."⁴⁰⁰ This Egyptian story was written for entertainment and the reading pleasure of the elite class of Egyptians but from our contemporary perspective has ramifications for the story Moses tells about ordeals of Joseph in Genesis. So, we know for sure that Moses had an Egyptian literary textual tradition to rely on in composing parts of his story in Genesis because some of the Egyptian story lines in the Genesis and Exodus are still extant in copies of this ancient text of the *Tale of Two Brothers*. This story gained currency in written form around the time of the Exodus if one takes the late date of 1320 B.C.E., for it was during this period of the Nineteenth Egyptian Dynasty that it took form but undoubtedly had an oral or written tradition that Moses could have used during the Exodus beginning in 1450 B.C.E. At any rate Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians as attested to in the New Testament, Acts 7:22, and there is no reason to believe that he would not be aware of the literary and oral traditions in stories like the *Tale of Two Brothers*. Moldenke copied the meduneter text from the *Papyrus D'Orbiney* in A.D. 1860 and had this to say of its connection with the sacred Hebrew text of which Moses is the author and its connection with the development or correspondence between Hebrew and Egyptian textual traditions that scholars like Morenz presuppose makes the Hebrew religion of the book superior to that of the Egyptian tradition of the sacred book. Moldenke states:

One reason for the great interest attached to our papyrus since the time of its publication in 1860 up to the present day, is the fact that here we have a story quite similar in the narrative to the Biblical account of the temptations of the pure Joseph by the wife of Potiphar. We do not claim that Moses, a student at the University of Heliopolis, simply copied the situation, for only a slight portion of both accounts is similar, but he may have had the wording of our papyrus in mind while writing the story. At any rate we draw the conclusion from both accounts that such a sin as contemplated by the wife of Potiphar and the wife of Anubis was held in execration alike by Jewish as well as Egyptian morality and law.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰⁰Rev. Chas. E. Moldenke, editor. *The Tale of Two Brothers: An Egyptian Fairy Tale*. (Baltimore, Maryland: Black Classic Press, 1988, first published 1892), p. 7.

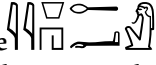
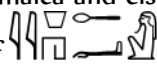
⁴⁰¹Moldenke, pp. 7-8.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE CELESTIAL ALLEGORY OF THE EXODUS: EVIL IN HISTORY AND MAPPING THE PSYCHIC-SPIRITUAL HUMAN CONDITION

In this chapter we want to turn the battle of the gods on its head. This battle takes place in the Earth of Eternity (between the gods) as played out in a spiritual/cosmic struggle between *Heka masters*, that is, between Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh's "magicians." Like Moses they are also trained in the arts of the **Words of Power**. The Egyptians explained *Evil* in allegorical terms mapped out as an existential condition within time and eternity (called the *heptanomis*, which is a physical region or Nome in Egypt but is mapped out from the Heavens) and as a psychic-spiritual region of the human mind. As the Hebrew text presents it the battle is between good and evil, between the good God, called Yahweh and the evil gods of the Pharaoh, between Moses who has Yahweh, God Almighty on his side and Pharaoh who has a plurality of *elohim* (i.e. little gods, none-the-less real) on his side. But this Hebrew way of seeing the story is not how the Pharaoh and the Egyptians the battle vaguely hinted at in the Hebrew text. My exposition or description of the story will demonstrate why Pharaoh, the magicians and the Egyptian leaders were so intransigent and fearful of Moses' request *to go out into the desert and pray to their "god."*

What did Pharaoh's magicians mean when they gave up fighting against Moses and said "*This is the finger of God.*" (Exodus 8:19). Did they know any more about the Hebrew God as Yahweh than Moses did at that time? We note here that Moses had for the first time learned God's generic personal name as Yahweh at the episode of the burning bush, when God told him in Hebrew אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁךְ אֱהְיֶה "I AM that I AM" (Exodus 3:14) with various meanings: "I will become what I choose to become" (Egyptian "The Ever-Coming One"), "I will be what I will be," "I create what I create," or "I am the Existing One." Before then Moses only knew Yahweh as: אֱלֹהִים *El-Shaddai* "God, Almighty," and so did not know God's personal name. Moses did share this sacred name of God with Pharaoh and his *Heka* masters (so-called "magicians") likely because he knew that they would not understand its meaning for the Hebrew. This was an opening gamut for Moses because it was not a casual matter to tell one's enemy the name of your personal or national god in that it could give the hearer a certain assumed power over one's "god" and so over the follower of this "god." In addition to that Moses himself had borrowed the name "Yahweh" from the Egyptian language. Despite all that we have been told and learned in Seminary "Yahweh" is not a Hebrew word but an Egyptian hieroglyphic *Medu Neter* word. As such the Pharaoh and his "magicians hearing the name "Yahweh" by itself would not have given them any undue cause for concern seeing that they were just as educated in Egyptian wisdom and learning as Moses was. It is likely that the Pharaoh and his men would have been more than a little amused and curious as to why Moses chose an Egyptian god as the national god for the Hebrew slaves. It is not difficult to come to this view once you know the hieroglyphic *Medu Neter* word for the Hebrew

"Yahweh." The Hebrew name יהוה "Yahweh" comes from the *Medu Neter* name , that is, **Yah-a** or **lah-a** (according to some transliterations) and means, according to the late Egyptologists E A Wallis Budge "**Jah the Great.**"⁴⁰² "**Jah**" is the short name for "Jehovah" that is widely used by the Ras Tafari of Jamaica and elsewhere as the name for God. A little grammatical analysis of the *Medu Neter* elements of  will likely compel the reader to agree that Moses borrowed the national name for the Hebrews/Israelites from this Egyptian name for **Yah-a** (Jah) since it is beyond doubt that this *Medu Neter* name existed thousands of years before the Hebrew people were even thought about and

⁴⁰² *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary* by E. A. Wallis Budge (1978, Dover Publications, Vol. 1, p. 142.)

before Hebrew became a national language. The Medu Neter element  is transliterated as “y” as in “yes” according to Collier and Manley’s *How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphics* (Berkeley: University of

California Press, 1998), p. 127. The Medu Neter element  the hieroglyphic for “vase, vessel, post, goddess, queen, mistress; broad, spacious, wide, bread, cake, loaf, bread-offering” is transliterated by Budge as “ab” where it is linguistically sound to transliterate it as “av”⁴⁰³ Collier and Manley transliterate

 as “h” like in “home.”⁴⁰⁴ These three elements taken together shows YAVHA=YWH = JAH, where in YWH the W is a double “V V” elided together. YWH itself is the **tetragrammaton** for the name **Yahweh** in Hebrew and is a breakdown of the name of God in Hebrew יהוה that is, YHWH, consisting of a series of consonants *Yod, Heh, Waw, and Heh*. The other three elements of the Medu Neter name for

God    will show how Budge arrived at “**Jah the Great**” for this Egyptian god, namely 

 and , where  “aa” means “great” (Budge, Vol. 1, p. cxxxviii);  “arm, bear, carry, set

in position, anything done with the arm”; and  “a” representing “a god or divine person,” so that this three elements taken together signify the meaning “**the great god who wears or carries the name Yah-a**” or “**Yah-a, the Great One**” Budge’s “**Jah, the Great.**”

The name יהוה “Yahweh” is filled with more meaning today than it was then for its Egyptian source    and for the Hebrews themselves. The Egyptian term from which the Hebrew borrowed shows that it was generic enough to be applied to almost any Egyptian god. Moses began the process of filling this name of God with meaning in his struggle with Pharaoh. All the Egyptian name for this god says is that he is “great” and not that he is the “Creator” as the Hebrew name “Yahweh” would later come to mean. We can see in the Book of Jonah the national god of the Hebrew would only take on terrifying meaning once outsiders knew His attributes ascribed to him. The Book of Jonah has the following in a question/answer conversation between Jonah and his shipmates heading to Tarshish when they were been threaten with drowning as a result of Jonah trying to escape “Yahweh’s” call for him to go preach warning to the Babylonians in the City of Neneveh, a people whom he hated:

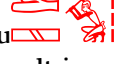
Now the word of *the Lord* [יהוה *Yahweh*] came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, “Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me.” But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of *the Lord* [יהוה]. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so, he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of *the Lord*. But *the Lord* hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to *his god* [אלהים, *Elohim*]. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down, and was fast asleep. The captain came and said to him, “What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on *your god*! [אלהים]. Perhaps *the god* [אלהים] will spare us a thought so that we do not perish.” The sailors said to one another, “Come let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. They said to him, “Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” “I am a Hebrew,” he replied, “I worship *the Lord* [יהוה], *the god* [אלהים] of heaven,

⁴⁰³Hieroglyphic Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. cxliv.

⁴⁰⁴ How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphics, p. 127.

who made the sea and dry land." Then the men were even more afraid, and said to him, "What is this that you have done!" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them so. (Jonah 1: 1-10, NRSV).

When the mariners understood that Jonah's *elohim* whose name was *Yahweh* and understood His powerful attributes explained by Jonah as the Creator God of Heaven, who made both land and sea they were "more afraid" (i.e. terrified). It was not the name *Yahweh* that frightened them; but His attributes and that Jonah's God was in fact *the Creator of both land and sea*. They immediately understood that this was the God that was threatening them with shipwreck and drowning. Moses had a more daunting task in convincing Pharaoh and his *Heka masters* (i.e. "magicians") that Moses' *elohim* whose name was *Yahweh* was in fact more powerful and more threatening than any god the Egyptians had here-to-fore encountered. Moses, therefore, took the chance (a gambit, or initial play) on using this name for the Hebrew God in the hope that Pharaoh and his "magicians" would grow to fear "Yahweh" the "elohim" of Israel the source of the horrid plagues they had to face. Even so we can safely say that Pharaoh given the name of the national god of Israel did not yet understand who this "god" was to the Hebrews.

Moses cunningly left the name generic enough to sow doubt in Pharaoh's mind, which contributed to his stubborn refusal to let the Hebrew slaves go. It took ten plagues to finally convince Pharaoh of just who this Hebrew god was, especially in respect of His power to upset the *ma'at* balance of cosmic power and order in Egypt. Finally, even these ten plagues were not enough Pharaoh leading his army to drown in the Red Sea! What was it that kept moving the Pharaoh to try and stop the Hebrews from praying to their god in the Red Desert [Tesh-t,  "the Desert"] also called the Tesh-t? In this "terrifying," "horrible" place lived the Teshrut  i.e. "the red devils" and/or the Tesheru,  i.e. "red ones," i.e. "the wicked gods who were associated with Set , the god of Evil and the Egyptian Devil. These associates of Set were also called by the Egyptians Teshu , i.e. "the red fiends."

It is apparent that Pharaoh filled in his own meaning the generic name Moses gave him so as to terrify him into letting the Hebrew slaves go. Did Pharaoh and his magicians have in mind a particular "desert god" that Moses (as a *Heka master*) purposely planted in their consciousness to incite the desired response in them to let his people go? Is that why Moses kept insisting that they go worship their "god" in the desert? Moses knew very well what the Egyptians feared because "*Moses was trained in all of the knowledge and wisdom of the Egyptians*" (Acts 7:22) and so Moses cleverly associated the name of *Yahweh* with the "red desert" the god of which the Egyptians already feared. This associated with the plagues made a powerful and compelling argument that the Egyptians should let the People of Israel go. What the Pharaoh and his Egyptian "magicians" wanted to know is who really was this *desert god* that Moses kept alluding to in his demands to Pharaoh? The text of Exodus 8:25-29 will show that what Pharaoh was really concerned about (and perhaps rightly so given the Egyptian cosmological and spiritual horizon of understanding) was not so much losing the slave labor of the Hebrews (as is supposed by many commentators) but about Moses possibly invoking the help of the

"desert god" all Egyptians knew and feared, that is, , or , or , that is, **Set**, the Egyptian *devil* or *god of Evil*. This could have been Moses' opening gambit or play. From the Hebrew point of view, they would be going into the desert to invoke the name of their national god for the very first time, that is, **Yahweh**, the creator of heaven and earth. However, from the Egyptian point of view the Hebrews would be invoking **Set** the **Red Devil** who lived in the **red desert** despite Moses saying that the

god his people would be invoking would be “Yahweh.” To the Egyptians this place (the red desert) represented all that was *desolate, chaotic* and against the civilized way of life the Egyptians had engendered. More importantly (to the Egyptians and to the Pharaoh in particular) invoking or waking up this desert god would upset the *ma’at* balance between cosmos and chaos, between good and evil, which *the Pharaoh, as the representative of the Horus-Christ was commissioned and bound to maintain in balance*. The Pharaohs own Heka master finally confronted him about his stubbornness and reminded him of with his duty to the nation of Egypt and his purpose as Pharaoh saying to him after the 8th plague of locust: *“How long shall this fellow be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the Lord their God; do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?”* (Exodus 10:7, NRSV). They had already warned Pharaoh earlier about the matchless power of Moses’s “god” and so said to Pharaoh during the 3rd plague of Gnats they themselves could not duplicate: *“This is the finger of God!” “But the Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, just as the Lord had said”* (Exodus 8:19b, NRSV). Therefore, the struggle between Moses and Pharaoh had a deeper meaning to it than mere economic greed, pride and power once you bottom out the question why the Pharaoh’s heart was hardened and resisted Moses so fiercely. At first the Pharaoh was loath to use the national name of the Israelites but later supposedly caving into Moses’ demands relented: The Exodus text reads:

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, *“Go, sacrifice to your God [Elohim, אֱלֹהִים] here in the land.”* But Moses said, *“That would not be right. The sacrifices we offer the Lord our God would be detestable to the Egyptians. And if we offer sacrifices that are detestable in their eyes, will they not stone us? We must take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God, as he commands us.”* Pharaoh said, *“I will let you go to offer sacrifices to the Lord your god יהוה אֱלֹהִים [Yahweh Elohim] in the desert, but you must not go very far. Now pray for me.”* Moses answered, *“As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the Lord, and tomorrow the flies will leave Pharaoh and his officials and his people. Only be sure that Pharaoh does not act deceitfully again by not letting the people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord.”* [Exodus 8:25-29, NIV]

Some of the nuances of the text underlined include the fact that Pharaoh would rather for the Hebrews to sacrifice to their god, presumably Set within Egypt but more specifically Goshen where the Hebrew worship of their god could be watched and observed rather than in the desert, the seat of Set’s power, the same place Jesus exclaimed to know as Satan seat: “I know where Satan has his throne,” which can be construed to be within the psychic-spiritual interior dwelling, that is, the desolate, arid, desert dwelling place of the human mind and personality. As can be gleaned from the New Testament this is same desert where the Spirit of God *forcibly* drove Jesus to be tested by Satan for 40 days (i.e. the period of the Egyptian Lent. See below). The Devil lodges in the wilderness or desert places meaning the caverns of the soul or psychic mind where temptation has its greatest power over the human person in isolation from the good and the concrescence of the beautiful. Moses replied to Pharaoh that sacrificing to Set in Egypt proper would be detestable to the people of Egypt because they feared and hated this god of chaos, terror and desolation. They would never recognize Moses’ God, Yahweh as anything other than Set, a god associated with evil. The content of the Hebrew ritual itself was not what was detestable because the Egyptian nor the Hebrews at that time would have understood what the content of the ritual would be, but it was the purpose and goal of that ritual which was to bring the power of Set in its full upon the heads of the Egyptians. Moses, however, kept insisting that they be able to go deep into the heart of the desert but Pharaoh equally insisted,

while they could go into the desert they not go into the heart of it (i.e. not to go very far into it). Pharaoh finally asked Moses to pray for him now, not in the desert but now in Egypt proper so that the plague of the flies would leave. It would not be out of line for the African mind to ask one to pray to their god even if that god was feared or detestable because of the operation of thought that contemporary thinkers call the coincidence of opposites. Do not forget the terrified mariners who asked Jonah to pray to his god (a god they could not have known before this threat of shipwreck) in event that Jonah's god might take notice of them and bring them safely to shore. The Egyptians (like many ancient peoples) believed that all gods encompassed in their being both good and evil, but that some more than others enjoined in their being the concrescence of evil over the good. Set himself was considered good in certain periods of Egyptian history while in others periods, he was not, that is, thought of as a purely malevolent being. Set was like the Hebrew's Satan in this regard. Satan here was pictured formerly as a holy angel before falling from grace in the Old Testament; Set = Satan = Devil was also the good god of the Egyptians for a short period of time before he also (so to speak) fell from heaven for failing as the *Son of the Morning Star and the Dawn to keep proper time and balance between cosmos and chaos in the uranographic representation of the Egyptian original*. When the Egyptian priests discovered this fact of astronomical history or celestial history **Set** was dethroned and expelled from Egypt as he was from the heavens or heaven in their cosmology and sent into exile into the desert and thereafter accounted as *Evil incarnate*. This notion and the celestial allegory or celestial history is explained best by the late Gerald Massey who says in his *Ancient Egypt: The Light of the World* Vol. II (1907) that:

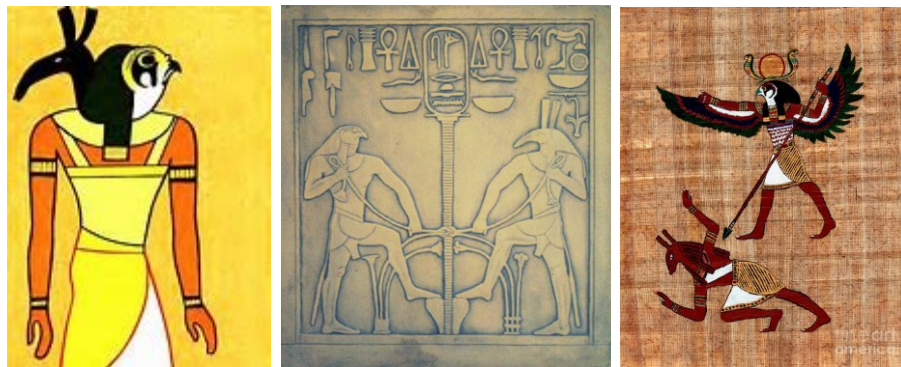
Amenta is the Book of Hades, and also in the Ritual, is described as consisting of two parts, called "Egypt and the desert land or wilderness." This latter was the domain of Sut in the Osirian mysteries. One part of the domain, named Anrutef, is self-described as the place where nothing grows. It was a desert of fruitless, leafless, rootless sand, in which "there was no water for the people to drink" or, if any, the water was made bitter or salt by the adversary Sut or the Apap-dragon. The struggle of Sut and Horus (or Osiris) in the desert lasted forty days, as these were commemorated in the forty days of the Egyptian Lent, during which time Sut as the power of drought and sterility made war on Horus in the water and the buried germinating grain. . . . The lower Egypt of Amenta was a land of dearth and darkness to the manes. It was the domain of Sut at the entrance in the west. Here was the typical wilderness founded on the sands that environed Egypt. Aarru or the garden far to the eastward was an oasis in the land of promise. The domain of Sut was a place of plagues; all the terrors of nature were congregated there, including drought and famine, fiery flying serpents and unimaginable monsters. There were the hells of heat in which waters were on fire; there were the slime-pits, the blazing bitumen, and brimstone flames of Sodom and Gomorrah. The desert of engulfing sands, the lakes of fire, and the deluge of overwhelming waters had to be crossed, and all the powers of death and hell opposed the passage of the glorified elect, the chosen people of the Lord, who were bound for bliss in the land where their redemption dawned upon the summit of the mount. This was the land of bondage where the manes were in direct need of a deliverer.⁴⁰⁵

The Egyptian celestial allegory (e.g. Genesis and Exodus stories) that the Egyptians developed within their literary tradition primarily came from their observations of the uranographic

⁴⁰⁵ Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*, Vol II (Baltimore, Maryland: Black Classic Press, 1992, first published in 1907), p. 642.

representations in the **Seven Heavens**. They used these stories to explain cosmos and chaos in their existential situation in Egypt and later applied these allegorical representations to the *life-world* and *lived-experience* of the postmortem human persons traveling through the *Valley of the Shadow of Death*. The explanation included a detailed description of the psychic-spiritual condition of the Osirian traveler or interior traveler through the caverns of the mind and soul where Set and the Horus-Christ took up their struggle in the deserts of the soul of the human person. The Egyptian story of the struggle between good and evil is told on three levels: (1) that of the cosmos; (2) that in the Earth of Time (that is history as a copy of what had already transpired in heaven) and (3) last that of the psychic-spiritual journey of the human personality through time and eternity. Any other approach to understanding the Egyptian celestial history is likely to result in a nonsensical reading and conclusion that the Egyptians were mere pagans dabbling in mythology, when in fact they were deeply engaged in cosmology, theology and providing a reasonable and compelling theodicy and ontology for the problem of evil. Moses is likely to have understood the celestial allegory as an Osirian priest based on the description of him by Josephus. We will touch on this a little more later and explain the history and liberation of the Hebrew in terms of this celestial allegory. Moses was within the Egyptian literary tradition when constructing his narrative celestial allegories of Genesis and Exodus. Such stories and allegories were then the means of conveying universally accepted truth, even historical truth and facts through mythos.

Egyptian Hieroglyphic Representation of the Struggle Between Good and Evil



CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE CONJUNCTION OF TIME, ETERNITY IN DANTE'S INFERNO

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down --- that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Revelation 12:7-9

Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' Matthew 25:41.

DANTE'S INFERNO: NINE CIRCLES OF PUNISHMENTS



*I AM THE WAY INTO THE DOLEFUL CITY,
I AM THE WAY INTO ETERNAL GRIEF,
I AM THE WAY TO A FORSAKEN RACE.*

*JUSTICE IT WAS THAT MOVED MY GREAT
CREATOR; DIVINE OMNIPOTENCE CREATED ME,
AND HIGHEST WISDOM JOINED WITH PRIMAL LOVE.*

*BEFORE ME NOTHING BUT ETERNAL THINGS
WERE MADE, AND I SHALL LAST ETERNALLY.
ABANDON EVERY HOPE, ALL YOU WHO ENTER.*

The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321)
Illustrated by Sandro Botticelli (mid 1480s - mid 1490s)

I saw these words spelled out in somber colors inscribed along the ledge above the gate; "Master," I said, "these words I see are cruel." . . . And I, in the midst of all this circling horror, began, "Teacher, what are these sounds I hear? What souls are these so overwhelmed by grief?" And he to me: "This wretched state of being is the fate of those sad souls who lived a life but lived it with no blame and with no praise. They are mixed with that repulsive choir of angels neither faithful nor unfaithful to their God, who undecided stood but for themselves. Heaven, to keep its beauty, cast them out, but even Hell itself would not receive them." And I. "Master, what torments do they suffer that force them to lament so bitterly?" He answered: I will tell you in few words: these wretches have no hope of truly dying, and this blind life they lead is so abject it makes them envy every other fate. Dante. *The Divine Comedy*. Vol 1. *Inferno* (Indiana University Press, 1971). Canto III, pp. 89-91.

My project assumes other spiritual actors in the universe (as would my black ancestors) that are not for the most part subject to the temporality of existence within a material universe and that they are as we are, actors in the drama and struggle between good and evil, for as the scriptures says: *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.* (Ephesians 6:12, NIV). But while we say these supra-natural and supernatural beings are not (for the most part) "subject to the temporality of existence within the material universe," we at the same time presuppose that *time and eternity runs tangent to each other and cyclically along an linear progression* and whether this battle against evil is being fought at the level of ontological being, or within the psychic-spiritual

being of humans, it has an existential dimension in the *Earth of Time* that within the temporality of material existence is unmistakable and which must be understood existentially as well. Human persons are affected in the *here and now* by this struggle whether it takes place in heaven or earth, or whether the struggle is somehow coeval between the two realms of temporal and celestial being. We believe that there is a dual outcome for the occasions of evil that has a reciprocal effect between the temporality of the material order and the eternal capacity of the spiritual order. *Evil* works in both realms to affect what happens in the *Earth of Time* on occasions for good and evil and has a direct relationship in the *Earth of Eternity* and vice versa. How this is accomplished is the burden of this chapter. What happens at the conjunction of *Time and Eternity* or at *the crossroads* as in Yoruba ontological understanding is important for the *ontology of evil* and to understand why *demonic experiences* such phenomenon has impact the human person. We must understand Evil both on the ontological as well as the existential level and it is near impossible to separate the two categories because there is no impassability between the two realms of being in the conjunction between the temporal/material order and the eternal/spiritual order. The doctrine of **divine impassibility** is plain out wrong, where it claims, "God does not experience pain or pleasure from the actions of beings within creation." Nothing is further from the truth in that God through Jesus Christ knows and feels our sorrows and has **divine pathos** for all that He has made as our Creator. And because God through His love and divine pathos feels our pains we can also participate in His sorrow because Our Lord Jesus Christ both lived and died in the flesh, where he took our sorrows upon himself and bore our sins and the punishment that had belonged to us was laid on him. Reinhold Niebuhr, one of the premier theological and philosophical thinkers of the early 20th Century, after criticizing the combination of mystical and rationalist doctrine's evident in the writings of Bertrand Russell, Santayana, Huxley's writings including Walter Stages' *Time and Eternity*, arrives at the conclusion that:

The philosophies which emphasize ontological categories, whether in naturalistic, idealistic, or mystical terms, in short, annul man in his undoubted historic existence. Man is primarily a historical creature. He plays his role against some ontological background, but his real milieu is history. History is a curious mixture ontologically, with elements of time and eternity in its composition.⁴⁰⁶

We cannot help but agree with that conclusion, but we arrive at the same conclusion not based on *a priori* logically derived Western ideas for the existence of being or God and man within the historical context alone, but from an African perspective supported by the *Egyptian original* that relies on experiential knowledge of *Time and Eternity* that includes special revelation as a source as well. Experiential knowledge seeks to understand the conjunction of *Time and Eternity* by pure experience with it. We believe that for the most part this is an African world view that experiences *time and eternity* as a spiritual reality of the whole and interprets and reinterprets existence based on that reality. What this means is that the African experiences for the most part what happens in *time and eternity* as *one reality*. To the African mind what they perceive as happening in the spiritual realm is as real as turning on a water faucet in the material world and they often fuse the two realms together as one reality or one story so that ontological and existential reality is hardly distinguished one from the other as it is with the Western mind. What this means is that when Africans like the Egyptians experience evil and then describe it in a story you will get *truth-myth*, that is an *celestial*

⁴⁰⁶ Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, eds. *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought*, vol II (New York: the MacMillan Company, 1956), 18.

allegory of time and eternity that attempts to give an explanation of how the occasions for good and evil happen at the *conjunction of time and eternity* and how these phenomenological effect humans at the existential level meaning in their *life-world* and *lived-experience*. Heaven is not somewhere *up there* as some place to go in the afterlife *per se*. Heaven as a phenomenological spiritual experience is right here on earth impacting the lives of humans by what happens within it at the conjunction where earth and heaven meets (experienced by Jacob as angels ascending and descending from earth to heaven and vice versa). Africans would have no problem understanding 1 John 1:1 that gives something of the sense and meaning behind that experience of the divine in history when the writer says: “*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched: this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.*” This is experiential knowledge of the Holy not logic based *a priori* theory. The Egyptians as an African people understood God and their relationship to God *prior* to special revelation, though perhaps through a *glass darkly*. Nevertheless, they had *His laws written on their hearts* and the fact that He exists as the Eternal God, the Creator did not require a systematic theology, a theosophy [Blasvatsky] or a systematic philosophy [Hegel] because the creation verified this Divine Reality recorded first in the heavens. The Egyptians went further with this insight and formulated a doctrinal religion, ritual and eschatology derived, as they would term it from *the Finger of God*, that is, *by inspiration of God*.

Karl W. Luckert shows that the Egyptians developed five schools of theology and philosophy: (1) *Junu theology* of Heliopolis or the On of the Bible, (2) *Waset* (Hermetic) *theology*, (3) *Shabaka* (Memphite) *theology*, (4) *Theban theology* and (5) *Amarna theology* of God (Aten) the One and the Only.⁴⁰⁷ These five schools of theology developed out of a desire to produce a synthesis of thought on the cosmological question of good and evil within the combined realm of time and eternity. The only problem the Egyptians had was that they did not want to get rid of any of categories of thought and or conclusions about the universe that the previous schools of thought had devised, so that in the end Egyptian theology and philosophy resembles a fish gobbling up a smaller fish. This fish is then gobbled up by another and then another until you cannot tell which theological or philosophical principle, category or proposition came first in its development so well did the Egyptian priests blend the theological and doctrinal notions one school with another.

Whether modern scholars considered Egyptian thought confused or not, the Egyptians took each previous schools' contribution to knowledge seriously and above all held that ideas contained in them were given by the *Finger of God* as divine revelations so that nothing could really be deleted but just reinterpreted. They then described these occasions for revelation by *unranographic representation of the Heavens*, that is, *mapping the Heavens and aligning it with the experiences of the Holy on Earth*, which we call *Celestial History* or the *Celestial Allegory* as earlier writers like Gerald Massey had called it.⁴⁰⁸ Unless one understands the celestial history, one cannot understand truly how *Evil* operates in it, nor the *nature of evil* at least from the cosmological perspective. The Egyptians did not need a *sign* like the Jews who were always asking for a *philosophy of being* like the Greeks had developed to understand the conjunction between the temporal order and the divine, for it was taken as pure fact by the Egyptians that the *temporal existence is an outward expression of the Divine Will* and that *material creation coming out of the essence of divinity is the way the Divine Will experiences its own being*. For Egyptian theology this *is how the Divine Reality feels all things* [Compare Heschel's

⁴⁰⁷ Karl W. Luckert, *Egyptian Light and Hebrew Fire: Theological and Philosophical Roots of Christendom in Evolutionary Perspective* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 77-113.

⁴⁰⁸ Massey. *A Book of the Beginnings*, Vol. II, p. 177.

thesis of the pathos of God in his book *The Prophets*, 1962) and how the Divine Reality knows all things, how the Divine Reality sees all things and is everywhere present and yet cannot be completely understood by man except through special revelation, whether that be through concourse with angels, mediums, seers, prophets or revelation of divine scripture and or the Holy Spirit that is God's indwelling *Shikinah* or glory vouchsafed to human persons as the interior dwelling place of the soul. This notion led to an erotic interpretation of mystical union of human and the divine, especially in the culminating Osirian faith and as Luckert points out was thought of in African terms as a process of copulation, an African conception picked up in Teresa of Avila quite readily for a Western mind set, but without what in the Western mind would be considered vulgar. He states:

Ordinary people therefore focused their mysticism on the process of copulation itself. They interpreted the union of Osiris and Isis mystically as God's loving embrace of their own souls, as though their soul were somehow feminine partners in that relationship.⁴⁰⁹

St. Augustine, the African bishop of Hippo in North Africa was the Father of *Linear History* outlined in his *City of God* (A.D. 410-412) and in his *Confessions* (A.D. 400). St. Augustine understood the relational conjunction between time and eternity and tried to give some explanation of it. The reader will find below a chart reconciling St. Augustine's linear conception of history with the Egyptian, so-called Greek conception of circular history. The proposition we make is that: *Time and Eternity are tangent to the other, meaning they touch at meaningful periods of history we call revelation or what Alfred North Whitehead might call occasions. At times the future invades the present and at other times the present moves forward into the future in an undeniable head on clash that disrupts both spheres like an untimely birth of events. In other words, Hell and or Heaven in its future promise shifts both categories backwards and forward to give man so to speak a taste of the life and death that is to come.*

From a Hebrew cosmological perspective both cosmic categories (temporal and celestial) radiate light from heaven and can move into the temporal present as well as into the dark night of hell and *judgment* can be introduced *prematurely*(because of these movements back and forward) into the present to give man a taste of both Dante's paradise and Dante's hell. We have noted this before, but it is an apt phrase from Whitehead that summarizes this proposition of what happens on the occasions when time and eternity meet. Whitehead stated: "When fundamental change arrives, sometimes heaven dawns, sometimes hell yawns open." When *Dante's Hell* enter onto the *Superhighway of God* Set's minions are loosed on mankind through the agency of *Setian men* to commit all unmentionable crimes against God and man.⁴¹⁰ Examples of these *dark nights or periods of hell on Earth* are the modern wars of attrition and ethnic cleansing, rape houses in Serbian held territories in Eastern Europe, African enslavement, gang rapes of black women during slavery by white constituted authorities, lynching and castrations of black men, open murder of unarmed black men and boys under the color of law, a *JUST-US* system that then allows *Setian men*(white or black) in blue to walk free, and other unspeakable crimes. When I say that *Time and Eternity* runs tangent one to the other I mean what the Kamau priests of Egypt meant when they said "*As Above, So Below*," meaning there is an *Earth of Eternity* that we call *Heaven*, entered at *Heaven's Gate* by means of *Jacob's Ladder* and the *Earth of Time* that are so closely intertwined that it allows terrestrial being (*Spirit-Man, God-Men*

⁴⁰⁹ Luckert, p. 89.

⁴¹⁰Remembering from our previous study in Book One that Set and his angels have been hurled to Earth but they are permitted to use the same Superhighway of God as the human person.

or *Medu Neter*, .e.g. *Babalowa*, *Seers*, *Prophets*, *Witch-doctors*, meaning spiritual doctors against witchcraft, *healers*, *root men*, and/or *black preachers* with certain spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc.) to interact with celestial being (e.g. *Spirits*, *Angels*, *Orisha*, *Jinn*, the *Holy Spirit*, *Jesus*, *God the Father*, the *blessed dead*, the *People of Heaven*, etc.), whether through *prayer*, *contemplation*, *meditation*, *Thurimand Thumim* (the Judeo-Christian practice of divination, i.e. *casting lots*, *Ifa* or other African divination practice, etc.) in a spiritual effort to invoke the *Divine Power* (i.e. *the Finger of God*). These human/divine forces are employed by human persons (so gifted) in order to disrupt control of God's *Holy Colony of Earth* by Setian men, demons, dark powers and principalities that are acolytes and devotees of Evil. What we mean here is that *the battle between Good and Evil on Earth mirrors that Celestial battle in Heaven*. In other words, there is *a direct ontological relationship between what happens in heaven and what happens on earth*. This ontological connection between heaven and earth is mirrored in Revelation 12:7-12:

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down --- that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." [NIV].

Set or *Satan* did not have enough power in heaven to overcome the Angels of God, that is, Michael's Army of *de Lawd* so he has, in this cosmological scenario, determined to do on Earth what he could not do in heaven, i.e. rule the *Holy Colony of Earth*! On God's Earth, Set or Satan has determined to enlist *Setian Men* who are ruled and influenced through demonic experience, along with other spiritual principalities and powers cast down with him to do his bidding in continuing his ill-fated war against God, Holy Angels and God-Men. Remember that Set's program in Heaven was to accuse the Holy Angels of God and Mankind before God both day and night, and therefore his objective has been and still is to destroy God's greatest creation and at the least to demonstrate to, angels, principalities and powers, and to the People of Heaven that God was wrong in creating man and making angels their servants. It should be noted in this connection with the misguided commercialism of angels in American society that their true nature can only be understood via special revelation or understood experientially. All sacred writing declares in one form or another they exist. Michael's angels seem not to have the slightest reservation in serving God by ministering to man. They in fact regard us as their brothers and fellow travelers (servants) as attested to in Revelation 22:8-9 when John fell down to worship the angel and the angel replied: "*Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!*" And angels are themselves interested in the mystery of salvation itself in relation to man for 1 Peter 1:10-12 states: "Concerning this salvation Even angels long to look into these things." The Bible shows they are curios, have feeling pathos even when God commands them to punish human persons. Nevertheless, they will carry out God's will. The book of Zechariah and First Chronicles attests to both the Angels pathos and feeling of compassion for humanity but nevertheless

they willing to carryout God's command absolutely to both to punish and even destroy mankind:

On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah so of Berechiah son of Iddo; and Zechariah said, In the night I saw a man riding on red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind were red, sorrel, and white horses. Then I said, "What are these my lord?" The angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "They are those who the Lord has sent to patrol the earth." They spoke to the angel of the Lord who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace." *The angel of the Lord said, "O Lord of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?"* *The Lord replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me.* So the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim this message: Thus says the Lord of hosts; I am very jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they made the disaster worse. Therefore, thus says the Lord, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it, says the Lord of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. Proclaim further: This says the Lord of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem. (**Zechariah 1: 7-17**, NSRV).

FIRST CHRONICLES 21:14-17

¹⁴ *So the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men.*

¹⁵ *And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.*

¹⁶ *And David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.*

¹⁷ And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

¹⁸ Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

¹⁹ And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the LORD.

²⁰ And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

²¹ And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshingfloor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.

²² Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the plague may be stayed from the people.

²³ And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all.

²⁴ And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost.

²⁵ So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.

²⁶ And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

²⁷ *And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.*

²⁸ *At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.*

²⁹ *For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon.*

³⁰ *But David could not go before it to enquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.*

Angels are spirits that minister to mankind for Hebrews 1:14 states: *“Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?”* And even though men are a *“little lower than the angels,”* (Psalms 8:5) God-men will judge angels [1 Corinthians 6:3], especially those that left their place in Heaven as it says in Jude 1:6, *“And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home --- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.”* We can say confidently from here that the purpose for the ontological connection between Heaven and Earth [Time and Eternity] is the salvation of man via the emancipation of God’s holy colony of Earth from the power of Set and his angels (i.e. demons) and *Setian Men*, men who are acolytes and devotees of *Evil*. This is the whole purpose of being for God-Men to effectuate this emancipation via war with Setian principalities and powers. The salvation of the human race from *Evil* is not the only objective of Heaven. Romans 8:22-24 speaks not only of the salvation of man but the salvation of the entire creation of God both animate and inanimate: *“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we await eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope, we are saved.”* The mirror of event between time and eternity is elsewhere expressed in the New Testament when Jesus

had the occasion to tell Peter that on his testimony that Jesus was the , *Mesu* (Messiah), the Egyptian name of “Moses” reflecting Deuteronomy 18:15, v. 18: “I will send you a prophet (i.e. deliverer, savior) like unto Moses. This would be Jesus as attested to by the Apostle Peter in Acts 3:22, the Son of the Living God. In Matthew 16:18-19, this Jesus would build his church on the testimony affirmed by Peter (Protestant interpretation) which even the gates of hell could not overcome. This passage following goes further to comment that “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; *whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven,*” so that heaven and earth, good and evil are so closely and intricately bound that Jesus said in the parable of the wheat and weeds that it would take the divine wisdom of angels sent by God to

distinguish divide good from evil and that not even the angels could do so before evil had matured right along with the good (on God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience) so that full grown it could no longer imitate what is good. Men apparently even at this stage are not able without divine help to destroy evil identified as such in society that has reached even incredible levels of demonic experience until it is obvious that Evil is evil and no longer needs to pretend it is not. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth; then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Apparently good was always shining in the kingdom of God but demonic experience clouds that light with deception in terms of human wisdom to distinguish adequately right from wrong, good from evil. When the source or agents of demonic experience are separated out then the agents of good or goodness or what is beautiful will do more brightly what it has always done, shine. However, we note in this parable of Jesus that he makes no claim that his angels are destroying evil itself, which is apparently beyond their power but the arrest, and destroy the agents of evil who actuate demonic experience throughout God's holy colony of Earth. We don't want to pass over the human psychic-spiritual dimension of this struggle because if the kingdom is cosmic as well as psychic-spiritual then the same struggle that goes on in the cosmos goes on in the human person, so that Jesus was not lying when he said "the Kingdom of God is within you!" Islam makes the same ontological claim when it says that "God is closer to you than your jugular vein," (*Holy Qur'an*, Sura 50:16).

Never-the-less, we believe a spatial relationship between *Time and Eternity*, that is, heaven and earth exists. In fact, this spatial relationship is one in which the Egyptians suggest the possibility that heaven occupy the same ontological continuum as earth, and they mapped out the geography of the earth (geodetics) by the uranography of heaven as they conceived of it through natural revelation. In other words in the Egyptian scheme heaven occupies the same ontological space as earth and in fact envelops or overlays it so that it appears to men that when the angels of God come it is *instantaneous*. While Jesus did talk about an "Inner Space" of spiritual connection between God, angels and men so as to effectuate divine communication and carry out his plan of salvation, Jesus later elaborated on the idea of this cosmological connection by saying that "*the kingdom of God is already here!*" This project declares that *Heaven is not up* as God had to demonstrate to the foolish men of Genesis 11:1-9, who sought to reach Heaven by building the *Tower of Babel*. *Heaven in fact has been here all the time* in the dimension of eternity that overlaps the dimension of time and for those that have God's spirit within, that kingdom is present in its most intimate fashion, that is, in the *inner spiritual space* of man's psychic mind (i.e. soul) vouchsafed to the human person by God Himself. The human person does not need to build a *Tower of Babel* to reach God or Eternity.

Existentially God is already here in our hearts manifested as *Christological experience* doing combat with *demonic experience* within the interiority of our mind and heart. That that experience is thanatic and when full grown in the person leads to death. The Epistle of James is clear on this: "*After desire (demonic experience) has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sine when it is full-grown gives birth to death (Thanatos = Greek god the personification of death).*" (James 1:15). We are in fact in God and God is in us as long as we are within Christ and he in us (John 17). At times God permits celestial interruptions of time and eternity, that is, He permits select groups of ministering angels to see us through this vale of time and for us to see them. The angels themselves cannot see us any more than we can see them unless God permits this concourse or connection (for example messages from God brought by Gabriel and other angels like the Angel of the Lord at various times and places,

etc.). They are very busy in their own world unless they are directed to visit us on God's command. Nevertheless, we can feel the presence of one another and have knowledge of one another's existence and being principally by means of God's Word. The angels are curious about us and our role in salvation, i.e. about the soteriological relationship between God and man and presumably the meaning of this relationship for the redemption of the entire creation as signified by 1 Peter 1:12. There is nothing spooky about this. It is a necessary outcome of the ontological spatial relationship that God has established between *Time and Eternity* for the purpose of ours and the creation's redemption from *Evil*.

The problem is that the same ontological pathway for good and the beautiful (God's Superhighway of Unified Human/Divine Experience) that God has established to promote the concrescence of *Christological experience* is the same ontological pathway used by *Evil* to promote that *demonic experience* in the cosmos and in the psychic-spiritual being of the human person. Moses the Egyptian leader of the Hebrews tried to reveal this cosmological connection between *Time and Eternity* or *Heaven and Earth* in the book of Genesis when he told the story of Adam and Eve being put out of the *Garden of Eden* and the fact that the entrance to this *place* was later guarded by cherubim angels and a flaming sword. The curious comment that Moses makes is as follows. "*So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.*" (Gen. 3:23, NIV). We notice even before this that Genesis 2:8 says that "*Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.*" The discerning reader will notice almost immediately that Moses is indicating in each passage that *the Garden* even though on Earth is somehow ontologically different from the harsh ground from which the man was first *put* and then *banished* from. The *Garden of Eden* somehow *stands outside* the ecological conditions of the terra firma called Earth. Adam was not *made* in the *Garden of Eden*. Rather *he was put there* and insulated from the harsh ecological conditions that lay outside of it. Later Adam would be banished from this *abode of paradise* the Greeks called the *Elysian Fields* because of his disobedience to God. We propose here that *the Garden* had a symbiotic relationship to Earth and should be viewed as an ontological spatial geodetic entity God *trans-planted from Heaven* just as He sent *manna* from heaven the Scriptures call *angels food*, i.e. "*Yet he commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven; he rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. Mortals ate of the bread of angels; he sent them food in abundance*" (Psalms 78:23-25, NRS). The bread that God

gave to mortal men is called  i.e. **tau Heru** by the Egyptians translated as "*bread of the celestials*" or "*bread of angels*." In the same way God sent this bread of Heaven He will reopen the portal to the *Garden of Eden* and send *down from Heaven the New Jerusalem* to Earth where Jesus, the Christ shall rule the *Earth of Time for a thousand years* (Revelation 3:12 and 21:10-14f). We submit that the *Garden of Eden* and the *New Jerusalem* are the same *celestial creation* that somehow joins with the earth *only for a time* in some kind of celestial/temporal order that is currently beyond human understanding, some kind of *celestial symbiosis* of time and eternity from heaven's gate where *the Garden* is not part of earth at all but a celestial creation which is never-the-less real because the angels had to guard its entrance to keep humankind from re-entering it in order to block the way to the *Tree of Life* until God did something with it. Moses was trained in both Egyptian cosmology and theology [Acts 7:22] and was indicating by this story in Genesis that Adam was actually in the Egyptian

garden where the blessed dead live and serve Osiris called  the **Sekhet-Aaru** or the "Field of Reeds" located in  **Amen-ta**, the "Hidden Land," or "the west", "the abode of the

dead”, “Dead-land” the entrance of which was guarded by three *neteru* , i.e. gods, angels, spirits, etc. This so-called “Hidden Land” the “Abode of the Dead” had two spiritual locations for the dead those living among the fiends (being tortured by them) and the blessed dead in , i.e. the **Taut** or Paradise of God, the temporary abode from which they eventually emerge into the day to see the *Bright and Morning Star*() and for that blessing give praise and adoration to God for redemption and deliverance. Both places are temporary abodes the Catholics (having a partial truth) mistakenly call *Purgatory*. We pause here to point out that Satan was the *first guardian cherub* God put in *the Garden* to protect *the man* from unwarranted encroachment from the people already living on the Earth *outside the Garden*, as signified in Ezekiel Chapter 28 which states:

You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. **You were in Eden, the garden of God**; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. (Ezekiel 28:12b-15, NIV).

But as Genesis 3:1-6 shows this *cherub angel* who by nature is *ashape-shifter* who can *at will change his form* came to Adam and Eve in the *form of a serpent*. Within the *Sekhet-Aaru* was the “Plant of Truth,” i.e. *Tree of Life*. *Amen-ta* is the abode of Osiris that is located “spatially” between Time and Eternity (Heaven and Earth). The Egyptians in fact represented this ontological reality

uranographical in the , **Pet** or “sky”. This ontological reality for Catholic’s is *Purgatory* as we mentioned above and for Protestant’s it is the *Garden of Eden*. The Catholics have taken *the positive aspects* of the *Sekhet-Aaru* in which the water drunk there by the righteous is “cool and sweet.” In Luke 16:22-26 the rich man asks for *cooling water* from Lazarus from the *left side of the water of life* (Revelation 21:6) called a *great chasm* by Father Abraham. In the Catholic *Baltimore Catechism* Articles 439-442 the *river of life* is pictured as the waters containing the Spiritual Treasury of the Church, that is water mixed with the blood of Jesus, Mary and the Saints that grants remission of part of the temporal punishment in the *Sekhet-Aaru* for the sins of the blessed dead. However, the Protestants take *the negative aspects* where the same water drunk by the wicked is “boiling hot and bitter.”

In fact, the Catholics and Protestants are both partially right about this ontological reality because when put together by the Egyptian Original shows that *Sekhet-Aaru* is divided into two major parts. On the right bank of the river of life are the righteous with celestial food and drink and on the left bank of the river of life are the wicked eternally damned.⁴¹¹ This is not the only idea to keep in mind. The Egyptian theological doctrines were already written down and codified centuries before Judaism (Moses) and Christianity (Christ). E. A. Wallis Budge, the great English Egyptologist believes that priests of the famous school of **Anu** or **On** of the Bible with their *Junu theological notions* succeeded within the first six Egyptian dynasties of establishing an authorized version or **canon**

⁴¹¹ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Dweller on the Nile: The Life, History, Religion and Literature of the Ancient Egyptians* (New York: Dover Publications, 1977), pp. 276-280.



(*Maat*, that is, *canon*) of their main religious texts.⁴¹² This version of the “Book of the Dead,” or the *Pert-em-Hruwas* authorized no later than 2180 B.C.E., the beginning of the First Intermediate Period.⁴¹³ The *Garden of Eden* contained everything that the *Sekhet-Aaru* contained and according to Moses’ understanding each functioned the same way, that is, as a source of eternal nourishment to mankind. In the Egyptian cosmology which Moses likely turned into a Hebrew cosmology the righteous Egyptian is an Osirian traveler who when he becomes fully part of the *living*, that is, the *blessed dead* goes to the *Sekhet-Aaru* and there:

He thirsts not, nor hungers, nor is sad; he eats the bread of Ra and drinks what he drinks daily. . . . He eats what the gods eat, he drinks what they drink, he lives as they live, and he dwells where they dwell. . . . Not only does he eat and drink of their food, but he wears the apparel which they wear, the white linen and sandals; he is clothed in white and “he goeth to the great lake in the midst of the Field of Peace whereon the great gods sit; and these great and never failing gods [angels = People of Heaven, insertion mine] give unto him [to eat] of *the tree of life* [my emphasis] of which they themselves do eat . . . that he likewise may live. The bread which he eats never decays and his beer never grows stale. He eats of the “bread of eternity” and drinks of the “beer of everlastingness” which the gods eat and drink and he nourishes himself upon that bread which the Eye of Horus has shed upon the branches of the olive tree.”⁴¹⁴

The reader will notice immediately that the *Tree of Life* is in the *Sekhet-Aaru* just as it was in the *Garden of Eden*. Moses in fact understood Egyptian Osirian theology and recast this Egyptian doctrine into his creation story. We have no doubt that Moses (a trained Egyptian priest) was doing so, for later in the Book of Exodus he recasts the Egyptian *Bread of Eternity* that *never decays* into the *Manna from Heaven* which however *does decay* within the Earth of Time if not eaten daily. The only manna that did not decay was that which God permitted to be kept in the *Ark of the Covenant* as a memorial to His saving power as the true *Bread of Life*. Curiously enough manna in the Egyptian religion is thought of as the food of divine beings and in the Old Testament is called “angels’ food,” in Psalms 78:25, or the “bread of heaven,” in Psalms 105:40. Josephus acknowledges the high regard Egyptians had for education and higher learning; scientific, literary and ecclesiastical. He states: “However, if any one should ask Apion which of the Egyptians he thinks to be the most wise, and most pious of them all, he would certainly acknowledge the priest to be so; for the histories say that two things were originally committed to their care by their kings’ injunctions, the worship of the gods, and the support of wisdom and philosophy.”⁴¹⁵ What is certain is that Moses was well endowed by his Egyptian education and stature within Pharaoh’s house to lead the Hebrew people out of Egypt, which later enabled him to write the Torah (i.e. Five Books of Moses, Psalms 90, and the Book of Job, the Hebrew query into “why bad things happen to good people”) inspired by the Egyptian Original. It is from the Egyptian Original we know when Eternity comes into contact with Time, that which is eternal is affected in that spatial interruption taking on some aspects of the temporal characteristics

⁴¹² Among other meanings *Maat* signifies *law, order, rule, truth, straightness, right, justice*, inclusive of the highest conception of physical and moral law known to the Egyptians)

⁴¹³ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

⁴¹⁴ Budge, pp. lxxv-lxxvi.

⁴¹⁵ Josephus, p. 628.

of time so that the *Bread of Eternity* becomes the temporary *Manna of Heaven* for man's nourishment. Jesus also understood what happens to celestial being when it encounters the temporal order, that is, when he became incarnate in human flesh. He understood that celestial being is subject to death and decay and so when he *found Himself in the form of a man, he humbled himself, even though He thought it not robbery to claim equality with God, the Holy* (Philippians 2:5-8, NIV). Yet he was willing for Hebrews 10:5 says:

Therefore, when he comes into the world, he says: Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but you have prepared a body for me; You had no pleasure in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, The I said, 'Behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of me) to do your will, O God.(EOB).

However this celestial transmutation, what occurs when the celestial and temporal order meet is a two way street so that things temporal are effected likewise taking on immortal characteristics we call *miracles*, that is, functioning in ways we consider from our human understanding of science to be *impossible or metaphysically outside the temporal order*, for example, Jesus turning water to wine at the wedding of Cana by the spoken word, or walking through solid doors to visit his disciples, walking on water; or like the Prophet Elisha through some means only known to a Heka master or man of God, making an *iron axe head float on water!* *The incarnation of Jesus was in fact the story of the triumph of the immortal being the Logos (Word) of God, that is, the Logos-Elohim over death when it came into contact with corruptible being.* The incarnate Logos (Horus) in the body of Jesus (Born of a Virgin, i.e. Immaculate Host) had to die. This is what the Egyptians would understand as the *Horus Adoption* described in the Gospels and understood by the Egyptians with their developed theology of the resurrection from death to life. In the Egyptian Original the connection between eternal life is informed by the Horus-Christ through the vine of the olive tree because he is the source of life and resurrection. In John 15:5 Jesus makes a statement that mimics this Egyptian notion: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." More will be said of the *Horus Adoption* later as a key to understanding the Baptism of Jesus by John and the meaning of the dove (Holy Spirit) alighting on Jesus and the pronouncement at that precise moment that *"Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased,"* (Luke 3:22, NASB). Jesus was *at that moment* begotten of God, that is, the Logos-God via the dove (Horus) for the first time incarnates Himself in the body of Jesus as can be seen in "Thou art my son, today I have begotten thee" (Acts 13:33b, NASB).⁴¹⁶ After the Resurrection this process of the *Horus Adoption* would be complete, a process of incarnation and transformation (becoming human) that began with the immaculate birth, culminating in baptism and incarnation of the Logos-Elohim in the host [i.e. the body prepared for Jesus] and then the completed act of incarnation with the transformation of Jesus in the triumph over death where God is now able to say not only that he is well pleased with the life of Jesus and consecrates that life with the full anointing of the Holy Spirit to say *"today I have begotten thee."* The *Horus Adoption* of Jesus was a three part *moment* [Hegel], Whitehead would say *occasion* and what Tillich would call a *Kairos moment*, where His pre-existent

⁴¹⁶Obviously, the notion of Christological adoption brings up some orthodox doctrinal and theological objections and concerns having to do with *miaphysis* Christology of the one united in Christ without division or confusion. Here we are only looking at one aspect of the Egyptian Original from a history of religions horizon of understanding. This is not a theology but a cosmology and ontology as the Egyptians might have understood it. It also suggests why some early church fathers later charged with heresy and some theological schools of thought in Ethiopia and elsewhere advanced this Christological proposition.

holiness is subsumed or sublated into mortality and later his mortality, the partial negation of his holy being, is itself sublated, that is, negated and therefore transformed into the higher being of immortality; transformed from the dead body being spiritually transmuted into the higher and more powerful spiritual form of the glorified body, which is the *Egyptian Hope* of the resurrection and the life. The sublation of Jesus' being began with *the first moment*, the (1) Virgin Birth, continued in the *second moment* by (2) the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the *third moment* of (3) Resurrection from the Dead. These *three moments of sublation* I call the *Horus Adoption*.⁴¹⁷ These *three moments* which transforms us into the *sons of God* is the same hope the Egyptian had. The hope is that we will be transformed, first (1) by the renewing of our minds, then by (2) after being Baptized receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of living a holy life according to God's perfect will, then (3) being raised from the dead to be finally transformed, that is, given a glorified body which will allow us to live in the *New Jerusalem* and see God as He is. We too hope for the *three moments of Horus Adoption*. We can see from above that God can (has and likely will again) interrupt *Time with Eternity* with what we call miracles. When that happens, it has consequences for both celestial and temporal ontological realities of being, e.g. the death and resurrection of Jesus, the *Logos-God*. It is to be noted here that even after Jesus returns to His Father and sits at His right hand; he returns as a transmuted being with the scars *forever worn* of his humanity as the *slain Lamb of God*. This is signified by Apostle John when he says in the Book of Revelation:

In the right hand of one who sat on the throne, I saw a scroll written inside and outside, sealed shut with seven seals. Then I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seals?" But no one in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, was able to open the scroll or to look in it. And so I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look in it. One of the presbyters said to me: "*Do not weep! Behold, the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome; he who opens the book and its seven seals.*" I saw in the center of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the presbyters, *a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain*. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. The Lamb came and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four presbyters fell down before the Lamb, each one having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sang a new song, saying:

You are worthy to take the book, and open its seals: because you were slain, and redeemed us for God with your blood, our of every tribe, language, people, and nation. You have made them kings and priests to our God and they will reign on the earth

I saw and I heard something like the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the presbyters. The number of those speaking was ten thousands of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands. They were saying with a loud voice:

⁴¹⁷ This is different from the heretical claim of *theological adoptionism* that must deny the first moment of the Virgin Birth since (according this Christology) Jesus *only* became God's Son at Baptism. Before that the claim is that he was merely a human person like all others born of a man and woman.

"Worthy is the Lamb who has been killed to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessings!"

I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them, saying:

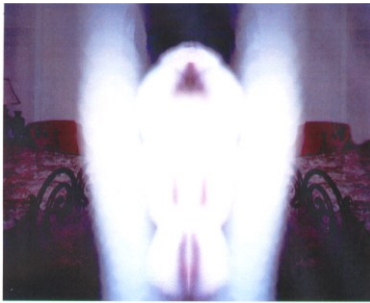
"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing, the honor, the glory, and the dominion, unto ages of ages!"

The four living creatures said, "Amen", and the presbyters fell down and expressed adoration.
(Revelation 5:1-14, EOB)

The *Garden of Eden* was also an *ontological cosmic interruption* or *cosmic transmutation* because of the sin of Adam. It was *temporary* and will not be restored until the *New Jerusalem (Ja-Ru-Salem, i.e. the "Gate of God's Peace")* comes down from Heaven to the Earth of Time and Eternity, this time to stay *permanently*. The Garden was *between* heaven and earth and not on it but was grafted as a symbiosis of celestial and terrestrial bodies. We may regard this symbiosis as *a miracle*. Whatever the case, when man sinned, he *was cast out* and the *gate or pathway leading to the Tree of Life* was temporarily closed by God's gatekeepers, the holy angels welding the *rotating flaming sword*, giving the reader the *hint* immediately that the *Garden was not of this Earth*. The Egyptian *Sekhet-Aaru* which Moses signified by his writings helps explain the inexplicable story in Genesis that seems to the non-theist a myth or mythological. Every theologian and bible scholar, or scholar to date (with the exception of Gerald Massey) has (in my opinion) hopelessly misunderstood the Genesis story. They have given us great learned expositions from the sublime to the ridiculous, but never-the-less they all have failed to bottom out the story because they have failed to recognize the Egyptian Original textual tradition that is the foundational source of Genesis and Exodus stories. The internal evidence of the Hebrew texts themselves testify that Egypt and Egyptian culture play a much larger role in forming the Hebrew biblical textual tradition than the eastern Babylonian textual model. Biblical scholars will never understand the writings of Moses, especially the Book of Genesis and Exodus without understanding the Egyptian background, cosmology and language. They have taken the story of Abraham given by Moses as a story of his family ancestry to *give ex-slaves a history* but an *autochthonous history* independent of the context from within which the story was developed! The story of the *Garden* is an *Egyptian story* Moses wrote in order to explain (in part) the *interruption of time and eternity* we call *miracle*. The best example for the credulous reader of these kinds of celestial and terrestrial interruptions of time and eternity is evidenced by Daniel 10: 4-21 and 11:1:

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. I Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me,

I stood up trembling. Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. *But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come. . .* So he said, "*Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia and when I go, the prince of Greece will come, but first I will tell you what is written in the **Book of Truth**. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.*" (NIV, my *italics* and emphasis).



left half of this photo was taken in Mother's bedroom two weeks following her death. I took the picture at night with a 35mm camera. There is no known photograph of what produced the light image. We leave it to you to interpret for yourself.

There is no doubt that this is a vision and the one speaking to Daniel is a very powerful angel, that in the vision Michael, one of the chief princes is God's Archangel of War is clearly mentioned, and that the prince protectors of Persia and Greece are *Setian* celestial beings (demons, fallen angels) trying to stop God's angel from contacting Daniel with an important prophesy that would *change history* in the Earth of Time. Daniel may have beheld the awesome visage of an angel who appeared like the angel below I have named **Amen-Ra I** invisible to the naked eye but captured by a 35mm camera in a room of a wonderful woman who had died perhaps a week earlier:⁴¹⁸ This battle between the Holy angles of

God and Satan's angels 'takes place in the *Earth of Eternity* for Michael, the Chief Arch-Angel is styled in the biblical text as Daniel's prince protector and the angel speaking to Daniel is the prince protector of Darius the Mede. The celestial battle both paralleled and was a harbinger to the "great war" predicted in the *Earth of Time*. The historic event presaged by the celestial battle was part of God's salvation history and plan. So, a celestial battle between holy angels and unholy angels took place, one side to see that God's plan for Israel would be carried out and the other to stop that plan. It is hard to miss here that these angels both holy and Setian were *assigned* not to individuals but to certain kingdoms, one to protect God-Men and the other to initiate demonic influence within Setian nations and men to destroy or stop God-Men. This shows God's direct hand in the affairs of the *Earth of Time*. These spheres of angelic influence can be seen in texts like Deuteronomy 32:7-9 (NIV):

⁴¹⁸ The circumstances of how I obtained this picture and given permission to use are described in my yet unpublished manuscript *Angels Among Us* where among other things I pay honor to the great woman (a woman highly esteemed much like Daniel) whom God favored with the presence of one of his guardian angels. The daughter whom I spoke to personally in 2004 (while I was doing my Doctor of Ministry studies in Chicago) believed that this angel captured in film was indeed her mother still present in her room after passing away. I do not dispute this sacred and personal memory of her mother but merely suggest that is possible that this angel I call **Amen-Ra I** is her guardian angel as I understand it from my own faith tradition of Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedo*(ተዋሕዶ) theology and Christology. In 2004 I was informed by this woman's daughter that there is a 35mm picture of another angel captured by a daughter of a family she knows who also lost a love one. I have personally no doubt this account is true and that the pictures are real because the two daughters come from families highly regarded in the business world and are financially well off. They both have little reason (financial or otherwise) to fabricate these pictures and stories. As of yet I have not been able to see the picture of the second angel. But for now, I will merely call it **Amen-Ra II**.

Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you. When the *Most High* gave the nations their inheritance, and he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the *sons of Israel*. For the *Lord's* portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.

I have italicized certain words in this text because the translation is very deceptive in that there are different readings of the original Masoretic text, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint Greek text [LXX] that suggest that the correct reading in place of *sons of Israel* is *sons of God*. In fact, the NIV translation commentators append a note affirming this reading. Also, the critical notes below this text in the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* which gives the Masoretic text show that the correct reading is בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים, *beni-el* or בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים, *beni-elohim*, that is *sons of God* or *sons of the gods*. We prefer the former. Never-the-less this reading puts a new light on this text and shows that the Deuteronomist is saying something quite different than given out by the above translation. These *sons of God* are the same category of *spiritual being* that are said to have “*went to the daughters of men and had children by them*,” (Genesis 6:4). The writer of Jude 6 says these *sons of God* were actually *fallen angels*, who according to him “*did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home --- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.*” (NIV). Thomas L. Thompson, Professor of Old Testament at the University of Copenhagen gives this translation:

Think of the days of yore; attend to generations past. Ask your father; let him tell you. Let the old one recount to you how *El Elyon* divided the nations; how he separated humanity from each other and how he established the boundaries of peoples according to the number of his *messengers*. *Yahweh's* lot became his people: Jacob was his inheritance.

Above I have highlighted the terms of interest. Thompson correctly shows that עֶלְיֹן, *el-elyon* is *name of the Most High* that divided the nations among His *messengers* (meaning His *angels*). In the case of the translation of the compound name for God, i.e. *El Elyon* or *Most High God*, or *God Most High* (the *Upper God*) and *Yahweh*, translated as the *Lord* in most English translations, Thompson translates literally but in the case of *messengers*, that is *angels* (i.e. *malok*) he translates idea for idea and rightly concludes that *sons of God*, means *messengers* or *angels*. This means that the text is talking about dividing up the terrestrial sphere of the *Earth of Time* among God's angels according to their numbers. This is not the only point of interest but more astonishingly this text distinguishes one of these powerful spiritual beings as *Yahweh*, which we will here call the *Logos-Elohim*, who later is identified as Jesus. This difference between the two *Elohim* is obscured by most English translations in favor of the view that the *El Elyon* is *Yahweh*. Thompson suggests that this is not so and that *El Elyon* is the *MostHigh God* is not *Yahweh*. Thompson states:

Moses' song of Deuteronomy 32 represents the heavenly side of this myth and is cast in the form of a paraphrase of old legends about the father of the gods surrounded by his children. They are his messengers. They represent him for all the nations. He is present through his sons, each of whom is given a land of his own. *Yahweh* received Jacob for his inheritance; *El Elyon* has made *Yahweh* God for Israel.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁹ Thomas L. Thompson, *The Mythic Past: Biblical Archaeology and the Myth of Israel* (Basic Book, 1999), p.

According to Thompson then *Yahweh* is separated out as just one of the *sons of God* and he is given as his terrestrial sphere of influence *Jacob* or Israel as his inheritance by *El Elyon*. This has astonishing biblical and theological implications that will allow us to see why Hebrews 1:9 states that Jesus is a *companion among the angels* (“... God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions”) although the writer of Hebrews makes it clear that this companionship is in terms of *partners in mission and not essence* by using the Greek term *μετόχους* *metoxous*, “partner” or an associate who shares an undertaking, mission or enterprise. Yet the writer of Hebrews comes perilously close to describing Jesus as just a *superior angel* who achieves his distinction because he identified himself perfectly with the will of God. The *subordinationist* would have a field day with this if the writer of Hebrews had not cleared this up in 1:10 when he says “*In the beginning, O Lord, you have laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands,*” clearly pointing out that Jesus is no mere *Elohim*, that is, just one of the boys or the gods; but *Elohim*, the Creator-God. Nevertheless, Israel is his special inheritance and in his pre-existing form as the *Angel of the Lord* functions as Israel’s God-protector. This Angel of the Lord is identified in Revelation subtly as “his angel” so that the text reads: “*This is Revelation of Jesus Christ; which God gave him to show to his bondservants the things which must happen soon. He sent it and made it known by his angel to his bondservant, John, who testified about everything that he saw: to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ*” (Revelation 1:1-2, EOB) and where “his angel” is so closely identified with Jesus Christ that “his angel” says: “*Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold, I am alive unto the ages of ages! I have the keys of death and of hades*” (Revelation 1:17-19, EOB). The *angel* that appeared to Daniel is in close *partnership* with *Yahweh* (fights to carry out God’s will by fighting against the “prince of Persia” and the “prince of Greece”) This does not mean Jesus is an angel. Far from it! But it does make the important distinction that *El-Elyon* is not *Yahweh*. Jesus is the *Yahweh* that is spoken of in the Old Testament and if understood in this way supports the Trinitarian view of the God-Head. *Yahweh* then is not necessarily understood to be *El Elyon*, the *Most High God*, but a powerful *Elohim* who is likely the same “god” that went before Israel in the Sinai desert exodus as a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. In Exodus 13:21 *Yahweh* is identified as the going before the children of Israel in the pillar of fire and cloud, while Exodus 14:19 says that the *angel of God* went before them in the pillar of the fire and cloud, therefore identifying *Yahweh* with the *angel of God*.

Some theologians and churchmen hold that *Yahweh* or *Jehovah* is in fact *Jesus*, that is, the pre-existing Logos *taking the form in this case as Jehovah, the Angel of God*. And whether this is true or not, it is in harmony with Jesus’ claim for his mission to the Canaanite woman. He said, “*I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel*” (Matthew 15:24). Even more telling is the fact that Revelation 7:17 uses the Exodus imagery for the Lamb of God, where Jesus is leading those in white robes to “springs of living waters,” as the *Yahweh* did through Moses for the Children of Israel leading them to water in the Sinai Desert (Exodus 17:1-7) but water where they would thirst again. Jesus alludes to this in his discussion about *living water* with the Samaritan woman [John 4:10] or again when he points out that Moses did not give the children of Israel the true “bread from Heaven” in the Sinai but that it was He that was sent from Heaven that is the true bread of heaven because “*I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty*” (John 6:35).

Thompson points out another startling aspect of this understanding of the Angel of God, Yahweh, the protector and guide to the House of Jacob. He says, "Deuteronomy 32 similarly recalls the ancient knowledge of the gods' division of the world according to its many peoples, each people with its own god.⁴²⁰ Yahweh in this view would be considered as *one of the many gods of the nations* who had like they to distinguish himself as superior by defeating the other gods in the *Earth of Time* by one nation overcoming the other and signifying the other nations gods as *evil* and superiority by *carrying off the other symbolic representations of the defeated god*, as in the story of the *Art of Yahweh* in 1 Samuel 4:10-6:21. The so-called "little god" of Israel is Yahweh, their tribal God. El Elyon, Himself, having divided up the nations of men according to the number of his ruling Elohim, e.g. Yahweh, being the *Israelite deity*. The Hebrew's mistook this spiritual being in the service of El Elyon, the Most High God as the *Angel of the Lord* because they did not know him as Yahweh. In fact, there had never been but one *Most High God* which Egyptian theology testifies to as well; but men took to worshipping in an idolatrous fashion the *Elohim* that God, Almighty placed over them. They mistakenly began to worship these Elohim, giving them various names throughout history, thus establishing the various pantheons of the "gods". Some ancient theologies, such as the Egyptian never lost sight entirely of this vital distinction that have fueled the debate over *monotheism vs. polytheism* and which came first, the chicken or the egg syndrome. Hebrew theology took to ridiculing the wooden and material icons of these various spiritual beings but hinted all the same that Yahweh was in fact fighting against real "gods" in some cases and not just against that which was simply the imagination of men. There is a clear recognition in both Hebrew and Egyptian theology that there are more spiritual actors in the universe with real power which are subordinate to God, *El Elyon*, the Most High God. This is so even though He *created these principalities and powers they are in fact real!* *El Elyon* has no problem with this because He is the only un-created, non-contingent being. What ticks Him off so-to-speak is man's continual misunderstanding of the spiritual and spatial forces under His command and man's setting up these principalities as "gods" outside the bounds of their authority over against His divine authority and will. This disposition is described by the Hebrews as idolatry. The other mistake is those *modern* men who think they are helping God or *El Elyon* by denying the existence of other spiritual actors in God's created spiritual universe in order to establish an *absolute monotheism*, equating that with high civilization. Egyptian theology has an answer to that, and Hebrew theology rightly understood confirms this presupposition. The proposition that God has established within his plan of salvation that celestial being in the Earth of Eternity (called Heaven) have a direct influence over terrestrial being and events in the Earth of Time can be seen clearly in Psalm 82:1-7, where God berates and punishes the *Elohim* for their failure to carry out his commands *to prevent evil in the Earth of Time*, and an even more serious sin against God, actually participating in evil by defending the unjust, that is, Setian men in oppressing the weak and the defenseless. Here is what the text says:

God presides in the great assembly; he gives judgment among the "gods": "How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. They know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I said, You are "gods"; you are all sons of the Most High. *But you will die like mere men*; you will fall like every other ruler. *Rise up, O God, judge the earth, for all the nations are your inheritance.*" [NIV].

⁴²⁰ Thompson, p. 40.

In this text the Hebrew word used for “gods” is אֱלֹהִים, that is, *Elohim*, and can be translated in the superlative as “angels,” “judges,” with both of these usage’s found in *The Jerusalem Bible*. This same text can also be translated as mighty or gods. Here it likely means gods and is the equivalent of the Egyptian  that is *neteru*, the “gods” as opposed to just  that is *Neter*, that is, God. The text above is one among the many instances where the Hebrew serves to interpret the meaning of the Egyptian term for God and the so-called “gods” which has so baffled Egyptologist for centuries running the gamut from calling Egyptian religion polytheism to calling it a pure monotheism in trying to decipher the usage of *neter* and *neteru*. The Egyptian *neteru* or “gods” is equivalent to the Hebrew order of *Elohim*, and it is from the Hebrew’s Egyptian background came their understanding of the “gods.” The Egyptian order of celestial being is preserved in the Hebrew Bible. When the above text states: *“But you will die like mere men; you will fall like every other ruler. Rise up, O God, judge the earth for all the nations are your inheritance,”* it is saying first that these “gods” *are not mere men but in fact a special order of created spiritual being able to seat in the heavenly counsel of the Most High*. Their role is to judge the inhabitants of the Earth with justice; but on the contrary they are falling down on the job. Secondly, it shows that God, that is *El-Elyon* has given them the *nations as their inheritance* supporting the supposition we started with in Daniel that there is a direct link and conjunction between Heaven and Earth, between that which is eternal and that which is temporal. The NIV translators did a good job of obscuring this notion because they make the last *Elohim* mentioned to be “God” instead of “gods”, clearly taking out of the context in which the “gods” are being berated by *El-Elyon* for supporting wicked, unjust men on Earth against the righteous, the poor and the oppressed. They are able to use this subterfuge because *Elohim* even though plural, meaning “gods” can also within proper context be translated “God.” But here they have misused the context in order to achieve this result, i.e. in order to *deny that “gods” over the nations are real and not mere idols*. The Hebrew text actually reads in translation, “Rise up you “gods”! Judge the earth for *you will inherit* all of the nations, instead of *you inherit* the nations, so they can maintain this verse is talking about the one God but obscuring the fact of the Hebrew imperfect depicting a future act. If this is God and not the “gods” how is that God, who Himself said “all the Earth is mine!” has to inherit anything? This referent to inheritance has to do with those “gods” who are given authority over the Earth and not to the one God who is the giver of such authority. *Celestial History* can be dated but only by the confluence of the events of the *Earth of Eternity* meeting the events of the *Earth of Time* at the *crossroads* where terrestrial beings have their converse with celestial being. However, it is impossible to know (unless told by special revelation) which set of events influences the other, that is whether the actions of God-men and Setian men influences the actions of the heavenly beings or actions of the heavenly beings influence or parallel the actions of God-men and Setian men. Examples of both exist in the Hebrew Bible. Apostle Paul himself was even unsure which events affect which, *for by the very contact with eternity, time is transmuted where the senses no longer cooperated with the will*, as demonstrated by Daniel’s contact with the angel in the text above. Paul had such a contact with eternity, speaking of being translated to the *third heavens the very Throne of God*. With typical Hebrew cosmological thinking he said:

I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. 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. And I know that this man --- whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows --- was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that a man is not permitted to tell. (2 Cor. 12:1-4, NIV, Emphasis mine)

Apostle Peter had his own experience with meeting Eternity at the confluence of Time when he was placed in jail by King Herod after he had put the Apostle James to death by the sword. The text in Acts reads:

It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after Passover. So, Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. Quick, get up! He said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison, *but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision.* They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him. *Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating."* (Acts 12:1-11, NIV)

Below are some examples from the Old Testament that illustrate the confluence of events in the *Earth of Time* and the *Earth of Eternity* that make up what we have been calling *Celestial History*. Egyptian priests knew Celestial History very well, but it has been forgotten placed in the realm of myth by Christians and Jews. The connection between the Earth of Time and the Earth of Eternity has always been understood by West Africans, like the Yoruba who have practice using *Ifa* to meet the *Orisha* and the blessed dead at the *cross-roads of time and eternity*. There is abundant textual evidence that events in the *Earth of Time* (especially when a *Man of God* is involved) influence decisions or events in the *Earth of Eternity*(i.e. Heaven). **Second Kings 6:9-18** has one example that demonstrates this. This story shows the invisible spiritual forces of Good (i.e. from Heaven) engaged in battle in support of Prophet Elisha against the King of the Arameans and a strong inference that invisible spiritual forces of *Evil* (i.e. from Hell) are in support of this king and his army coming against this prophet of God:

The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places. This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?" "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." Then he

sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. *"Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."* And Elijah prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw *the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around* Elisha. As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, "Strike these people with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked.

It is easy to miss the import of Elisha's statement *"Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."* Elisha's servant's eyes were opened to see *those angels of God* described as *chariots of fire* that surrounded Elisha, but the text also implies that *evil celestial beings were with the forces of Aram* as well, described by Elisha as *"those who are with them."* Elisha's servant was only permitted to see the forces of God and not the forces of Set, or Satan that stood with Aram and his army, even though Elisha plainly told him they were present, and that God's forces were greater than theirs. This demonstrates that the forces of Heaven in the Earth of Eternity (both Setian evil forces and God forces) work in consort respectively with the actions of Setian evil anti-God-men influenced by demonic experience and the actions of God-men in the *Earth of Time*. We are too quick to think that Setian men do evil acts alone. While evil men do have fallen angels (demons and demonic principalities and powers) that fight on their behalf, God-men who work in God's favor also have angels who fight on their behalf according to God's purposes as the battle lines are drawn on the *Superhighway of God*. David was engaged in a similar spiritual cosmic battle with the Philistines and is a dramatic case that further supports my supposition. One day David inquired of *Yahweh* as to whether he should go and stand against these enemies of Israel in battle. *Yahweh* said:

Do not go straight up, but circle around behind them and attack them in front of the balsam trees. *As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, move quickly, because that will mean the Lord has gone out in front of you to strike the Philistine army.* So David did as the Lord commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer. (2 Samuel 5:23-25, NIV).

This passage suggests that there was a spiritual force or *army of De Lawd* situated or *marching in the tops of the balsam trees* that David could not see but merely had to wait to hear them arrayed in position for battle along with the human army of David. He was not to move before that. Should he had moved in disobedience of God's command before that it is likely he would have lost his battle against the Philistines. Why? A plausible inference can be made that there was also an opposing spiritual army of *Evil* that was present to fight on behalf of the Philistines that were with the Philistine army and was too strong for David's human army alone. Who were these spiritual forces marching against him? As said, there is a hint that spiritual forces of *Evil* were arrayed against David on the side of the Philistines as *those with them* the King of Aram against Elisha. Both of these Old Testament stories shows that there is (in some cases that we are told about in Scripture) a dual battle going on in the spiritual realm (in the *Earth of Eternity*) that parallels the battle that is going in the material realm in the *Earth of Time*. More remarkable than the fact of these occurrences or occasions is that *the confluence or conjunction of Time and Eternity can sometimes be dated*. For instance, I mentioned the story of Daniel in the reign of Cyrus the Great or Cyrus the Elder (600 - 529 B.C.E.), who was

not only the king of the Medes and Persians but by 539 B.C.E. had become king of Babylon. Daniel was there and the celestial battle that presaged the vision given to Daniel, that is the *conjunction of events* in the *Earth of Time and Eternity* can be dated precisely because the text surrounding that time-dated event states:

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar). Its message was true and it concerned a great war. . . . On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist.

The year was 536 B.C.E., that is, 539 B.C.E., minus three years since the beginning of Cyrus' reign over Babylon. It was also the "twenty-fourth day of the first month." If we keep in mind what the angel said to Daniel, that is, "the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days," meaning the Setian celestial being that influenced for ill the Persian kingdom of Cyrus, then the *beginning* of the battle between God's angel, the one speaking to Daniel and the Setian angel must have taken place on the *3rd day of the first month in 536 B.C.E.*, assuming "days" here are not symbolic or some other designated length other than what seems clear as days in the text counted in terms of the *Earth of Time* or as men measure or count. This *conjunction between celestial and terrestrial history* then would be according to the Hebrew Calendar, 3 Tishri 4297 A.M., *Annon Mundi* (i.e. *From the Year of the Creation*). The New Testament from time to time gives dates for the *conjunction of events* between *the Earth of Time and Eternity*. From the New Testament above I gave Paul's description of his translation into the third heavens where he says *I know a man in Christ* (speaking of himself as the latter text makes clear) *who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven*". This *celestial conjunction* can be dated because we have an anchor date associated with the ministry of Paul based on his appearance before Gallio the proconsul of Achaia a political department of which the city of Corinth was a part. These events are highlighted in Acts 18:12-17. It is known from independent historical sources, namely the imperial inscriptions of Claudius Caesar that Gallio likely took his proconsulship in July 1, 51 A.D. or 52 A.D. Based on that date it is a good conjecture that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in Ephesus around A.D. 55 and then in A.D. 56 completed Second Corinthians while he was in Macedonia. If this is the case then the date for his revelatory experience, i.e. this *conjunction between Time and Eternity* likely took place in A.D. 42, fourteen years before writing that epistle (i.e. Second Letter to the Corinthians 12:1-2). It is worth repeating here that Paul said: "I know a man *in Christ who fourteen years ago* was caught up into the *third heaven* (whether [it was] in the body, I do not know, or whether out of the body, I do not know; God knows). [Yes], I know such a man (whether in the body, or outside of the body, I do not know; God knows), how he was caught up *into Paradise*, and heard ineffable words, which it is not lawful for anyone to utter" (2 Corinthians 12:2-4, EOB). Again, demonstrating how the human mind and body are *disengaged from the reality* we know at *the confluence of Time and Eternity* between the *Earth of Time* and the *Earth of Eternity* even if a precise date can be assigned to the event. Another example where the New Testament gives a date for the conjunction between the Earth of Time and Eternity is the dating of a heavenly event found in the Book of Daniel alluded to in the Book of Acts that here-to-fore has left many biblical baffled. That heavenly event or snapshot is the *Ascension of Jesus Christ* (i.e. the Son of Man) into heaven which in the Egyptian Original is the completion of his **Horus Adoption** that we must reiterate again begins with his incarnation with the Virgin Birth. The *Horus Adoption* is a *three moment*

Christological event that covers his (1) *Incarnation*, (2) *Baptism*, and (3) *Resurrection & Ascension* and is not the same as the heresy of *adoptionism* in the first and second Christian Century. This New Testament culminating event of the Ascension that is made possible by his resurrection in the third moment of the Horus Adoption is described in Mark 16:19, Matthew 28:18 and Luke 24:51 and taken together gives this culminating event in chronological time at its beginning so that a date can be ascribed to it where Jesus leaves the *Earth of Time* and ascends into the Earth of Eternity (we call Heaven). Centuries before this actual Christological event the Prophet Daniel using his well-known prophetic insight predicted the culmination of the *Ascension* and gives us a snapshot of Jesus *arriving* in Heaven, the *Earth of Eternity* on a cloud as the triumphant *Son of Man* after ascending into the clouds in full view of his disciples as described in the Book of Acts. The reader should know that in no other place in the Bible other than in the Book of Daniel is the Son of Man described as *arriving in* Heaven (the Earth of Eternity) on a cloud to Heaven but always the Son of Man *comes on a cloud to* the *Earth of Time* in visions so that Daniel's description is absolutely incredible given the New Testament references in the Gospels and especially in the Book of Acts. We give the references in the New Testament first so that the reader can easily see the parallels:

The Gospel of Mark states:

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, *he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God*. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. (Mark 16:19-20, NIV).

The Gospel of Matthew states:

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matt. 28:16-20. [NIV]

Luke follows in writing of Jesus' Ascension states that:

When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. *While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.* Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple praising God. (Luke 24:50-53, NIV).

The Gospel of Matthew mentions no ascension at all; however, all harmonies of the Gospels put this appearance of the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee just prior to the event of the ascension. We quote the passage in Matthew more importantly because of the statement, which we have italicized, that "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." We will see this language as parallel to the language found in the Daniel passage we will quote below. Mark mentions the ascension and even though there is textual controversy over the so-called *long ending* of Mark 16:9-20 because the most reliable early texts do not have this passage, we still accept this witness about the ascension because Luke accepts this tradition and Luke probably relied on the Gospel of

Mark. In each case Jesus is taken up into heaven to be seen as the *Son of Man* no longer in the flesh where Paul could confidently affirm that “Even though we used to think of Christ according to the flesh, we no longer think of him this way” (2 Corinthians 5:16, EOB). Christ, the Son of Man is now the composite *God-Man* forever a lamb standing, as though he had been slain (Revelation 5:6). Matthew simply testifies to the tradition that prior to this ascension that Jesus believed he had received all power in heaven and earth. We now quote Daniel 7:12-14 to complete the circumference of our thought on this topic:

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, *coming* with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. *He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.* (Emphasis mine).

The parallel of Jesus, the Son of Man coming with the clouds and being led into the presence of the Ancient of Days and receiving from Him authority and sovereign power, absolute, all power is a striking scene in and of itself but all the more extraordinary when it is compared with scenes in the gospels where Jesus the Son of Man *ascends* into heaven on clouds leaving the *Earth of Time*. Daniel gives us the culminating scene of the Son of Man’s coming on the clouds arriving in the *Earth of Eternity* (i.e. Heaven) after his earthly mission is completed. With these parallel scenes from the Old and New Testament we can date this heavenly event at the confluence of Time and Eternity. This occasion or cosmic event appears to be a near *instantaneous* translation of Jesus from earth to heaven to receive back the glory he had with the Father before the creation of the world [John 17:24]. When did the ascension chronologically take place? Most biblical scholars believe that Jesus’ earthly ministry began in A.D. 26-27 and ended A.D. 33. That end date if accepted would be the year of the ascension of Christ and also the predicted time of Daniel when the Son of Man approached God on a cloud and “was given authority, glory and sovereign power.” Daniel’s *Night Vision* of this cosmic event makes little sense without the scenes in the Gospels and the Book of Acts. However, Daniel’s *Night Vision* makes perfect sense with the story they tell. It explains where the Son of Man riding on the clouds was *coming from* (i.e. the *Earth of Time*). On the other hand the Night Vision of Daniel illuminates the Gospel story and Acts of this event and opens up a celestial portal that shows the culmination event where the Son of Man actually receives all power from the Ancient of Days, he claimed he already had in Matthew 28.

An example of events in Heaven or the Earth of Eternity that affect the events in the Earth of Time can be found in the story of Job the oldest theodicy. In Job 1:6-12 and following Job 2:1-7 we see events which originates at the very throne of God in the Third Heaven that directly affect events in the Earth of Time. There is no apparent objective for this occasion but to demonstrate the power of God-men to overcome Setian celestial and terrestrial forces, those subject to demonic experience, against all odds and to demonstrate the wisdom and power of God in defense of God-men who are in the end preserved in the struggle against *principalities and powers of evil*. We take note here that the story of Job is older than Hebrew history itself and that moreover it is not a Hebrew story *per se* and was only later incorporated by writers into the Hebrew Bible because it was believed Moses wrote it. Job is a story that belongs to the Semitic mix of stories in the same class of those like the Flood, etc. which the Hebrew writers sequestered from the surrounding Semitic neighbors, probably in this case from Northern Arabian folk-history, and incorporated them into their scriptures in order to

explain their self-understanding of celestial history, that is, how God's works in the *Earth of Time*. It is likely also that the heavenly scenes are interpolated by the Hebrew writer in order to give an ordinary story extraordinary moral import to explain *why bad things happen to good people* describing the events of suffering and patient endurance of Job, a rich and powerful God-man. Hebrews could hardly think of terrestrial events in any other way. Moses probably developed this story while traveling around and around in the desert for 40 years first as entertainment and secondly to help the Hebrews understand that there are no coincidences. Behind what was happening to them in the Earth of Time there were perhaps events in the Earth of Eternity that occasioned and once understood provides a rational basis for their suffering. Moses probably had the story of Job told orally among the people first before writing it down close to the end of their journey. Nevertheless, the story is told:

One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. (Job 1:6-12, NIV).

A *hedge around* Job that Satan mentions likely means that God had his protecting ministering angels around Job so that Satan or his minions could do him or his property no harm. This *hedge* around Job is similar to the imagery of divine protection in Zechariah 2:5, where God said that he himself would "be a *wall of fire*" around the city of Jerusalem. The story goes on to tell of Satan using Setian men called Sabeans, that is, Southern Arabians and later Chaldeans to carry off all of Job's flocks and herds and kill all but one of his servants, showing again that Satan influences Setian-men and rewards them with the pleasures of *demonic experience*. In between these two events the *Fire of God* came down and killed Job's sheep and other servants and last a whirlwind of some kind collapsed the house his children were in and killed them all as the story goes, showing that Satan as the *ruler of the air* can with God's permission influence the forces of nature to destroy man and his livelihood, *natural evils* we (like they) call *acts of God*. When we cannot explain *why bad things happen to good people* we can and do blame God for things that are really *acts of Satan*. Even with all of this tragedy Job maintained his faith in God and stated: "*Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised*" (Job 1:21, NIV). Satan had not yet proved his accusation to God that Job's righteousness was not genuine and he only held it because God preserved him from all *Evil*. Satan therefore goes back to God for a second time to report on the results of the first challenge and challenge God a second time because of His boast about Job's righteousness:

On another day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. And the Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one

on earth like him: he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, *though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.*” “Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. But *stretch out your hand* and strike his flesh and bones, and *he will surely curse you to your face.*” The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.” So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head. (Job 2:1-7, NIV).

Satan in this part of the story shows he has a dim view of the human-race and believes that we are basically selfish in nature, and we will do anything to save our lives so he said “Skin for skin” to suggest that if the human person’s physical life is threatened in any way that person will then blame God and even curse His name. However, the case two things needed to be noted about this story that would not be immediately evident without understanding something of the original Hebrew text. First the angels themselves like the Setian being referred to in the text as “ha-Satan” (i.e. *the Satan*) probably all have been going to and for in the earth carrying out various assignments and are back at the throne of God to give their reports, for the force of the two Hebrew words for *came* and *present* taken together carry the idea of *coming forth quickly to stand before a king and report*. The Hebrew word for *came* is בָּא (bo) which means *to come* (on command), *to bring forth*, *to fetch* (on command). The Hebrew word for *present* is יָצַב (yetsab) and means *to station* or *present themselves* as in *coming forth fast to stand before*. The angels including Satan are *lighting fast* but are not by nature *omnipresent*, i.e. which cannot be *everywhere present* as is the nature of God Himself. While I was in seminary one of my Old Testament teachers gave a visual demonstration to express the action that is taking place as the angels both *come* and *present* themselves before God. He suggested we visualize the modern cartoon which shows characters like the *Road Runner* who moves so fast that when stopping their heels dig into the ground just before for they hit a particular object with the action accented by the verbal use of *bong!!!*, that is, a *sudden vibrating stop!* The angels came in this posture and manner as in fearful obedience and honor before an almighty God.

The most significant thing here is that the Setian being referred to as “ha-satan” without the capital “S” *also came forward in the same reverent and fearful manner* even though he appears to be haughty in his response to God. Yet despite his haughtiness he must obey God in the first challenge not touching Job in his physical person, and in the second challenge not to take Job’s life even though it is clear Satan could harm Job’s physical person. Less we miss this nuance in the text the first attack by Satan on Job’s property and children is described as *fire from God* and the second attack against Job is described as God *stretching out his hand* against Job, and even more remarkable God being *incited* by Satan to do Job harm who God himself declares is a righteous man and is being ruined *without reason*. This remarkable heavenly scene suggests that God, in whom we suppose is *no darkness at all* is culpable in every instance with the only explanation given is the theodetic notion of the *coincidence of opposites* which holds that God *encompasses within himself both good and evil* advancing a terrible and inexplicable truth that is signified by God and perhaps affirmed when God blocks man’s pathway in the Garden to the Tree of Life and says: *“The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever”* (Genesis 3:22, NIV). According to this theory the only way God can claim to have within Him *no darkness at all* is to expiate *Evil* or the *Nothingness* on to a being like *ha-satan* who is (by nature) more than willing to subject himself to Evil in return for the pleasures of demonic experience. Never-the-less, this Setian being could not go beyond the limits permitted by

God. Of course, the fact that Satan cannot harm man beyond prescribed limits is not the most interesting thing here from the perspective of the Hebrew. What is of interest is that this shows God controls events in both the *Earth of Time* and the *Earth of Eternity* on the *Superhighway of God*. Celestial History is under God's direct control and for His own glory. The story of *Jacobs Ladder* is valued in this regard. It shows that God controls the access and egress of traffic as holy angels of God's use of a ladder to ascend and descend between the Earth of Eternity and the Earth of Time. Jacob refers the place where he had the night vision as the "portal of God" or the "gate of heaven" because above this "ladder" or "stairway" to heaven stood the Lord. (Genesis 28:12-17). This *Stairway to Heaven* is just one of the portals that allow access and egress onto the *Superhighway of God* between the *Earth of Time and Eternity*. Modern translators render the Hebrew word for the Setian being that comes before God to report and meet his challenge as "Satan" knowing full well that this is a complete and utter falsehood and is designed to mislead the reader in favor of the traditional fable that Satan himself comes and goes as he pleases between the Earth of Time and Eternity and so allowed to come forward like the other angels before the throne of God. The Hebrew reveals that this Setian being is more than likely a cherub, a specific order of angelic being described as a *shape-shifter* that we mentioned before. This celestial being comes from the same order of celestial being as Satan himself, and in fact is working directly for Satan, who is "*Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour,*" (1 Peter 5:8) and who "himself masquerades as an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14). So, it is likely that the Setian being in the story of Job was not Satan himself. This Setian being although one of the fallen angels apparently had special permission by God to be there and a special task like a prosecuting attorney to test the claims that God dares to make about the righteousness of human person He has created. This Setian being is called generically שָׂטָן, that is, *ha-satan* (*the satan*), the accuser, the adversary, a celestial prosecutor, the one who lurks about, and who is hater and antagonist of God like his Father Satan. This Hebrew word with the definite article is used in the text, but the translation is obscured so that people are led to think that this being is Satan himself standing before the Lord. We have already noted in *Celestial History* Satan himself had been thrown out of heaven and will never be allowed back in, although *Celestial History* does not give the precise time or date point when this happened. It likely happened at the time God created man and assigned angels to minister to him, Satan being for a time the chief "protector" or even "watcher" assigned to report the actions and character of *ha-Adam* to God. It is on the strength of the definite article that we translate Satan *the satan*. Now the name for this Setian being is in the Old Testament 18 times, and 14 times of which he is mentioned in Job. In 1 Chronicles 21:1 and in Psalms 109:6 there is no *ha-satan* only *Satan*, the *adversary* as translated in the Jerusalem Bible. There is only one other Old Testament book that uses the Hebrew construction used in the Book of Job *ha-satan*, or *the satan*, that is Zechariah 3:1-2 where he again stands as an accuser against in this case Joshua, an *Aaronid* high priest. William P. Brown, associate professor of Old Testament at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia states that:

The common translation "Satan" is avoided here, since the Hebrew term (*hassantan*) is nothing more than a functionary title and, hence, not to be identified with the archenemy of God, as found in the apocalyptic and New Testament literature. In the prologue, this character functions as a roving, semi-independent prosecutor within the heavenly council under Yahweh's charge.⁴²¹

⁴²¹ William P. Brown, *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*

Derek Kidner, former warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge, looks at the same scripture and assesses the matter in a similar manner to Brown. Kidner states:

The scene in which the angels and the adversary alike present themselves to report on their activities expresses in vividly dramatic form the sole authority of God, whose ends even the rebellious unintentionally serve. The point is further emphasized in that the Hebrew treats the word Satan here not as a name but as a common noun, 'the satan', to indicate the place he is allowed to occupy in the total scheme of things. In a trial at law, the *satan*, or 'adversary', is a term for an accuser or prosecutor, and in the present context this creature's cynicism fits him to produce the damning charge that can be brought.⁴²²

In a footnote to these comments Kidner says that in "each of these references [he means here Psalms 109:6b in the RSV and NIV and Zechariah 3:1-2] 'satan' has the definite article, as in Job. Satan appears as proper name only once in the Old Testament (1 Ch.21:1)." In the New Testament Satan's character as the supreme angelic shape-shifter is found in Ephesians 2:2 where he is called "*Ruler of the Kingdom of the Air*," Browns "archenemy of God." The former is a Jewish expression to describe Satan's power over the natural elements, that is, to cause natural evil, the power to control, direct and modify them, such as his ability to send down what man in his ignorance perceives as the *Fire of God* or a *Great Wind* as we saw in the case of Job. Satan's power welded by him and his acolytes and devotees (such as the ha-satan) is limited by the power of God but it is never-the-less real and extraordinary enough to mimic what the human person would perceive as an *act of God* or *God's will*. We can conjecture then that Satan and the order of cherub's he belongs to can spiritualize himself (themselves) into a material being (like a serpent for example) and actually can become part of that material being or the elements, such as the very air in which God-Men and Setian Men operate. Satan can be seen but only with the spiritual eye of the God-Man, himself being seen and yet unseen, appearing at one time visible as wind, air or even empty space, etc. It is apparent at least in the texts that Satan can modify himself but is more than a mere chameleon. Satan can also modify the elements around him. Set or Satan however is not omnipresent and cannot be everywhere present like God himself, but he can affect the natural elements as the "ruler of the air," and so can influence the human person's behavior negatively or even affect negatively his physical being though physical and mental illness and other kinds of sickness. However, Satan has no power over man without the human persons enabling cooperation that is rewarded with the pleasures of demonic experience (i.e. where ultimately the wages of sin is Death). Satan cannot destroy a man's soul, nor does he have the ability to read a human mind *for only God knows the hearts of men* (i.e. the rational psychic and emotive mind of the human person). Satan *cannot* make a humans do anything. Satan can only influence the behavior of man to willfully imbibe in demonic experience, where a man willing destroys his own soul. There is no such thing as "*The Devil made me do it!*" the humorous byword in the old Flip Wilson comedy show. Satan has but one desire and that is make us willfully disobey God and to make us Setian followers of him. God will in the end be declared justified in punishing men because the human person often times is a willful and repeat offender. As Paul says in Romans 3:4, "*Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: 'So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when*

(Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), p. 56, 7f.

⁴²² Derek Kidner, *An Introduction to Wisdom Literature: The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job & Ecclesiastes* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 58.

you judge." (NIV). Revelation affirms God as just in His judgment of the human person for their sins against His holiness:

The third [angel] poured out his bowl into the rivers and springs of water, and they too became blood. I heard the angel of the waters saying, "You are righteous, the one who is, [and] who was, the Holy One, because you have passed judgment. They poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. They deserve this." And I heard the altar saying, "Yea, Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments!" (Revelation 16:4-7, EOB).

In the very last *Sura* of the *Qur'an* called *Nas* or "Mankind", i.e. *Sura* 114:4-6, Satan or Set or *Shaitan* is called the *Whisperer of Evil*, شر الوسواس (*sharri l-waswasi*, "[the] evil" "[of] the whisperer") who then *withdraws* after he *whispers evil suggestions* into the hearts of men. He and his Setian army can suggest but they cannot make a man, who is endowed with freewill do anything. The text reads as follows: "From the mischief of the *Whisperer of Evil*, who *withdraws* (after his whisper). (The same) who *whispers into the hearts of mankind—Among jinns and among men*" (*An-Nas*, *Sura* 114-6, Yusuf Ali). According to Abdullah Yusuf Ali:

Evil insinuates itself in all sorts of insidious ways from within, so as to sap man's will, which was given to man by God. This power of evil may be Satan, or evil men, or the evil inclination within man's own will for there are "evil one among men and *jinns*, inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception" (6.112). They secretly whisper evil and then withdraw, to make their net the more subtle and alluring . . . This last clause amplifies the description of the sources from which the whisper of evil may emanate: they may be men whom you may see or invisible spirits of evil working within. . . So long as we put ourselves in God's protection, and trust in God, evil cannot really touch us in our essential and inner life.

However, this is not to under-estimate Satan and the *ha-satan*, that is, followers of Satan. They are powerful and apparently God has not taken away the powers natural to their specie of spiritual being and embodiment. Those demons (i.e. fallen angels) assigned to people and nations have unusual powers of perception of men's emotive behaviors of the psychic-mind which they have observed for thousands of years. This uncanny ability allows them to make suggestions (i.e. whisper) or create negative circumstances with the ultimate goal of murdering the spiritual, psychic-mind, and/or physical being of God-Men, who is destined to be *their over-ruler* under the command of God in the Kingdom of Heaven. Hebrews 2:7-8 says in confirmation of this that man was made a little lower than the angels and that God, "*crowned him with glory and honor and put everything under his feet. In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.*" Paul states in Corinthians 6:3 (NIV): "*Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!*" This future status of ruling in the Kingdom of God includes ruling over Satan and the *ha-satan* as well. The human person will not be able to achieve this human/divine status as deiform being until they overcome the desire for *demonic experiences and pleasures* if the human person wants to be co-creators and co-rulers with God. *Sin* is second element or triune aspect of Nothingness and principal cause for the enmity that exists between God and man. *Evil* seeks to increase *Sin* in the human person and minimize the occasions for the condescension of the good and the beautiful in human communities. Evil seeks to harass the human person and embarrass mankind before God by influencing humans to sin in an attempt to separate

us from the love of God. Fortunately for us Evil ultimately is not able to achieve this because:

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those that are called according to his purpose. . . . What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. Indeed, I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:28-39, EOB).

We are under God's full protection on the Superhighway of God in the Earth of Time and Eternity but we must not be overcome by *Evil* but rather overcome *Evil* with good (Romans 12:20), and do away with *Sin* in our lives by denouncing the desire and pleasures of demonic experiences offered by IT. We must not continue to Sin and become like Satan and his demons' acolytes and devotees of *Evil*. The Scriptures warns us about this:

Everyone who sins breaks the law, and in fact, sin is lawlessness. You know that Christ was revealed to take away our sins, and in him there is no sin. Whoever remains in him does not continue in sin, but whoever practices sin has not seen him and does not know him. Little children, let no one lead you astray. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. Whoever lives in sin belongs to the devil, since the devil has been a sinner from the beginning. This was the purpose of the manifestation of the Son of God, to undo the work of the devil. Those who have been born of God do not keep on sinning because God's seed abides in them. They cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. This is how the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother [or sister]. (1 John 3:4-10, EOB).

However, even when we feel defeated by *Sin* in our lives God additionally gives us this comfort in our struggle of good and evil: *"And this is how we know that we are of the truth and assure our heart in his presence; even if our own heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness toward God. Whatever we ask, we receive from him because we keep his commandments and do what is pleasing in his sight"* (1 John 3:20-22, EOB). The human person is designed in our human/divine nature to give God praise and become co-creators in the work of building God's Kingdom in the Earth of Time. Thus, we are created to participate in occasions for creating the good and beautiful within the existential realm of the here and now. Setian beings who (like the *ha-satan* in Job) are acolytes and devotees of *Evil* know full well that what we achieve here on earth will have a positive outcome in the *Earth of Eternity* based on the paradigm that I have already set forth. This celestial paradigm provides the rationale for the *cosmic conjunction and functional relationship between the Earth of Time and the Earth of Eternity*. This human/divine relationship is often interrupted by Sin on God's superhighway is tested just as often (as was Job's relationship with God) by the *ha-satan* (i.e. the impertinent prosecutor who accuses the human person before God and His angel's day and night). Nevertheless, the *ha-satan* no matter his impertinence before God is yet subordinate to the will of God. Some theologians speculate using another perspective and advance the idea that this *ha-satan* in Job is the negative expression of God's

holiness. Karl Barth believes that *Evil* is some kind of black hole in relationship to God's being. The idea is that what God *does not actuate* somehow becomes *really real* as a byproduct of God's act in creating Heaven and Earth. God's creative act somehow brings Evil into reality as one triune aspect of *Nothingness*. God is somehow the source that brings *Nothingness* and its triune aspects of *Evil*, *Sin* and *Death* into existence even if the positive creative act to bring about the good and the beautiful caused it. This is okay with Barth since God did not positively will it and even more because God yet is sovereign over IT and all acolytes and devotees of *Evil*. From a process theological perspective all occasions for good are occasions that may bring about *evil* as it's opposite since as a triune ontological reality seeks to destroy and decrease those occasions for good in God's *Good Creation*. David Ray Griffin, Associate Professor of Philosophy of Religion, School of Theology at Claremont presents Barth's position in the following way:

However, there is another strand of Barth's thought, the strand which contains the doctrine of nothingness, which seems to say that there is power in reality other than God's by which the creatures go against God's will and thereby cause genuine evil. . . . But what is this nothingness? And in what sense does it "exist" as a third factor alongside God and God creation? Formally, nothingness is that which God has negated or rejected, that which God does not will. Barth defines it as "the possibility which God in his eternal decree rejected and therefore did not and does not will". . . Barth elsewhere suggests its multiple nature, as he describes it as "the possibility, which God in His creative decision has ignored and despised, . . . that this which God did not elect and will "comprises the infinite range of all the possibilities which He passed over and with good reason did not actualize" However, when Barth moves beyond this purely formal definition to describe the content of nothingness, it is narrowed down to one idea. He lists the forms of nothingness as real sin, real death, the real evil of suffering, the devil, and hellWhat all the forms of nothingness have in common is this: antithesis to the grace of God. "What confronts Him in us and all creation, what is alien and opposed to His gracious will --- that and that alone is true nothingness, sin, evil, death in their true form as that which is bad". . . . This must be regarded as the essence of evil, since for Barth the grace of God, as the basis and norm of all being, is the criterion of all good. Therefore the negation of God's grace is that which is intrinsically evil. . . . namely, what is a lie and adverse to grace, and therefore without it" This nothingness is a reality. But is it a reality *sui generis*. Only God and the creatures *properly* are. Nothingness has nothing in common with them. "In a third way of its own nothingness 'is'". . . . It has "the being of non-being, the existence of that which does not exist" It "is" only "as inherent contradiction, as impossible possibility". . . .How can it exist? The answer is: It cannot. Only that which God wills can possibly exist. And nothingness is by definition that which God does not will. Hence it cannot exist. And yet it does. Hence, it exists as an impossible possibility."⁴²³

The argument of Barth seems circular and never bottoms out the question of where does *Evil* or *Nothingness* comes from even though Barth does try and get at the nature of IT, that is, "*what does not exist.*" Some would say that this completely side steps in a completely inconsistent way *the problem of evil* in relationship to the omnibenevolence of God. Barth does not care much for consistency so that he can maintain his doctrine of the sovereignty of God over even of his own *doctrine of nothingness*. This is what Barth means by the *Problem of Nothingness*. If God is sovereign over all

⁴²³David Ray Griffin, *God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy*. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster Press, 1991), pp. 159-161.

things He is also sovereign over *no-things* and somehow the source of both because He is God and the Creator. Barth merely says so what to the arguments of theodicy which try to absolve God from being the source of evil. Whatever *Evil* is and whatever its nature IT remains the very anti-thesis of God's goodness, mercy and grace according to Barth as we have seen above. Others may then take a hint from Barth and say that *Evil* is the *alter-ego of God* given embodiment within *demonic experience* of *ha-satan* and other human and/or spiritual entities that are devotee and acolytes of *Evil* with Satan himself being the perfect host and Chief acolyte and devotee of *Evil*. As such Satan appears to be *evil incarnate* although we reject that notion. The theological speculation on the origin of evil also has this as one of its poles. This is why I *italicized* parts of the texts in the *Book of Job* to show that the writer describes the fire that destroyed Job's sheep and some of his servants as *The Fire From God* and has God admitting in the second round of challenge with the *ha-satan* that He *was incited against Job for no reason* and even has the *ha-satan* to say *if you stretch forth your hand against Job* as if God is the one punishing Job unjustly and as if God can be tempted of evil which the New Testament writer James says is impossible "*because God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. But a person is tempted when drawn away and enticed by his own lust*" (James 1:13b-14, EOB). Here again we are faced with apparent biblical inconsistencies and the kind of *impossible possibilities* that Barth was faced with when dealing with how *Evil* operates on the *Superhighway of God* in and between the *Earth of Time* and the *Earth of Eternity*. I think the story of Job showing God acting in ways contrary to doctrinal statements in the New Testament brings forth some theological inconsistencies that make certain presuppositions about God untenable. This comes from trying to *explain* or *explain away* theological dualism. Egyptian religion and theology may be of some help here. Ancient Egyptian religion and theology has the same problem with dualism as Christian biblical theology does today. In Egyptian religion and theology dualism posits two god's of equal power, that is the *god of good* and the *god of evil* and it also death with how one could subordinate to the other but yet powerful enough to oppose the will of the other as Evil does (by God's permissive will) on the Superhighway of God.

The Egyptians present the two opposing principles of *Good and Evil* as the  *Twin God's*,

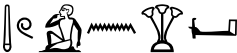
 *Horus and Set on one body* to give expression to the idea that good and evil come from the same divine substance (another *impossible possibility*) but are in constant battle to balance one principle against the other, which when achieved can only end in stalemate called *ma'at*.⁴²⁴ Even the Egyptians could not deal with this dualist stalemate and eventually has Horus defeat and *bound* Set or Satan as in Revelations 20:1-2 (NIV):

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and *bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations any more until the thousand years were ended.*

The chaining of Satan or Set is found in Egyptian sacred writing three thousand years before the *Book of Revelation* was written by John on the Isle of Patmos. The *Evil One*, the god of darkness

⁴²⁴ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), 475; Vol. 2, pp. 242-243.

in his symbolic form of a hippopotamus was defeated and chained by Horus the Holy One, i.e. *elohim* or angel of light. E. A. Wallis Budge translates the Egyptian text as follows:

When Set saw what had been done to his friends [Setian followers, both celestial and terrestrial, authors insertion] he cried out and uttered awful imprecations and complaints of the terrible destruction which Horus had wrought, and because of his foul words,
, *metu-neha*, the fiend was ever after called Nehaha, 
 . Horus straightway attacked Set, and hurled his lance at him, and threw him down upon
 the ground in a place near the city which always afterwards called Per-Rerehu, 
 ; when he came back he brought Set with him, and his spear was in his neck,
, *and the legs of the monster were chained, and his mouth had been closed by a blow from the club of the god* [my emphasis].⁴²⁵

We notice immediately the parallel to the biblical account with that of the Egyptian sacred text, in that Horus *seized* Set, *chained* Set and *sealed* his mouth so that he could not talk and continue his lies, accusations, slander, and invocations of evil against God-men. It was Set's nature to use verbal accusation and deceit in order to accomplish his purpose, which was to rule over the Kingdom of Horus, given to him by his father Osiris. The sacred text of the Egyptian texts parallels the biblical text in respect of Jesus enemy Satan, who attempting to rule the Holy Colony of Earth by deceit, only to be overthrown for a thousand years while Jesus, the Horus-Christ rules the *Earth of Time* from the Camp of God. As the Apostle John points out Satan is called the accuser of mankind and John says in Revelation 12:10 (NIV): "*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.*" Before this war in heaven scene in Revelation 12:7 Satan is thrown out of heaven along with his angels by the Arch-Angel Michael and his angels. When Satan realizes in 12:13 that he has been hurled to earth, he sets out in anger as Set did with Horus to make war with humanity. It is with his foulmouth that he spews forth curses, blasphemy and along with his surrogates he makes war against God and man. As we can see in the Egyptian original Horus not only bound Set's hands and feet but with one blow to his face closed his *mouth* which he uses to blaspheme and accuse with. Revelations parallels this notion in 13:5-8 (NIV), which states:

The beast was given a *mouth* to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast --- all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. (my *italics*).

Egyptian theological dualism came out of their desire to defend the *oneness of God* and reconcile that notion with the desire to absolve God as an omnibenevolent being from the charge of origination *Evil*. The Egyptians had to deal with the theological paradox of having twin gods of good and evil on one body. This suggested not only that they were in opposition one to the other to gain

⁴²⁵ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Vol. 1, 480.

the ascendancy within the cosmic created order but also (and doctrinally unacceptable) one in divine substance as well. How can this be true? This is the Egyptians theological and ontological *impossible possibility*. This is a theodicy just as cumbersome as all of the modern ones in that the Egyptians are trying to preserve a certain doctrine of God, while at the same time trying to explain how genuine Evil can exist if all-powerful, loving and Sovereign God exists. For good and evil to exist within God at one and the same time is a *coincidence of opposites*, which means that both good and evil are somehow encompassed within the ontological being of God and this fact leads God to expiate *Evil* from His being onto sentient beings who by nature are willing to be its acolytes and devotees. This of course seems outrageous to Christian sensibilities not because we hold to biblical truth but to our well-worn theologies and doctrines despite clear evidence in the Scripture that might favor such a radical notion. Here is another example beside what we have pointed out in God's admission that the ha-satan "incited" God against Job to harm him for "no reason." In the incident where King Jehoshaphat of Judah made a military alliance with King Ahab of Israel against Ramoth-gilead (Ahab's enemy) King Jehoshaphat wanted assurance from one of God's prophets (not one selected by Ahab) as to whether he should join this battle. King Ahab was not happy about this but chose the prophet Micaiah son of Imlah. Micaiah gives the following revealing prophesy that shows how events in the Earth of Time are influenced by the Earth of Eternity and even more revealing shows God willing to permit the use of sinful means by one member of God's angelic army to bring about an outcome apparently blessed by God, which His decree that Ahab die in his war against Ramoth-Gilead:

Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing to the right and to the left of him. And the Lord said, Who will entice King Ahab of Israel, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? Then one said one thing, and another said another, until a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, 'I will entice him.' The Lord asked him, 'How?' He replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. Then the Lord said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it. So you see, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets; the Lord has decreed disaster for you. (2 Chronicles 18:18-22, NRSV).

I have heard preachers say, "I believe every word of the Bible!" But do they really? How can they reconcile biblical passages such as the one above showing God condoning the use of lying to achieve His will with the Earth of Time? How can they reconcile what the Bible clearly says with their own theology and doctrine that seems to be supported in other parts of Scripture but contradicted in others? A reconciliation of these two poles of good and evil where God expiates Evil from Himself onto others willing to carry it out has to be explained. Of course, I don't have an answer, but the Egyptians attempted to demonstrate this tension between the twin poles of good and evil by showing that the Horus-Christ and Set (Satan) are Twin Gods. Evil for them is real, genuine and has dual nature that cannot be separated from one with the other by any human power. The only possibility is that one or the other god is temporarily dominant within the cosmos. The only true evil is the imbalance within the cosmos and the only good is when good and evil are balanced within the cosmos. What the Egyptians are really saying in their depiction of the twin gods of good and evil is that *only God can separate good from evil or make good triumph over evil*. The Egyptian presumably has solved one important aspect of the problem of evil. They have kept the doctrine of the oneness of God intact but also they have managed to uphold the dual principle of good and evil without at the same time

denying genuine evil by positing all goodness in God and all evil in Satan. The Egyptians have destroyed the implications of the dualist theological preposition that *Satan is equal to God* but leaves the doctrine with the implication that God (represented by the Horus-Christ in the struggle with Set) must of necessity struggle with *Evil* that threatens His own being with *Nothingness*. This scenario would make God the victim of Evil as Barth proposes and expiation of Evil from God onto the frontiers of God's Good Creation is the only for God to deal with IT since IT (*for the moment*) cannot be destroyed. Because of the *coincidence of opposites* the Egyptians attempt to protect the doctrine of the oneness of God runs into an error that suggests that *God is somehow still the responsible for Evil* that's found in God's *Good Creation*. Evil in this scenario does not exist autonomously but even more dangerously is the *alter ego* of God. The *alter ego* argument without the complexity of the Egyptian original runs into trouble as well. *Evil* is said to be the *alter ego* to God's holiness. But Jesus counters by saying there is none good but the Father. Elsewhere it says that God is light and in Him can no darkness be found. But here we are on two horns of a dilemma. Because God is *All-good* and no darkness is in God then *Evil* has to come from somewhere since IT at the same time is *really real*. Christian theology ultimately (as Barth did) has to come to terms with the notion that *Evil* is *both* genuine and *really real* (i.e. has some kind of ontological being). Because *Evil* is genuine and *really real* (while maintaining that God is All-good and All-powerful) you have to either accept *dualism* (two gods of equal power and authority, one good and the other evil) or the *alter ego* conjecture that suggests that *Evil* is by necessity the negative aspect of God's holy nature. To escape *dualism* or the *alter ego* conjecture there is nothing left but to propose *theological subordination*. Christian theology needs Satan to explain the presence and reality of *Evil* without having to dwell on arguments for either the origin or nature of *Evil*. For the most part Christian theology is satisfied with the idea of blaming all evil on Satan and his human acolytes and devotees for it helps them avoid the perplexing questions surrounding the origin and nature of *Evil*. Christian theology must have an evil being powerful enough to challenge God but yet fall under God's authority and power. Satan who is a mere created being and creature that wants to *make himself like the Most High*. This is clear in Isaiah and a second passage in Ezekiel:

How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; *I will make myself like the Most High* (Isaiah 14:12-14, NIV, my *italics*).

This is what the Sovereign Lord says: You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. *You were in Eden, the garden of God*; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; *on the day you were created they were prepared*. You were anointed as *a guardian cherub*, for so I ordained you. *You were on the holy mount of God*; you walked among the fiery stones. *You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you*. Through your widespread trade you were *filled with violence*, and *you sinned*. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and expelled you, O guardian cherub from among the fiery stones. *Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth*; I made a spectacle of you before kings . . . All the nations who knew you are appalled at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more. (Ezekiel 28:12-19, NIV).

Satan is reminded that he is a *mere created being* who has the temerity to try and be equal with the Creator-God. Satan is told of his origins and that through willful disobedience to God he is in fact a *sinner*, a *murderer*, and a *liar from the beginning*. *Original sin* therefore began in heaven and not in the *Earth of Time and Eternity* represented as the *Garden of God* in Genesis and Ezekiel. Jesus says of Satan in John 8:44 (NIV): “*You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*” Ezekiel says that Satan was both *created being* and the author of sin from *the beginning*. However, it does not necessarily follow that Satan is author of *Evil* as well. The knowledge of good and evil already present in the garden as a reality expiated from God and given embodiment as a principle along with good as represented symbolically by the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. Satan was assigned to *the Garden of God* as the *guardian cherub* as the spiritual protector of God’s human creation and overseer *the Garden*. Satan chose to use that authority to begin his attack on God’s *Good Creation* with his aim clearly laid out in Isaiah as quoted above. We know from Genesis, Satan using the power he had as cherub angel to be a shape-shifter appeared before Eve as a serpent and introduced her to evil by influencing her through deceit of his *mouth* to participate in the pleasures of demonic experience: “*So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate*” (Genesis 3:6, NSRV).

Original sin that theologians from Calvin to contemporary theologians speak of does not have its roots in biblical theology but Hellenistic dualism or some form of oriental dualism between the philosophical principle of good and evil. If not for the dominance Greek speculative theory in Western thought, theologians like Luther, Calvin and others would have seen clearly in scripture that the origin of evil began in heaven (*Earth of Eternity*) with Satan as the chief participant in demonic experience and who introduced it *later* in the *Earth of Time* through the willful disobedience of men in cooperation with Satan, the Chief acolyte and devotee of *Evil*. These Christian reformers would have known according to Genesis that God created first the *heavens* (for which we do not have a complete *celestial history* in the scriptures) *then* God created the Earth. It was in the *celestial history* of the heavens that *original sin* had its beginnings. How this theological supposition *does not* absolve from sin and guilt for submitting their wills to *Setian influence and Setianism* in return for the pleasures of *demonic experiences*. Barth will affirm again and again that God is sovereign and is not subject to human will or our accusations about how God deals with Evil and/or why He allows *IT* to exist and operate in the *Earth of Time* (i.e. the temporal order subject to change). The bottom line is (whether we understand it or not or willing to accept it or not) God may do whatever He wishes within God’s *Good Creation*. God is the Creator and so we (as human persons and contingent beings) must take warning from Scripture that states: “*Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay (which we are) say to the potter (which God is), ‘What are you making?’ . . . Woe to him who says to his father, ‘What have you begotten?’ Or to his mother, ‘What have you brought to birth?’ (Isaiah 45:9-10, NIV)*. Rather we should give God honor and praise by saying with the Prophet Isaiah: “*Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay; you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be angry beyond measure, O Lord; do not remember our sins forever. Oh, look upon us, we pray, for we are all your people.*” (Isaiah 64:8-9, NIV). Our humble condition as contingent human persons does not mean we cannot explore and question God’s actions and even God’s motives for His actions in respect to *our life-world* and *lived-experience* of suffering and/or pain for God Himself invites mankind: “*Come now let us*

reason together" (Isaiah 1:18a, NIV). We can reason things out with God as long as we recognize that God's sovereignty of His *Good Creation* and the limitations of our horizon of understanding as contingent beings and creatures of that creative process. This is why in this project I feel comfortable in exploring the nature of Evil in relationship to God's holiness, attributes absolute goodness and power and entertaining conjectures the coincidences of opposites that suggest uncomfortable notions that God Evil might be the alter-ego of God's holiness or somehow the necessary by-product of God's creative process. God does have to be any of the things I say as long ultimate respect who God is through the best reasoned arguments I can make or examine and finally that I recognize with other Christian theologians that *we can* (for the moment) *see God and even ourselves only through a glass darkly*. That being said we press on to discover and explore what may be known in seeking the truth.

We must also understand another aspect of God sovereignty. God's permissive will does not just extend to man but to other sentient beings like the *ha-satan* and Satan himself. When let loose within the prescribe limits set by God on the Superhighway of God the *ha-satan* can do considerable damage to human/divine Osirian travelers on the pathway to eternal life because of their awesome power relative to the weak frame of mortal man or God-Men. The *ha-satan* a class of angels (e.g. the guardian cherub, etc.) with enormous powers wisdom and discernment and when given over to *Evil* can wreak great damage to the human person's *life-world* and *lived-experience* of suffering as in the case of Job. Even the weakness of these demonic spiritual beings is more powerful than the mightiest of mortal man, so that when God permits, their evil actions against man, it appears to man to be *The Fire of God* or a *Mighty Wind*; acts which insurance agencies so glibly calls *Acts of God* to escape the liability for damages. They never say *Acts of Satan* because supposedly only God can control nature and therefore natural disaster, which is not true. God has other created beings or actors in the universe, including us, that are endowed with certain awesome powers (e.g. look at man's current awesome power of reason and intellect to destroy the whole world with the power of nuclear warfare, and to kill people from a distance, surgically using smart bombs and so making killing a mere "war game" that can be "played" without any guilt whatever). Of course, God has given us moral neutral power to choose between good and evil. We are therefore permitted to use our free gift of moral neutral power in contradistinction to God's will because God will not violate our free will to choose good or evil. He will however judge us for our actions in word and deed because "whatever a man sows, so shall he reap!" Man as a special order of *spiritual being clothed in flesh* is not described by the bible as being *a little higher than other members of the so-called animal kingdom*, he is described in Hebrews 2:7 and Psalms 8:6 as *a little lower than the angels or heavenly beings*, so that we are a *spiritual class of being that are members of the spiritual kingdom of God* and only temporarily members of the so-called animal kingdom by virtue of being *clothed in flesh*. We are spirit beings constitute or incarnated in flesh and thus are not merely human but psychic-spiritual beings. That knowledge of course leads to the conclusion that we should not be servants of the flesh, because the perfection of our bodily form (in so much as that is possible) is given us only for the purpose of locomotion and sensation so that we may be able to carry out God's will in the *Earth of Time*. And in addition, we are perfectly capable of communicating on a very profound spiritual level because of our natural spiritual anthropology, that is, from our God-given spiritual natures or divinity. We are spiritual beings at our core and are bound for eternal life unless God kills our souls in the second death. This is theological proposition in both Christianity and in Egyptian religion which can be seen in the *Book of Revelation* and the Egyptian *Pert em Heru* so-called "Book of the Dead" that we have already mentioned above. Our psychic-spiritual anthropology constituted as such means that God intends to glorify the corruptible flesh of man and transform it into an incorruptible new body for

those who elected to believe in Christ, so close is the ontological relationship between body and soul. The following New Testament scripture supports this supposition:

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose. Whoever God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that his Son might be the firstborn among many brethren. Whoever God predestined, he also called. Those whom he called, he also justified. Those whom he justified, he also glorified. What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how would he not also give us all things with him freely? Who could bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies! Who is the one who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes and rather, who is risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (Romans 8:28-34, EOB).

Not understanding our relational form and relational status to heavenly being makes us incapable of seeing so-called *Acts of God*s coming from any other source than God himself because we tend to avoid the dualist principles that posit other divine powers in *created being or spiritual actors* in the universe but ourselves. We deny the possibility that there are *Elohim* who because of their extraordinary power appear to us as gods. Paul certainly had the same problem dealing with this concept of *the gods* in relationship with the One God. He both denied and admitted that there are other gods in the created order, which in our thinking should always be tempered with the knowledge that these celestial beings only mimic the being god-like because of their superior power relative to ours. They *do exist but are not the Creator-God*. They are not Deity (non-created, non-contingent being). They are created beings of a particular spiritual order and embodiment and therefore should never be worshipped as some are in danger of worshipping angels today. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 8:5-6:

For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, *from whom all things came* and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, *through whom all things came* [see Gospel of John 1:1-3] and through whom we live.

God's holy angels recognize they are not gods and should not be worshipped. After John received Revelation from the angel of the Lord he fell down twice (in Revelation 19:10 and 22:9) to worship him. The text in Revelation Chapter 22 reads:

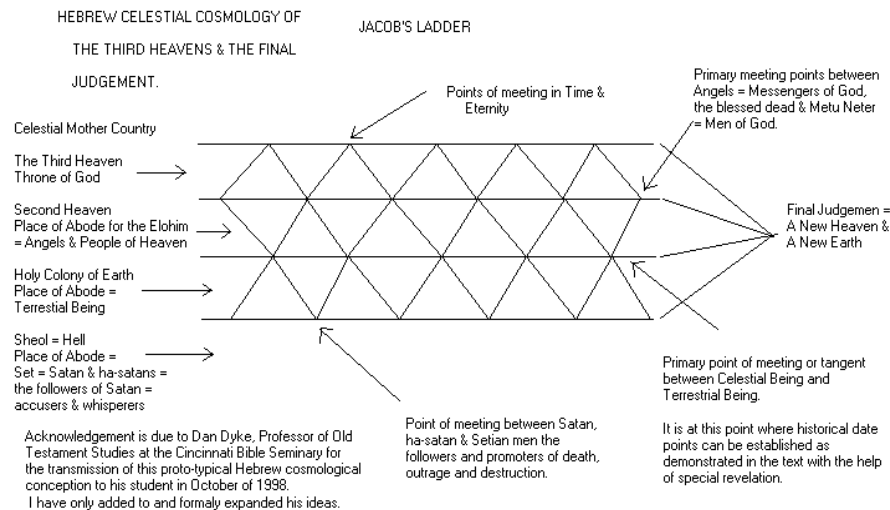
The angel said to me, "These words are faithful and true! The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show to his bondservant the things which must happen soon." "And behold, I come quickly! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophesy of this book." Now I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw, I fell down to express adoration at the feet of the angel who had shown me these things. He said to me, "See that you do not do it! I am a fellow bondservant with you and with your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Express adoration to God!"
(Revelation 22:6-9, EOB).

John's experience with the angel in Revelation shows just how over awed the human person is (in our emotive psychic mind) when confronted with the extraordinary power of spiritual

phenomenon and entities. We can only understand and interpret these experiential phenomena from the perspective (or through the emotive lens) of our own *life-world* and *lived-experience*. It is very likely that our condition is considered by God when such revelation is given to us. The reality of the revelation is modified to fit our emotive psychic-mind and therefore what we get in such prophesy from Ezekiel, Daniel and John is the spiritual reality *as they saw it!* The Hebrew writer reinterpreted the heavenly scenes in the story of Job much the same way, so it fit well into his Hebrew *theocentric* horizon of thought. He could only see the acts against Job as *Acts of God* as most people do today when certain unexplained disasters hit. Job's so-called friends approached and reproached him from this same theocentric viewpoint: "*What did you do to make God do these things to you? What sin or sins did you commit to make God punish you, Job?*" The Hebrew writer is staying true to the story *as they saw it* in giving their view from the prospective of the human person and how the human person with their limited and limiting spiritual and psychological capacity perceive events at the *conjunction of Time and Eternity*. The Hebrew conception of Time and Eternity is demonstrated by the diagram attached to the end of this section, I have called the *Hebrew Celestial Cosmology of the Third Heavens & The Final Judgment* is a graphic depiction of the heavenly vision dramatically illustrated in Genesis 28:10-13, commonly called within the African-American Baptist faith tradition *Jacob's Ladder*. Not only is this a story of the vision of Jacob an illustration of Hebrew celestial cosmology but it betrays its origin as Egyptian in conception, for it is no less than the *Ladder of Osiris* by which he ascended from the *Earth of Eternity* up to the Third Heavens after his resurrection from the dead in triumph over Set who had him crucified (i.e. nailed and sealed in a coffin that could not hold him). The Hebrew text says:

Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. *He had a dream in which he was a stairway ["ladder" in KJV] resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.* (my *italics*). There above it stood the Lord, and he said: "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. (Genesis 28:10-13, NIV).

On the Hebrew cosmological chart below the diagonal lines represent the ladder or stairway upon which *the angels of God ascend and descend*, and shows the Hebrew idea of the *conjunction between Time and Eternity = the Earth of Time and the Earth of Eternity*.



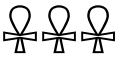
What does this Hebrew conceptualization of *Time and Eternity* have to do with Osiris and Kamau Egyptian religion? Moses who was educated as an Osirian priest is likely the one who transmitted from the cosmological ideas he acquired from the Egyptian Original to the Hebrews. Some Old Testament scholars believe the writer who wrote Genesis used Egyptian genre and forms of writing to tell their Hebrew theocentric story. Undoubtedly the writer of Genesis (who we believe is Moses) was influenced by Egyptian forms of writing and literature. In addition to that supposition is the fact that the story of the *Ladder of Osiris* exists in texts thousands of years older than the Book of Genesis is probably the *Egyptian Original* that Moses replied on to tell this part of his story of Jacob. In the *Pyramid Text of Pepi, the First* (c.2325-c.2150) and those of *Unas* these original Egyptian texts may be found. E. A. Wallis Budge comments upon and translates from these texts the following:

In the pyramid of Pepi I the king is identified with this ladder: "Isis saith, 'Happy are they who see the father,' and Nephthys saith, 'They who see the father have rest,' speaking unto the father of this Osiris Pepi when he cometh forth unto heaven among the stars and among the luminaries which never set. With the uraeus on his brow, and his book upon both his sides, and magic words at his feet, Pepi goeth forward unto his mother Nut, and he entereth therein in his name Ladder." The gods who preside over this ladder are at one time Ra and Horus, and at another Horus and Set. In the pyramid of Unas it is said, "Ra setteth upright the ladder for Osiris, and Horus raiseth up the ladder for his father Osiris, when Osiris goeth to [find] his soul; one standeth on the one side, and the other standeth on the other, and Unas is betwixt them. Unas standeth up and is Horus, he sitteth down and is Set." And in the pyramid of Pepi I. we read, "Hail to thee, O Ladder of God, hail to thee, O Ladder of Set. Stand up, O Ladder of God, stand up, O Ladder of Set, stand up, O Ladder of Horus, whereon Osiris went forth into heaven. . . . Pepi hath gathered together his bones, he hath collected his flesh, and Pepi hath gone straightway into heaven by means of *the two fingers of the god* who is he Lord of the Ladder."⁴²⁶

⁴²⁶ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), lxx-lxxi.

Who is the *Lord of the Ladder*? It is none other than Osiris himself, who is the soul of Ra, like Horus is the soul of Osiris. This is the theological equivalent of the Hegelian notion of sublation, where Jesus is in the bosom of the Father as is said in John 1:18 (NIV): “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the *bosom of the Father*, he hath declared *him*,” and John 17:19-23 (EOB):

I sanctify myself for their sake, so that they too may be sanctified in truth. I do not pray only for these, but also for those who [will] believe in through their word, so that they may all be one; *even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you. May they be one in us*, so that the world may believe that you sent me. The glory which you have given me, I have given to them, so that they may be one even as we are one; *I in them, and you in me*. May they be perfected into one, so that the world may know that you sent me, and [that you have] loved them, even as you have loved me. (my *italics*).

Not only is Osiris the Lord of the Ladder in the Egyptian texts, but he is also God, the Son of God, once he reaches heaven. Budge goes on to say, “*When the Osiris of a man has entered into heaven as a living soul, he is regarded as one of those who ‘have eaten the eye of Horus’; he walks among the living ones* , *he becomes ‘God, the Son of God,’ that is,* , *Neter, Sa Neter.* ⁴²⁷When Moses tells the story of *Jacob’s Ladder* and the Lord at the top of the ladder he is speaking about God Almighty. In Egyptian theology Osiris the God of the Ladder is also the *Son of the God of Time and Eternity* (as represented by the hieroglyphics , *Sa, Neter Sa*, whose birth as Lord of the Creation affirms him as being One among the Trinity , that is, the *living one that has life within themselves*. In a remarkable statement that agrees with the Egyptian Original Jesus says: “*For as the Father has life in himself, so has he given to the Son to have life in himself. He also gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be astonished at this, because the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment*” (John 5:26-29, EOB). The birth of the Lord of Creation in the person of the Son of God and Son of Man is also the cosmological basis for the development of the *Kamau Solar Calendar*. E. A. Wallace Budge, narrating part of Plutarch’s story, *Osiris and Isis*, states:

According to this writer the goddess Rhea [Nut], the wife of Helios [Ra], was beloved by Kronos [Seb]. When Helios discovered the intrigue, he cursed his wife and declared that she should not be delivered of her child in any month or in any year. Then the god Hermes, who also loved Rhea, played at tables with Selene and won from her the seventieth part of each day of the year, which, added together, make five whole days. These he joined to the three hundred and sixty days of which the year then consisted. Upon the first of these five days was Osiris brought forth; and at the moment of his birth a voice was heard to proclaim that the lord of creation was born. ⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ Budge, lxxi-lxxii.

⁴²⁸ Budge, xlix.

Interestingly enough the celestial announcement of the birth of the Man-God or God-Man Osiris is similar to the proclamation of *the birth of Jesus Christ, whose birth like that of Osiris split time in both the Earth of Eternity and the Earth of Time, the Solar Calendar coming into existence at the birth of Osiris and the Christian or Common Era A.D. coming into existence at the birth of Jesus Christ*. Both the ancient Egyptians (and as we will see below, the Muslims, as well) believe that their sacred writing is only a shadow or copy of portions of the *Eternal Book* in Heaven, which is mentioned in Revelation as the “*Eternal Gospel*” in the hands of a holy angel proclaiming it to all the nations on Earth (Revelation 14:6). The Egyptians captured a portion of this revelation by reading the heavens by translating developing that reading into a uranographic representation of what they saw as the *written sacred word of God* (i.e. *Medu Neter*, sacred writing). They declared that the *Word of God* was written in the heavens by the *finger of God* and transmitted through the Mind of God, i.e. represented by the

god *Tehuti*, ,  the ibis-god, the scribe of the gods, who writes the *Book of Life* the final

judgment of the Osirian traveler  as their his/her heart is weighed in the balance by Anubis, even as Jesus would do in the final judgment: “*because the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.*” (John 5:28-29, EOB). This uranographic representation was expressed by means of hieroglyphics with the resultant cosmological notions discovered (or revealed) compiled later into various theological works and theological schools of thought. The Egyptians were the first to promulgate a “revealed” religion. A comparison between the Egyptian Original and the Books of Moses (especially Genesis and Exodus) will show heavy borrowing by the later and in addition show the same borrowing in both the Psalms and Proverbs.⁴²⁹ This is not to say that the Hebrews did not have a unique *revealed religion of the Book*. We claim here that they just did not merely create or “receive” their revelation of God’s Word outside of the Egyptian cultural matrix they had been in for over 430 years. For all this time they saw the *Word of God* produced by the Egyptians from uranographic representation written like billboard on Egyptian monuments for over four centuries. How is it claimed then that they received this sacred Word independently and directly from God in its initial transmission (from Moses) apart from the sacred Word they (and Moses) learned from the Egyptians for centuries? Successive revelation could very well mean that God used the Egyptian Original as a means to reveal Himself to Moses who used his vast understanding of these sacred scripture begin the development of the Torah that led to development (over thousands of years) of the Hebrew Bible. No sacred scripture occurred in a cultural and literary vacuum. This notion does not diminish the theological and biblical notion of verbal inspiration of the scriptures one wit. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God* but *verbal inspiration* is only one mode God used to reveal Himself. The writer of Hebrews signifies this truth by stating: “*In the past, God spoke to the fathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. At the end of these days, he has spoken to us in his Son who he has appointed heir of all things and through whom he [had] made the ages*” (Hebrews 1:1-2, EOB). According to these ancient sources the

⁴²⁹ Dia S. Mari-Jata, “The Wisdom Traditions of Amen-em-ope and Proverbs: The Controversy Over Parallels,” *A Term Paper Presented to Cincinnati Bible College & Seminary* (December 2, 1997), 5.

sacred books we now have in our hands, the Egyptian *Metcha-t Neter*, the Hebrew *Old Testament*, and the *New Testament* are only a minute part of the *Book of Truth* in Heaven. The Egyptians and the Hebrews are not the only religionist to believe such things. The Muslims also have this concept and in *Sura* 13:38-39, entitled *Ra'd*, that is, "Thunder." This chapter or *sura* speaks of the *Mother of the Book* from which the *Qur'an* was revealed to Muhammad. It says:

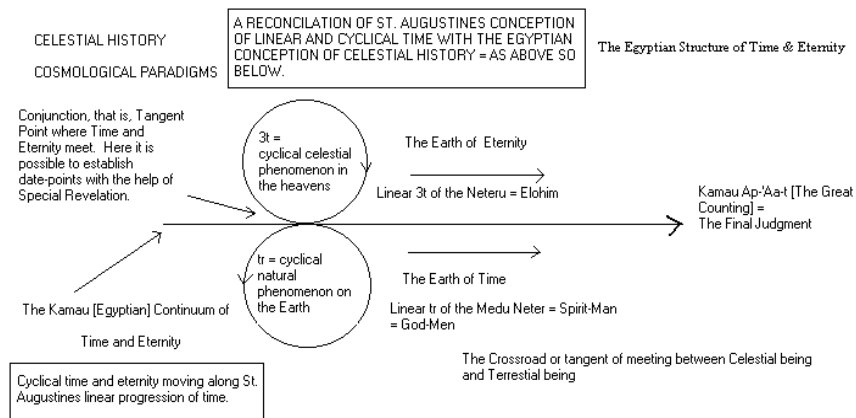
We did send messengers before thee, and appointed for them wives and children: *and it was never the part of a messenger to bring a Sign except as God permitted.* For each period is an appointment. God doth blot out or confirm what He pleaseth: with Him is the Mother of the Book.

The *Qur'an* cannot be called the final revelation of God, but it is the third revelation given to mankind from the Mother of the Book based on the successive revelations of the Abrahamic religions to include (1) Torah, (2) Gospels, and (3) *Qur'an* (i.e. where the Old Testament is *first* and the New Testament is *second*, and the *Qur'an* is *third*). Of course (from our horizon of understanding) this begs the question about the natural revelation given by God to the Egyptians through uranographic representation in the Heavens upon which we claim all three Abrahamic religions are grounded. In this project we would say the Egyptian Original that was eventually written down in the Pyramid Texts and the Coffin Texts would be the first revealed religion from God. Nevertheless, the *italicized* portion of the above *suras* like the biblical declaration in Peter 1:21 "*For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*" The above discussion underscores the fact that not only do we have constant battles between the holy and Setian angels in the *Earth of Eternity* over what happens in the *Earth of Time* where we are domiciled as men, mirroring our own struggles but the sacred scripture that men hold in minutia mirrors the *Book of Truth* or *Mother of the Book* in Heaven as suggested or signified in Revelation of John when it states: "*Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, 'Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment had come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.'*" This work assumes this construct as fact but this *eternal gospel* held in the hand of the angel while undoubtedly containing all that the written gospel already revealed to us likely will contain more that we do not have. Other portions of this *eternal gospel* (perhaps the last portions) will be given to us when this angel preaches to mankind in the final judgment of God. John as a witness signifies this truth when he states: "*And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down.*" (Revelation 10:4, NIV). Further in the Gospel of John it clearly states that we have not been given everything that happened regarding Jesus' ministry on Earth. The Evangelist states:

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20:30-31, NIV).

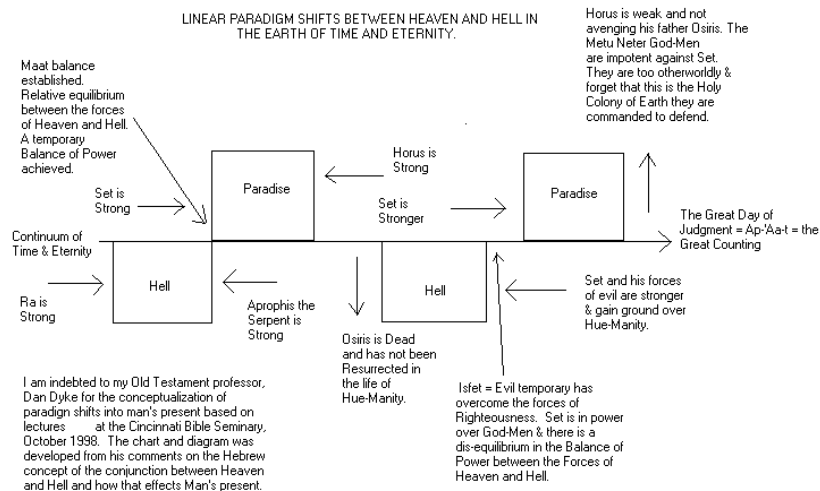
This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. Jesus did many other things as well. If everyone of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written (John 21:24-25, NIV).

Of course we cannot put any dates on when all of these things will happen and so it would be presumptuous to assign dates to events, for it can never succeed fully under the schema that I have presented, for how can a time dated system date-point celestial events that it cannot track chronologically but only guess at the few date points provided by special revelation, based in some cases on anchor dates established by the history of man. This sacred chronology gives only a glimpse through the sacred writing when God is so pleased to reveal where and when He and his Holy Angels were present in History. Yet the presumption that celestial events can be dated (in some cases) is justified. The reader will see a further brief discussion of the philosophical basis for *Celestial History* when I discuss the views of St. Augustine, the African Bishop of Hippo in North Africa on *Time and Eternity* as represented in the two pictographs below:




 , tr = Time related to natural phenomena


 , 3t = Time related to God-Men and Neteru



CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

BATTLE OF THE "GODS" MOSES, GOD'S MAN and the *BOOK OF JASHER*

The main problem in the telling of the Patriarchal history is that scholars keep trying to tell the story of the Hebrews using the Babylonian background and its cosmology instead of viewing the Patriarchal story being told by Moses concerning his family from an Egyptian background using its literary tradition, cosmology and uni-theology. When the Hebrews came out of Egypt they were likely *Egyptian in culture* if not altogether in race or racially mixed. This is a very important point. *They had no connection with Babylonian culture at all until at least 850 years after the Book of Genesis and Exodus was written.* It is revisionist history and scholarship that tries to reach back to this period and interpolate Babylonian religion and cosmology into the story of Genesis and Exodus that we have shown was told from and within an Egyptian cultural self-understanding and cultural matrix using Egyptian literary, cosmological and theological traditions. Moses told the story of his family with Abraham as its Patriarch. That story did not exist did not exist in literary form before Moses set pen to paper sometime during and after 1450 BCE, although Moses may have had bits and pieces of some oral tradition passed down to elements of the Hebrew people. Moses using both Egyptian and Hebrew sources put this story together in narrative form to make sense of the stories about Abraham (born 1948 BCE and died 175 years later around 2123 BCE). More importantly Moses wrote this story to give the Hebrew slaves a narrative and coherent national history because every people needs one. The story of Abraham was also personal for Moses and Abraham became his direct ancestor through the Tribe of Levi. In Chapter 6 of Exodus the family genealogy of Miriam, Moses, and Aaron becomes part of the Abrahamic patriarchal tradition and makes Moses family line inextricably and directly linked to that of Abraham, according to Moses (noting that he is writing this genealogy the source(s) unknown. Moses' family genealogy ("**The Families of Miriam, Moses and Aaron**") is given as follows:

Now these are the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reubin, the first born of Israel [Jacob], where Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. This is the family of Reuben. Now the sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman, These are the families of Simeon. *Now these are the names of the sons of Levi* according to their genealogy: Gershon, **Kohath**, and Merari; and Levi lived one hundred and thirty-seven years. The sons of Gershon were Libni and Shimi, the houses of their family. The sons of Kohath were **Amram**, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel; and Kohath lived one hundred and thirty-three years. The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of Levi according to their kindreds. Now **Amram** took as his wife Jochebed, the daughter of his father's brother;⁴³⁰ and *she bore him Aaron and Moses and Miriam* their sister; and Amram lived one hundred and thirty-seven years. . . . Now Aaron took as his wife Elisheba, daughter of Amminadah, the sister of Nahshon; and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar . . . Eleazar, Aaron's son took as his wife one of the daughters of *Putiel* [**Put-El** = People belonging to the God Put] ; and she bore him *Phinehas* [**Pi-Nehas** = Child of the Nubians]. *These are the heads of the families of the Levites according to their genealogy. Now these are the same Aaron and Moses*

⁴³⁰Either Gershon or Merari, but likely the oldest Gershon, where he becomes the father of Jochebed, since clearly since Exodus marks both Amram and Jochebed as Levites, See Exodus 2:1 ; "*Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son* [later named Moses by Pharaoh's daughter]; *and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months.*".

to whom God said, "Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt with their army." These are the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt. These are the same Moses and Aaron. (Exodus 6:1-27, The Orthodox Study Bible).

Moses therefore had both political and personal reasons as leader of the Hebrew slaves to legitimize his family genealogical line through Abraham. He had to legitimize his national leadership over the Hebrew slaves by claiming he was a Hebrew himself despite Egyptian textual evidence that indicates he was Egyptian, and being called "**an Egyptian**" by Jethro's seven daughters as follows:

Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, who fed the sheep of their father Jethro; and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. When they came to Reuel [i.e. "Friend of God" so that we can say Jethro, Friend of God] their father, he said to them, "How is it you came so soon today?" They replied, "**An Egyptian delivered us from the shepherds; and he also drew enough water for us and watered our sheep.**" So he said to his daughters, "And where is he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread." Then Moses dwelt with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses. So the woman conceived and bore Moses a son, and he called his name **Gershom**; for he said, "*I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.*"

(Exodus 2:16-22, The Orthodox Study Bible).

Despite the many examples of correspondence between the Egyptian Original and Biblical texts in both the Old and New Testament Christian commentators never ask where Moses got these ideas and whether he might have taken them from Egyptian religious textual tradition encompassed within the Egyptian Original. This is even more curious since the Book of Acts states clearly that: "*At that time, Moses was born, and he was pleasing to God. For three months, he was nourished in his father's house; and when he was thrown out, Pharaoh's daughter took him and raised him as her own son. Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was powerful in his words and actions*" (Acts 7:20-22, EOB). An Egyptian education (especially for the elite males in the house of Pharaoh) would have meant being introduced to the best literary traditions and science the Egyptians possessed. It goes without saying that the Egyptians held learning in the highest regard as the following statements from Adolf Erman (1894) in his *Life in Ancient Egypt* affirm while at the same times it shows the nature of what was taught:

The Egyptians valued learning because of the superiority which, in matters of this life, learned men possessed over the unlearned; learning thus divided the ruling class from those who were ruled. He who followed learned studies, and became a *scribe*, had put his feet on the first rung of the great ladder of official life, and all the offices of the state were open to him. He was exempted from all the bodily work and trouble with which others were tormented. The poor ignorant man, "whose name is unknown, is like a heavily-laden donkey, he is driven by the scribe," while the fortunate man who "has set his heart upon learning, is above work, and becomes a wise prince." Therefore "set to work and become a scribe, for them thou shalt be a leader of men. The profession of scribe is a princely profession, his writing materials and his rolls of books brings pleasantness and riches." The scribe never lacks food, what he wants is given to him out of the royal store: "the learned man has enough to eat because of his learning." He who is industrious as a scribe and does not neglect his books, he may become

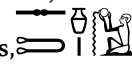
a prince, or perhaps attain to the council of the *thirty*, and when there is a question of sending out an ambassador, his name is remembered at court. If he is to succeed, however, he must not fail to be diligent, for we read in one place: "the scribe alone directs the work of all men, but if the work of books is an abomination to him, then the goddess of fortune is not with him." Therefore he who is wise will remain faithful to learning, and will pray Thoth the god of learning to give him understanding and assistance. Thoth is the "baboon with shining hair and amiable face, the letter-writer for the gods," he will not forget his earthly colleagues if they call upon him and speak thus to him: "Come to me and guide me, and make me to act justly in thine office. Thine office is more beautiful than all offices. . . . Come to me, guide me! I am a servant, that all men may say: 'Great is that which Thoth hath done.' Let them come with their children, to cause them to be marked as scribes. Thine office is a beautiful office, thou strong protector. It rejoices those who are invested with it. . . . As soon as the scholars had thoroughly mastered the secrets of the art of writing, the instruction consisted chiefly in giving them passages to copy, so that they might at the same time practice their calligraphy and orthography and also form their style. Sometimes the teacher chose a text without much regard to the contents—a fairy-tale, a passage from some religious or magical book, a modern or an ancient poem—the latter was especially preferred, when it would impress the youth by its ingenious enigmatical language. . . . From the earliest ages the Egyptians had the greatest veneration for their writing, which they considered to be the foundation of all education. They called it the *divine words*, and believed it to have been an invention of the god Thoth, who had taught it to the inhabitants of the Nile Valley."⁴³¹

Josephus (A.D. 37-100) makes it clear that Moses had access to the highest levels of Egyptian education in its literary tradition that produced works like *The Tale of the Two Brothers* and access to the texts that they called the *divine words*. Josephus may be regarded as critical and even a biased writer contra to the texts he relied on from Manetho about Moses. But nevertheless, his comments shed light on how the Egyptians viewed Moses (primarily as a scribe and Osirian priests as well as a powerful government official within Pharaoh's court who later rebelled against his master). Josephus account is therefore revisionist in an attempt to make the life and story of Moses fit closely to the Book of Exodus. Where Josephus is not specific in regard to Moses educational, scribal and ecclesiastical attainments they may be surmised from his comments on the high-status Moses had obtained in the royal court of Pharaoh as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Josephus quoting the ancient texts of Manetho and Apion recounts the following about Moses' career beginning with him becoming a leader (called by the Egyptians "**Osarsiph**" and "**Tisithene**") of revolt against Pharaoh Amenhotep around 1450 B.C.E. from the City of Trypho (i.e. the City of Set, the god of Evil) where this Pharaoh had consigned the Hebrew slaves:

Now this city, according to the ancient theology, was Trypho's city. But when these men were gotten into it, and found the place fit for a revolt, they appointed themselves a ruler out of the priests of Heliopolis, whose name was Osarsiph, and they took their oaths that they would be obedient to him in all things. He then, in the first place, made this law for them, That they should neither worship the Egyptian gods, nor should abstain from any one of those sacred animals which they have the highest esteem, but kill and destroy them all; that they should join themselves to nobody but to these that were of this confederacy.—When he had made such laws as these and many more such as were mainly opposite to the customs of the

⁴³¹ Adolf Erman. *Life in Ancient Egypt*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), pp. 328-329, 331, 333.

Egyptians, he gave order that they should use the multitude of the hands they had in building walls about their city, and make themselves ready for a war with king Amenophis . . . It was reported that the priest who ordained their polity and their laws, was by birth of Heliopolis; and his name Osarsiph from Osiris, who was the god of Heliopolis; but when he was gone over to these people his name was changed, and he was called Moses. . . And now I have done with Manetho, I will inquire into what Cheremon says; for he also, when he pretended to write the Egyptian history, sets down the same name for this king that Manetho did, Amenophis, as also of his son Ramesses, and then goes on this . . . that Moses and Joseph were scribes, and Joseph was a sacred scribe; that their names were Egyptian originally; that of Moses had been Tisithene, and that of Joseph Peteseeph.⁴³²

It is curious that Moses' other Egyptian name besides *Osarsiph* ["Son of Osiris"] but also *Tisithene*, that is, **Ta-Seth**[" One *belonging to the Land of the god Seth or Set*"], where **Ta** means "land" and where **Seth** [Set]  is the Egyptian god of Evil. He was the brother of Osiris, and "god of the desert, foreign lands, thunderstorms, eclipses, and earthquakes. *Seth* was a powerful and often frightening deity; however, he was also a patron god of the pharaohs, particularly Ramses the Great." Historian Sebastian Maydana in his essay "Seth: 7 Facts on the Egyptian God of Chaos and Violence" (March 21, 2022): "The name Seth means strength, but also chaos, destruction, confusion, evil, anger, and storms." Moses likely acquired the name **Tisethene** [*Ti-Seth-ene*] losing his priest's name **Osariph** after he rebelled against Pharaoh. From the Egyptian perspective he would have ceased to be a follower of Osiris but now a follower of the evil god Set (Seth) becoming a rebel leader leading the Hebrew slaves out into the **red desert** realm to foreign land the Hebrews would called the "Promise Land." Of interest here is that *Ta-Seth* could also mean "The land (i.e. desert) where libation is poured out" having the same semantic domain as the god Seth above, that is,  , meaning to "*pour out libation*." Another meaning for *Set*  is "smell, odor, scent." Also, in the same semantic domain as the others is *Seth*  meaning "*the smell of flesh*." We take note here that Moses made the accuse to Pharaoh for not wanting to do sacrifices to his God (i.e. pour out libations) and/or burn the *flesh of animals* within Egypt proper, because it would be "detestable to the Egyptians" who then would stone the Hebrew slaves.⁴³³ There is much more but this is sufficient to show the stature and the high education level to which Moses had obtained through his Egyptian education as a scribe and a leader of men who in this case used it to become a powerful antagonist of Pharaoh on behalf of the Hebrew people. Moses goes to great lengths to legitimize his claim to Hebrew ancestry, especially in the Book of Exodus. Moses was a man whose ancestry would ordinarily be suspect by the Hebrew slaves because it was rumored that when he was a baby (a Hebrew baby) he was conveyed in secret into the Pharaoh's palace by Pharaoh's daughter and apparently accepted as her son, although no one among either the Egyptians or the Hebrews could be sure, since his education was Egyptian and official status in the royal court as the Son of Pharaoh's daughter was kept top secret within her harem. So, it was always hanging over Moses' head as to his family origins as to whether he was **black Egyptian** or **black Hebrew**. He tried to clear that up by claiming his family line as descended from *Abraham* (the ancestral **black Hebrew**, i.e. **Ab-Ra-Ham** = "**Father of the Black followers of Ra**", i.e. that is, *Ra, the Creator of*

⁴³² *Flavius Josephus Against Apion* in *Josephus Complete Works*. Trans. By William Whiston. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1960), pp. 618-620.

⁴³³ *An Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 629).

Heaven and Earth). We assert here that Abraham *is not* the *Father of the Hebrew Nation*. Moses, the black Kamau Osirian priest of Ta-Mera is the real Father of the Hebrew Nation. Moses created this nation out of a bunch of Hebrew slaves mixed with Egyptian rebels who left Egypt with the Hebrews. Most used the oral history of Abraham perhaps discovering it among the Hebrew slaves who needed such a tradition to survive the ordeals and harsh conditions of enslavement. Moses began his written history of these people with parts of the oral history the people already knew (in bits and pieces) and creatively weaved this oral history in with their current experience of slavery in Egypt. He engaged in this creative writing as a means to build a national history for Hebrews slaves. This aim can be easily seen in Genesis 15, where Moses writes that Abraham in a dream hears God say: “*Know for a certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.*” (Genesis 15:13-16, NIV). Abraham (as a real personage, adopted in the oral history of the Hebrews as their Father) was in fact a mixed Afroasiatic born in the “Ur of the Chaldees” (Genesis 11:31) and was likely a mixed blood of black Dravidian and Mongoloid Sumerian origin.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁴ It should be noted that there is no independent documentation for the story and life of Abraham (2006-1859 B.C.). It was Moses, the black Egyptian liberator of the Hebrew slaves who wrote the story of Abraham beginning in chapter 12 of Genesis. It is likely that Moses took down the story of Abraham from the oral history of the Hebrews for two reasons. First, he used it as a means to give the Hebrew slaves a written history as part of his nation building program and bid for Hebrew self-determination under the oppressive rule of the Pharaoh's from whose royal court he had become estranged. The story of Abraham therefore did not exist as written history before Moses wrote it down in the Sinai sometime after he liberated the Hebrew slaves from their oppressors in about 1450 B.C. Secondly, Moses was so estranged from the royal Egyptian court that he gave himself a Hebrew identity and then later connected his family line with that of Abraham, so that *the story of Abraham becomes the story of Moses family*. The adoption of a Hebrew identity and family line would both legitimize his leadership over the Hebrew slaves, while giving them a national identity, sorely needed by all oppressed people. The evidence for this is the Bible itself and independent ancient Egyptian documents provided by Josephus. Moses establishes his Hebrew identity and his Hebrew priestly line of descent in chapter two of Exodus, indicating in verse one that he was the son of a Levite man and woman (Exodus 2:1). On the orders of Pharaoh he along with other male “Hebrew” babies were to be killed. His mother put him in the Nile river, where he was found by Pharaoh's daughter and raised in Pharaoh's court as her “adopted” son. Moses makes a point of describing the beginning of his estrangement from Pharaoh's court while establishing further his Hebrew identity. He writes in Exodus 2:11-12 that:

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where *his own people* were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, *one of his own people* [my emphasis]. Glancing this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong “Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?” The man said, “Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses afraid and thought, “What I did must have become known.” When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well [NIV].

Moses wrote the story very well up to this point, but made a Freudian slip that he was a black Egyptian and so continues his story line in Exodus 2:16-19, stating that:

Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the troughs to water their fathers flocks. Some shepherds came along and drove them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue and watered their flock. When the girls returned to Reuel [Jethro] their father, he asked them, “Why have you returned so early today?” The answered, “An *Egyptian* [my emphasis] rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock” [NIV].

In this story we see Moses connecting himself with the family of Jacob, a descendent of Abraham, through one of Jacob's son's Levi. It is through Levi that the Levites claim their priestly line of descent, one of whom was supposed to

Moses had to creatively mix the oral history of the Jews with their current situation to demonstrate that what he was doing to save them from Egyptian bondage was foretold by their so-called Hebrew ancestor Abraham. They had to know this in order to believe him and they had to believe in order to want to become a new nation under the covenant of Yahweh that Moses provided them through the Ten Commandments, the second pillar (or institutional structure) he used for Hebrew nation building. This is a classic national building technique to establish a written history for a enslaved people who for 400 years held on to a vague notion of one of their heroic ancestors and provide ex-slaves with an All-Powerful God that could and would deliver them from enslavement and make them a free people. Fortunately, we have at least one oral story that Moses undoubtedly used in the **Book of Jasher**. This what William F. Dankenbring has to say about the *Book of Jasher* in his remarks on the content presented by the translators and editors”

The Book of Jasher Uncloaked!

By William F. Dankenbring

Virtually ignored since it was discovered, the Book of Jasher holds vital clues to interpreting and understanding Biblical chronology, from the Flood to the Exodus. A mistake made by Archbishop James Ussher, who was unfamiliar with the book of Jasher, led to a 60-year error in placing the birth of Abraham. But this error is corrected in the chronological keys provided by the book of Jasher. And with these keys, an intriguing, and astounding story emerges.

be Moses' father. Next, we see Moses on the run from Pharaoh and he let it slip in the story that he really is an Egyptian and not a Hebrew. This would make Moses an African Egyptian priest and not a Hebrew with a priestly (Levite) lineage, as he was trying to claim for himself. We note here also that he ends up saving the daughters of a Midianite priest, Jethro, who later becomes Moses mentor and advisor. Moses establishing his descent as a priest and a trained one at that under the mentorship of Jethro is more important than the reader of this Exodus text would suspect. Moses not only needed a Hebrew identity direct through the line of Abraham, but he needed to show that he had a right to the priestly office of the Levites, in order to claim the spiritual leadership over the new Hebrew nation he was founding. This, black Egyptian, Moses founded the Hebrew nation and not Abraham, which is the contrary perspective from which all Christian scholars continue to write. The story of Abraham does not begin 2166 B.C. but in 1450 B.C. with Moses. Moses seals his Levite priestly line of descent and the power and control over the Hebrew slaves through his Levite and Aaronid family in Numbers 3:1 through Numbers 10:10. The account begins in 3:1 stating: *“This is the account of the family of Aaron and Moses at the time the Lord talked with Moses on Mount Sinai”* [NIV].

The Egyptian records available to us make it clear that Moses was an Egyptian and also an Egyptian Osirian priest at that. Moses well understood from Hebrew oral traditions held by the Hebrews slaves about Abraham that genealogical descent from his line was of utmost importance. Moses being an Egyptian priest also understood the importance that the Egyptian priesthood held in Egypt for power and authority. He needed to retain this functional priestly identity while assuming a Hebrew ethnic identity. Moses would use both identities to build the Hebrew nation around the story of Abraham, the Aaronid priesthood, and Yahweh (i.e. the moment the Hebrew national God, who turns out to be the Creator of the whole world, and its Sovereign Lord, giving the Hebrews preeminent authority to execute God's judgment on the Canaanites, when the time came, the divine authority for conquest ingeniously built into the national history, because the new nation needed a homeland, as well, and divine authority to take it from another people, who had violated the moral laws of God). What does the Egyptian record say about Moses? Josephus, the Jewish historian preserves the record for us. Josephus preserves for us the record of the Egyptian historian Manetho, who wrote the history of dynastic Egypt shortly after Alexander, the Great (protégé of Aristotle) invaded and conquered Egypt. Manetho gives us both the ethnic origins of Moses, as well as the fact that he was an Egyptian Osirian renegade priest that liberated the Hebrew slaves and created for them the sacred laws that govern their nation. Manethos states (as quoted by Josephus) that:

It was reported that the priest, who ordained their polity and their laws, was by birth of Heliopolis [On of the Bible, and Anu of the Egyptian texts]; and his name Osarsiph from Osiris, who was the god of Heliopolis; but that when he was gone over to these people, his name was changed, and he was called Moses [Josephus, “Flavius Josephus Against Apion,” *Antiquity of the Jews*, p. 618].

The book of Jasher, mentioned in the Biblical books of Joshua and Second Chronicles, was faithfully translated into English from the Rabbinical Hebrew in approximately A.D. 1840. Says the translator's preface, "the ever memorable events and transactions recorded in Scripture are with many others of the most interesting nature, comprehended in the Book of Jasher; and they are all arrayed in that style of simple, unadorned majesty and precision, which so particularly distinguishes the genius of the Hebrew language/ and this, together with other numerous internal evidences, it is presumed will go far to convince the Hebrew scholar that the book is, with the exception of some doubtful parts, a venerable monument of antiquity; and that, notwithstanding some few additions may have been made to it in comparatively modern times, it still retains sufficient to prove it a copy of the book referred to in Joshua, chapter x, and 2 Samuel, chap. i. There are not more than seven or eight words in the whole book that by construction can be derived from the Chaldean language" (page iii-iv). The title of the book in Hebrew, *Sephir Ha Yasher*, literally means "the book of the upright," or "the upright or correct record." Some have thought that "Jasher" was the name of a Hebrew judge in Israel, and a publication that arose in the middle of the eighteenth century (circa 1750 A.D.), purported itself to be a translation into English from a Hebrew manuscript of "Jasher" found at Gazna in Persia. That book appears to have been a fictitious book, a fraud, and most probably the work of some agnostic, cynical English skeptic, written in imitation of the language of Scripture. Its author, in his ignorance, presumed "Jasher" to have been the personal name of an ancient Hebrew figure, the original writer. But the mischievous deed was recognized by true scholars of Hebrew, for the pronoun "the" ("ha" in Hebrew) never precedes or is prefixed to proper names. How is the Book of Jasher important to us, today? It sheds marvelous light on the Biblical story, from the time of Adam and Eve, the time of Enoch, and the account of Noah's Deluge, to the Tower of Babel, the tyrant Nimrod, and the story of Abraham and his descendants. Needless to say, I cannot discuss the details of this remarkable historical record, which completely authenticates and corroborates Scriptural history, filling in many missing details deleted in the Scriptural record, in this article.

I highly recommend the book for any who desire to perfect their knowledge of ancient times, from Adam to the Exodus. The book of Jasher provides a fascinating glimpse into the life of Enoch, who was a righteous ruler over men, continually instructing them in truth and uprightness, and a knowledge of the Most High God. It also tells us that in the days of "Peleg," not only were the nations at Babel divided and scattered, but the earth itself was also divided. From this book we also learn that Noah and Abraham were contemporaries. Perhaps the most important key found in the Book of Jasher is that it corrects the erroneous chronological date for the birth of Abraham assumed by many Christian commentators, in particular archbishop James Ussher. Says the Translator of the book of Jasher: "From this book we learn that Noah and Abraham were contemporaries. How beautiful the contemplation of the meeting of these two Patriarchs, the one being a monument of God's mercy, the other having the promises of the favor and grace of God, not only to himself, but to his seed after him. This fact might be proved from Scripture; but from the 32nd verse in the 11th chapter of Genesis, most of the Christian commentators have erroneously dated the birth of Abraham 60 years later than it actually took place; as it is generally stated that he was born A.M. [after man, i.e., after Adam] 2008, whereas the regular calculation in the Bible leads us to 60 years earlier, viz. 1948. The only cause of this error has been that Abraham's departure from Haran, at the age of 75, is recorded close to the description of the death of Terah, at the age of 205, in Gen. Ch. xi, v. 32" (p. vi). How should we view the book of Jasher, today? The translator correctly points out that although it is not divine Scripture, it nevertheless is a mighty historical and ancient work which relates directly to Biblical historical times and events. Thus the translator does not recommend it to people as Scripture, as a work of divine inspiration, but does "as a monument of history, comparatively covered with the ivy of the remotest ages; as a work, possessing in its language, all the characteristic simplicity of patriarchal times; and as such, he conceives it peculiarly calculated to illustrate and confirm the sacred truths handed down to us in the Scriptures" (p.vii). The translator concludes: "Like all other ancient writings, (except the inspired volume,) it has in some respects suffered from the consuming hand of time; and there is reason to believe that some additions have been made to it. In fine, it contains a history of the lives and memorable transactions of all the illustrious characters

recorded in sacred history, from Adam down to the time of the Elders, who immediately succeeded Joshua" (ibid.).⁴³⁵

The Bible itself mentions the *Book of Jasher* in two places as a vital source to support its own narrative making the *Book of Jasher* extremely valuable for biblical studies although it has been treated as suspicious and suppressed by both ecclesiastical and biblical scholars for centuries since its discovery. First it is found in Joshua 10 as follows:

On the day when the Lord gave the Amorites over to the Israelites, Joshua spoke to the Lord; and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and Moon, in the valley of Aijalon." And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies. *Is this not written in the Book of Jasher?* The sun stopped in midheaven, and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. There has been no day like it before or since, when the Lord heeded a human voice; for the Lord fought for Israel. (Joshua 10:12-14, NRSV).

Joshua was about 40 years old and formerly was the young 20-year-old lieutenant of Moses. When Moses knew, he was going to die and not enter the Promise Land with the Hebrew slaves, he personally selected by Joshua with God's approval to lead the Hebrew slaves the rest of the way into the Promised Land. Biblical scholars believe that the **Book of Joshua** "may have been written during or shortly after Joshua's lifetime (which some scholars date to sometime between the 15th and 13th centuries B.C. There is no doubt then that the **Book of Jasher** was in the hands of the writer of the *Book of Joshua*. The *Book of Jasher* therefore has priority (i.e. existed before) over the *Book of Joshua* itself in order for the writer of Joshua to mention it as a corroborating source. If the Book of Jasher existed during the lifetime of Joshua it almost certainly existed and was available in some form either oral or written for Moses to use whether he acknowledged it or not as to where he obtained some of his material to both write about Abraham and build a connecting genealogy with Abraham for his own family line to support his legitimacy as leader of the Hebrew slaves. When God first called him to go to Pharaoh and liberate the Hebrew slaves, he was worried about his legitimacy both with Pharaoh and especially with the Hebrew slaves. Who would believe that God had sent him on such a mission" Moses made two excuses to God why he would not be accepted as the legitimate leader of the Hebrew slaves: "Who am I that I should toto Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11, NRSV); and then Moses made his next argument why he would not be accepted as the legitimate leader of the Hebrew slaves. "But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, the God of your ancestors has sent me to you, and they asked me, what is his name? What shall I say to them? God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." . . . This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.'" (Exodus 3:13-15, NRSV). For Moses the Book of Jasher would be a valuable source if not for direct corroborating purposes, then as the primary source for his own family story leading back to Abraham, his ancestor and the ancestor of the Hebrew slaves. The Book of Jasher was still important down to the time of Samuel. In 2 Samuel David takes out of this ancient book the "Song of the Bow" a lamentation for the death of Samuel and be taught to the people. This song the writer of 2 Samuel says, "**It is written in the Book of Jasher**" and then David sings the opening line of song taken from the *Book of Jasher* in a eulogy over Samuels body: "*Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon your high places! How the mighty have fallen!*" (2 Samuel 17-19, NRSV). Here are some passages from the *Book of Jasher* some that will sound familiar to those that have study the Books Genesis and

⁴³⁵ *The Book of Jasher*, Translators Preface.

Exodus and other remarkable passages from this extra-biblical source will not be familiar because Moses left them out of his story and biblical narrative even as some writers do today; taking only the material from corroborating sources that fit into the theme and arguments they are trying to make.

Some might argue for a later date after the Moses wrote Genesis and Exodus and that the writer of Jasher simply filled in detail to explain things Moses left out of the biblical narrative, such as why Terah had to leave Ur and go to Haran, and later why Abram left his father in Haran and went to Canaan; and to fill in the details that led to the divine destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The argument has some weight except the biblical texts like the Book of Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18 are using the *Book of Jasher* like it is already a common extra-biblical corroborating and reference source already in existence and available for any writer so interested to use. The work itself it to close in time to the period Genesis and Exodus was written not to believe that Moses either knew about or actually wrote it as notes he used and paired down later for his biblical narratives in Genesis and Exodus. It is a compelling claim that the *Book of Jasher* is in fact detailed notes written by Moses as he prepared Genesis and Exodus to be published among the Hebrew slaves. Nevertheless, The *Book of Jasher* is so important an extra-biblical source that Apostle Paul (a trained Jewish scholar under Gamliel) references it in 2 Timothy 3:8-9 which says:

Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall process no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as there also was. (2 Timothy 3:8-9, KJV).

In the Book of Jasher Chapter 79:27 the mystery that has plague most biblical scholars as to who Jannes and Jambres were revealed. In this passage we discover that Jannes and Jambres were the two magicians that the Pharaoh used to oppose Moses in a contest between their god and Yahweh, the God of Moses. Only Moses and Aaron could have known the names of the Egyptian magicians they faced and since Moses did not mention their names in the biblical record no later writer could have known these two names unless Moses left some kind of record. That record was the Book of Jasher.

And when they had gone Pharaoh sent for Balaam the magician and to Jannes and Jambres his sons, and to all the magicians and conjurors and counsellors which belonged to the king, and they all came and sat before the king. (Book of Jasher 79:27).

Jasher Chapter 9

When Ten Years Old, Abram goes to Noah and Shem, Remains with them for Thirty-nine Years, and is Taught in all the Ways of the Lord. The Wickedness of Nimrod and his People. They Propose to Build a Tower to Heaven and Dethrone God. The confusion of Tongues

1. And Haran, the son of Terah, Abram's oldest brother, took a wife in those days.
2. Haran was thirty-nine years old when he took her; and the wife of Haran conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Lot.
3. And she conceived again and bare a daughter, and she called her name Milca; and she again conceived and bare a daughter, and she called her name Sarai.
4. Haran was forty-two years old when he begat Sarai, which was in the tenth year of the life of Abram; and in those days Abram and his mother and nurse went out from the cave, as the king and his subjects had forgotten the affair of Abram.
5. And when Abram came out from the cave, he went to Noah and his son Shem, and he remained with them to

learn the instruction of the Lord and his ways, and no man knew where Abram was, and Abram served Noah and Shem his son for a long time. **6.** And Abram was in Noah's house thirty-nine years, and Abram knew the Lord from three years old, and he went in the ways of the Lord until the day of his death, as Noah and his son Shem had taught him; and all the sons of the earth in those days greatly transgressed against the Lord, and they rebelled against him and they served other gods, and they forgot the Lord who had created them in the earth; and the inhabitants of the earth made unto themselves, at that time, every man his god; gods of wood and stone which could neither speak, hear, nor deliver, and the sons of men served them and they became their gods. **7.** And the king and all his servants, and Terah with all his household were then the first of those that served gods of wood and stone. **8.** And Terah had twelve gods of large size, made of wood and stone, after the twelve months of the year, and he served each one monthly, and every month Terah would bring his meat offering and drink offering to his gods; thus did Terah all the days. **9.** And all that generation were wicked in the sight of the Lord, and they thus made every man his god, but they forsook the Lord who had created them. **10.** And there was not a man found in those days in the whole earth, who knew the Lord (for they served each man his own God) except Noah and his household, and all those who were under his counsel knew the Lord in those days. **11.** And Abram the son of Terah was waxing great in those days in the house of Noah, and no man knew it, and the Lord was with him. **12.** And the Lord gave Abram an understanding heart, and he knew all the works of that generation were vain, and that all their gods were vain and were of no avail. **13.** And Abram saw the sun shining upon the earth, and Abram said unto himself Surely now this sun that shines upon the earth is God, and him will I serve. **14.** And Abram served the sun in that day and he prayed to him, and when evening came the sun set as usual, and Abram said within himself, Surely this cannot be God? **15.** And Abram still continued to speak within himself, Who is he who made the heavens and the earth? Who created upon earth? Where is he? **16.** And night darkened over him, and he lifted up his eyes toward the west, north, south, and east, and he saw that the sun had vanished from the earth, and the day became dark. **17.** And Abram saw the stars and moon before him, and he said, Surely this is the God who created the whole earth as well as man, and behold these his servants are gods around him: and Abram served the moon and prayed to it all that night. **18.** And in the morning when it was light and the sun shone upon the earth as usual, Abram saw all the things that the Lord God had made upon earth. **19.** And Abram said unto himself Surely these are not gods that made the earth and all mankind, but these are the servants of God, and Abram remained in the house of Noah and there knew the Lord and his ways' and he served the Lord all the days of his life, and all that generation forgot the Lord, and served other gods of wood and stone, and rebelled all their days.⁴³⁶

Jasher Chapter 11

Nimrod's Wicked Reign. The Idolatry of Terah, Abram's Father. When Fifty Years old, Abram returns to his Father's House and Discovers his Idols. Makes a pretext to destroy them. After making Savory Meat for the gods, Abram takes a Hatchet and destroys them, leaving the Hatchet in the hands of the larger one, where it is discovered by his Father, who is told by Abram that the Great God had risen up in anger and Destroyed his Fellows. Terah in his wrath betrays Abram to the King, who brings him up before the Throne for Judgment. Abram Warns his Father and the King, before all the Princes, Of the Evils of Idolatry.

And Nimrod son of Cush was still in the land of Shinar, and he reigned over it and dwelt there, and he built cities in the land of Shinar. **2.** And these are the names of the four cities which he built, and he called their names after the occurrences that happened to them in the

⁴³⁶The **BOOK OF JASHER: REFERRED TO IN JOSHUA AND SECOND SAMUEL**

Faithfully translated (1840) FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW INTO ENGLISH SALT LAKE CITY: PUBLISHED BY J.H. PARRY & COMPANY 1887. "Is not this written in the Book of Jasher?"--Joshua, x. 13. "Behold it is written in the Book of Jasher."--II Samuel, i. 18. *This work is in the Public Domain. Copy Free*

building of the tower. **3.** And he called the first Babel, saying, Because the Lord there confounded the language of the whole earth; and the name of the second he called Erech, because from there God dispersed them. **4.** And the third he called Eched, saying there was a great battle at that place; and the fourth he called Calnah, because his princes and mighty men were consumed there, and they vexed the Lord, they rebelled and transgressed against him. **5.** And when Nimrod had built these cities in the land of Shinar, he placed in them the remainder of his people, his princes and his mighty men that were left in his kingdom. **6.** And Nimrod dwelt in Babel, and he there renewed his reign over the rest of his subjects, and he reigned securely, and the subjects and princes of Nimrod called his name Amraphel, saying that at the tower his princes and men fell through his means. **7.** And notwithstanding this, Nimrod did not return to the Lord, and he continued in wickedness and teaching wickedness to the sons of men; and Mardon, his son, was worse than his father, and continued to add to the abominations of his father. **8.** And he caused the sons of men to sin, therefore it is said, From the wicked goeth forth wickedness. **9.** At that time there was war between the families of the children of Ham, as they were dwelling in the cities which they had built. **10.** And Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, went away from the families of the children of Ham, and he fought with them and he subdued them, and he went to the five cities of the plain and he fought against them and he subdued them, and they were under his control. **11.** And they served him twelve years, and they gave him a yearly tax. **12.** At that time died Nahor, son of Serug, in the forty-ninth year of the life of Abram son of Terah. **13.** And in the fiftieth year of the life of Abram son of Terah, Abram came forth from the house of Noah and went to his father's house. **14.** And Abram knew the Lord, and he went in his ways and instructions, and the Lord his God was with him. **15.** And Terah his father was in those days, still captain of the host of king Nimrod, and he still followed strange gods. **16.** And Abram came to his father's house and saw twelve gods standing there in their temples, and the anger of Abram was kindled when he saw these images in his father's house. **17.** And Abram said, As the Lord liveth these images shall not remain in my father's house; so shall the Lord who created me do unto me if in three days' time I do not break them all. **18.** And Abram went from them, and his anger burned within him. And Abram hastened and went from the chamber to his father's outer court, and he found his father sitting in the court, and all his servants with him, and Abram came and sat before him. **19.** And Abram asked his father, saying, Father, tell me where is God who created heaven and earth, and all the sons of men upon earth, and who created thee and me. And Terah answered his son Abram and said, Behold those who created us are all with us in the house. **20.** And Abram said to his father, My lord, shew them to me I pray thee; and Terah brought Abram into the chamber of the inner court, and Abram saw, and behold the whole room was full of gods of wood and stone, twelve great images and others less than they without number. **21.** And Terah said to his son, Behold these are they which made all thou seest upon earth, and which created me and thee, and all mankind. **22.** And Terah bowed down to his gods, and he then went away from them, and Abram, his son, went away with him. **23.** And when Abram had gone from them he went to his mother and sat before her, and he said to his mother, Behold, my father has shown me those who made heaven and earth, and all the sons of men. **24.** Now, therefore, hasten and fetch a kid from the flock, and make of it savory meat, that I may bring it to my father's gods as an offering for them to eat; perhaps I may thereby become acceptable to them. **25.** And his mother did so, and she fetched a kid, and made savory meat thereof, and brought it to Abram, and Abram took the savory meat from his mother and brought it before his father's gods, and he drew nigh to them that they might eat; and Terah his father, did not know of it. **26.** And Abram saw on the day when he was sitting amongst them, that they had no voice, no hearing, no motion, and not one of them could stretch forth his hand to eat. **27.** And Abram mocked them, and said, Surely the savory meat that I prepared has not pleased them, or perhaps it was too little for them, and for that reason they would not eat; therefore tomorrow I will prepare fresh savory meat, better and more plentiful than this, in order that I may see the result. **28.** And it was on the next day that Abram directed his mother concerning the savory meat, and his mother rose and fetched three fine kids from the flock, and she made of them some excellent savory meat, such as her son was fond of, and she gave it to her son Abram; and Terah his father did not know of it. **29.** And Abram took the savory meat from his mother,

and brought it before his father's gods into the chamber; and he came nigh unto them that they might eat, and he placed it before them, and Abram sat before them all day, thinking perhaps they might eat. **30.** And Abram viewed them, and behold they had neither voice nor hearing, nor did one of them stretch forth his hand to the meat to eat. **31.** And in the evening of that day in that house Abram was clothed with the spirit of God. **32.** And he called out and said, Wo unto my father and this wicked generation, whose hearts are all inclined to vanity, who serve these idols of wood and stone which can neither eat, smell, hear nor speak, who have mouths without speech, eyes without sight, ears without hearing, hands without feeling, and legs which cannot move; like them are those that made them and that trust in them. **33.** And when Abram saw all these things his anger was kindled against his father, and he hastened and took a hatchet in his hand, and came unto the chamber of the gods, and he broke all his father's gods. **34.** And when he had done breaking the images, he placed the hatchet in the hand of the great god which was there before them, and he went out; and Terah his father came home, for he had heard at the door the sound of the striking of the hatchet; so Terah came into the house to know what this was about. **35.** And Terah, having heard the noise of the hatchet in the room of images, ran to the room to the images, and he met Abram going out. **36.** And Terah entered the room and found all the idols fallen down and broken, and the hatchet in the hand of the largest, which was not broken, and the savory meat which Abram his son had made was still before them. **37.** And when Terah saw this his anger was greatly kindled, and he hastened and went from the room to Abram. **38.** And he found Abram his son still sitting in the house; and he said to him, What is this work thou hast done to my gods? **39.** And Abram answered Terah his father and he said, Not so my lord, for I brought savory meat before them, and when I came nigh to them with the meat that they might eat, they all at once stretched forth their hands to eat before the great one had put forth his hand to eat. **40.** And the large one saw their works that they did before him, and his anger was violently kindled against them, and he went and took the hatchet that was in the house and came to them and broke them all, and behold the hatchet is yet in his hand as thou seest. **41.** And Terah's anger was kindled against his son Abram, when he spoke this; and Terah said to Abram his son in his anger, What is this tale that thou hast told? Thou speakest lies to me. **42.** Is there in these gods spirit, soul or power to do all thou hast told me? Are they not wood and stone, and have I not myself made them, and canst thou speak such lies, saying that the large god that was with them smote them? It is thou that didst place the hatchet in his hands, and then sayest he smote them all. **43.** And Abram answered his father and said to him, And how canst thou then serve these idols in whom there is no power to do any thing? Can those idols in which thou trustest deliver thee? can they hear thy prayers when thou callest upon them? can they deliver thee from the hands of thy enemies, or will they fight thy battles for thee against thy enemies, that thou shouldst serve wood and stone which can neither speak nor hear? **44.** And now surely it is not good for thee nor for the sons of men that are connected with thee, to do these things; are you so silly, so foolish or so short of understanding that you will serve wood and stone, and do after this manner? **45.** And forget the Lord God who made heaven and earth, and who created you in the earth, and thereby bring a great evil upon your souls in this matter by serving stone and wood? **46.** Did not our fathers in days of old sin in this matter, and the Lord God of the universe brought the waters of the flood upon them and destroyed the whole earth? **47.** And how can you continue to do this and serve gods of wood and stone, who cannot hear, or speak, or deliver you from oppression, thereby bringing down the anger of the God of the universe upon you? **48.** Now therefore my father refrain from this, and bring not evil upon thy soul and the souls of thy household. **49.** And Abram hastened and sprang from before his father, and took the hatchet from his father's largest idol, with which Abram broke it and ran away. **50.** And Terah, seeing all that Abram had done, hastened to go from his house, and he went to the king and he came before Nimrod and stood before him, and he bowed down to the king; and the king said, What dost thou want? **51.** And he said, I beseech thee my lord, to hear me--Now fifty years back a child was born to me, and thus has he done to my gods and thus has he spoken; and now therefore, my lord and king, send for him that he may come before thee, and judge him according to the law, that we may be delivered from his evil. **52.** And the king sent three men of his servants, and they went and brought Abram before the king. And Nimrod and all

his princes and servants were that day sitting before him, and Terah sat also before them. **53.** And the king said to Abram, What is this that thou hast done to thy father and to his gods? And Abram answered the king in the words that he spoke to his father, and he said, The large god that was with them in the house did to them what thou hast heard. **54.** And the king said to Abram, Had they power to speak and eat and do as thou hast said? And Abram answered the king, saying, And if there be no power in them why dost thou serve them and cause the sons of men to err through thy follies? **55.** Dost thou imagine that they can deliver thee or do anything small or great, that thou shouldst serve them? And why wilt thou not sense the God of the whole universe, who created thee and in whose power it is to kill and keep alive? **56.** O foolish, simple, and ignorant king, woe unto thee forever. **57.** I thought thou wouldst teach thy servants the upright way, but thou hast not done this, but hast filled the whole earth with thy sins and the sins of thy people who have followed thy ways. **58.** Dost thou not know, or hast thou not heard, that this evil which thou doest, our ancestors sinned therein in days of old, and the eternal God brought the waters of the flood upon them and destroyed them all, and also destroyed the whole earth on their account? And wilt thou and thy people rise up now and do like unto this work, in order to bring down the anger of the Lord God of the universe, and to bring evil upon thee and the whole earth? **59.** Now therefore put away this evil deed which thou doest, and serve the God of the universe, as thy soul is in his hands, and then it will be well with thee. **60.** And if thy wicked heart will not hearken to my words to cause thee to forsake thy evil ways, and to serve the eternal God, then wilt thou die in shame in the latter days, thou, thy people and all who are connected with thee, hearing thy words or walking in thy evil ways. **61.** And when Abram had ceased speaking before the king and princes, Abram lifted up his eyes to the heavens, and he said, The Lord seeth all the wicked, and he will judge them.⁴³⁷

Jasher Chapter 12

Abram placed in Prison, and is condemned after ten days to be cast into a Fiery Furnace. His Brother Haran being Falsely Accused is condemned to the same Fate. As Haran's heart was not right before the Lord, he perished, but Abram is Delivered and is brought forth Alive. Is Presented with Many Gifts. The King Dreams of Abram, and again Seeks his Life. Abram flees to the House of Noah

Jasher Chapter 13

On Abram's account Terah and all his House, with Abram, Leave Ur Casdim to go to the Land of Canaan. They tarry in Haran, where the Lord Appears to Abram, and upon condition of Faithfulness, Promises many Blessings. Abram, commanded of the Lord, takes his Wife and all belonging to him and goes to the Land of Canaan, where the Lord again appears to him and Promises the Land of Canaan as an Everlasting Inheritance. After Fifteen Years, Abram returns to Haran to Visit his Father. Teaches many to Walk in the Ways of the Lord. Again commanded to go to Canaan, where he Builds an Altar. The Lord renews his Covenant with him.

1. And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of his son Abram, and all the souls of his household and went with them from Ur Casdim to go to the land of Canaan. And when they came as far as the land of Haran they remained there, for it was exceedingly good land for pasture, and of sufficient extent for those who accompanied them. **2.** And the people of the land of Haran saw that Abram was good and upright with God and men, and that the Lord his God was with him, and some of the people of the land of Haran came and joined Abram, and he taught them the instruction of the Lord and his ways; and these men remained with Abram in his house and they adhered to him. **3.** And Abram remained in the land three years, and at the expiration of three years the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him; I am the Lord who

⁴³⁷ Book of Jasher, Chapter 11:1-61.

brought thee forth from Ur Casdim, and delivered thee from the hands of all thine enemies.

4. And now therefore if thou wilt hearken to my voice and keep my commandments, my statutes and my laws, then will I cause thy enemies to fall before thee, and I will multiply thy seed like the stars of heaven, and I will send my blessing upon all the works of thy hands, and thou shalt lack nothing. **5.** Arise now, take thy wife and all belonging to thee and go to the land of Canaan and remain there, and I will there be unto thee for a God, and I will bless thee. And Abram rose and took his wife and all belonging to him, and he went to the land of Canaan as the Lord had told him; and Abram was fifty years old when he went from Haran.

6. And Abram came to the land of Canaan and dwelt in the midst of the city, and he there pitched his tent amongst the children of Canaan, inhabitants of the land. **7.** And the Lord appeared to Abram when he came to the land of Canaan, and said to him, This is the land which I gave unto thee and to thy seed after thee forever, and I will make thy seed like the stars of heaven, and I will give unto thy seed for an inheritance all the lands which thou seest.

8. And Abram built an altar in the place where God had spoken to him, and Abram there called upon the name of the Lord. **9.** At that time, at the end of three years of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, in that year Noah died, which was the fifty-eighth year of the life of Abram; and all the days that Noah lived were nine hundred and fifty years and he died.

10. And Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, he, his wife, and all belonging to him, and all those that accompanied him, together with those that joined him from the people of the land; but Nahor, Abram's brother, and Terah his father, and Lot the son of Haran and all belonging to them dwelt in Haran. **11.** In the fifth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the cities of the plain revolted from the power of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam; for all the kings of the cities of the plain had served Chedorlaomer for twelve years, and given him a yearly tax, but in those days in the thirteenth year, they rebelled against him. **12.** And in the tenth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan there was war between Nimrod king of Shinar and Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Nimrod came to fight with Chedorlaomer and to subdue him. **13.** For Chedorlaomer was at that time one of the princes of the hosts of Nimrod, and when all the people at the tower were dispersed and those that remained were also scattered upon the face of the earth, Chedorlaomer went to the land of Elam and reigned over it and rebelled against his lord.

14. And in those days when Nimrod saw that the cities of the plain had rebelled, he came with pride and anger to war with Chedorlaomer, and Nimrod assembled all his princes and subjects, about seven hundred thousand men, and went against Chedorlaomer, and Chedorlaomer went out to meet him with five thousand men, and they prepared for battle in the valley of Babel which is between Elam and Shinar. **15.** And all those kings fought there, and Nimrod and his people were smitten before the people of Chedorlaomer, and there fell from Nimrod's men about six hundred thousand, and Mardon the king's son fell amongst them.

16. And Nimrod fled and returned in shame and disgrace to his land, and he was under subjection to Chedorlaomer for a long time, and Chedorlaomer returned to his land and sent princes of his host to the kings that dwelt around him, to Arioch king of Elasar, and to Tidal king of Goyim, and made a covenant with them, and they were all obedient to his commands. **17.** And it was in the fifteenth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, which is the seventieth year of the life of Abram, and the Lord appeared to Abram in that year and he said to him, I am the Lord who brought thee out from Ur Casdim to give thee this land for an inheritance. **18.** Now therefore walk before me and be perfect and keep my commands, for to thee and to thy seed I will give this land for an inheritance, from the river Mitzraim unto the great river Euphrates.

19. And thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace and in good age, and the fourth generation shall return here in this land and shall inherit it forever; and Abram built an altar, and he called upon the name of the Lord who appeared to him, and he brought up sacrifices upon the altar to the Lord. **20.** At that time Abram returned and went to Haran to see his father and mother, and his father's household, and Abram and his wife and all belonging to him returned to Haran, and Abram dwelt in Haran five years. **21.** And many of the people of Haran, about seventy-two men, followed Abram and Abram taught them the instruction of the Lord and his ways, and he taught them to know the Lord.

22. In those days the Lord appeared to Abram in Haran, and he said to him, Behold, I spoke unto thee these twenty years back saying, 23. Go forth from thy land, from thy birth-place and from thy father's house, to the land which I have shown thee to give it to thee and to thy children, for there in that land will I bless thee, and make thee a great nation, and make thy name great, and in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed. 24. Now therefore arise, go forth from this place, thou, thy wife, and all belonging to thee, also every one born in thy house and all the souls thou hast made in Haran, and bring them out with thee from here, and rise to return to the land of Canaan. 25. And Abram arose and took his wife Sarai and all belonging to him and all that were born to him in his house and the souls which they had made in Haran, and they came out to go to the land of Canaan. 26. And Abram went and returned to the land of Canaan, according to the word of the Lord. And Lot the son of his brother Haran went with him, and Abram was seventy-five years old when he went forth from Haran to return to the land of Canaan. 27. And he came to the land of Canaan according to the word of the Lord to Abram, and he pitched his tent and he dwelt in the plain of Mamre, and with him was Lot his brother's son, and all belonging to him. 28. And the Lord again appeared to Abram and said, To thy seed will I give this land; and he there built an altar to the Lord who appeared to him, which is still to this day in the plains of Mamre.⁴³⁸

Jasher Chapter 15

On Account of Famine in Canaan, Abram goes to Egypt. Tells the People that Sarah is his Sister, on account of her Beauty. Pharaoh Desires to take her, but is Prevented by an Angel of the Lord. The Truth is made known, and Sarah is Restored to Abram, with many Presents. Abram returns to his Home. Trouble between Lot and Abram on account of Lot's cattle. Lot Removes to Sodom.

Jasher Chapter 17

The Lord Appears to Abram and Establishes the Covenant of Circumcision, and calls his name Abraham, and Sarai, He calls Sarah.

1. And in those days, in the ninety-first year of the life of Abram, the children of Chittim made war with the children of Tubal, for when the Lord had scattered the sons of men upon the face of the earth, the children of Chittim went and embodied themselves in the plain of Canopia, and they built themselves cities there and dwelt by the river Tibreu. 2. And the children of Tubal dwelt in Tuscanah, and their boundaries reached the river Tibreu, and the children of Tubal built a city in Tuscanah, and they called the name Sabinah, after the name of Sabinah son of Tubal their father, and they dwelt there unto this day. 3. And it was at that time the children of Chittim made war with the children of Tubal, and the children of Tubal were smitten before the children of Chittim, and the children of Chittim caused three hundred and seventy men to fall from the children of Tubal. 4. And at that time the children of Tubal swore to the children of Chittim, saying, You shall not intermarry amongst us, and no man shall give his daughter to any of the sons of Chittim. 5. For all the daughters of Tubal were in those days fair, for no women were then found in the whole earth so fair as the daughters of Tubal. 6. And all who delighted in the beauty of women went to the daughters of Tubal and took wives from them, and the sons of men, kings and princes, who greatly delighted in the beauty of women, took wives in those days from the daughters of Tubal. 7. And at the end of three years after the children of Tubal had sworn to the children of Chittim not to give them their daughters for wives, about twenty men of the children of Chittim went to take some of the daughters of Tubal, but they found none. 8. For the children of Tubal kept their oaths not to intermarry with them, and they would not break their oaths. 9. And in the days of harvest the children of Tubal went into their fields to get in their harvest, when the young men of Chittim assembled and went to the city

⁴³⁸ Book of Jasher, Chapter 13:1-28.

of Sabinah, and each man took a young woman from the daughters of Tubal, and they came to their cities. **10.** And the children of Tubal heard of it and they went to make war with them, and they could not prevail over them, for the mountain was exceedingly high from them, and when they saw they could not prevail over them they returned to their land. **11.** And at the revolution of the year the children of Tubal went and hired about ten thousand men from those cities that were near them, and they went to war with the children of Chittim. **12.** And the children of Tubal went to war with the children of Chittim, to destroy their land and to distress them, and in this engagement the children of Tubal prevailed over the children of Chittim, and the children of Chittim, seeing that they were greatly distressed, lifted up the children which they had had by the daughters of Tubal, upon the wall which had been built, to be before the eyes of the children of Tubal. **13.** And the children of Chittim said to them, Have you come to make war with your own sons and daughters, and have we not been considered your flesh and bones from that time till now? **14.** And when the children of Tubal heard this they ceased to make war with the children of Chittim, and they went away. **15.** And they returned to their cities, and the children of Chittim at that time assembled and built two cities by the sea, and they called one Purtu and the other Ariza. **16.** And Abram the son of Terah was then ninety-nine years old. **17.** At that time the Lord appeared to him and he said to him, I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will greatly multiply thy seed, and this is the covenant which I make between me and thee, that every male child be circumcised, thou and thy seed after thee. **18.** At eight days old shall it be circumcised, and this covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. **19.** And now therefore thy name shall no more be called Abram but Abraham, and thy wife shall no more be called Sarai but Sarah. **20.** For I will bless you both, and I will multiply your seed after you that you shall become a great nation, and kings shall come forth from you.⁴³⁹

Jasher Chapter 18

Abraham Entertains Three Angels, who eat with him. Sarah is promised a Son. The People of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of all the Cities of the Plain become very Wicked

1. And Abraham rose and did all that God had ordered him, and he took the men of his household and those bought with his money, and he circumcised them as the Lord had commanded him. **2.** And there was not one left whom he did not circumcise, and Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised in the flesh of their foreskin; thirteen years old was Ishmael when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. **3.** And in the third day Abraham went out of his tent and sat at the door to enjoy the heat of the sun, during the pain of his flesh. **4.** And the Lord appeared to him in the plain of Mamre, and sent three of his ministering angels to visit him, and he was sitting at the door of the tent, and he lifted his eyes and saw, and lo three men were coming from a distance, and he rose up and ran to meet them, and he bowed down to them and brought them into his house. **5.** And he said to them, If now I have found favor in your sight, turn in and eat a morsel of bread; and he pressed them, and they turned in and he gave them water and they washed their feet, and he placed them under a tree at the door of the tent. **6.** And Abraham ran and took a calf, tender and good, and he hastened to kill it, and gave it to his servant Eliezer to dress. **7.** And Abraham came to Sarah into the tent, and he said to her, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it and make cakes to cover the pot containing the meat, and she did so. **8.** And Abraham hastened and brought before them butter and milk, beef and mutton, and gave it before them to eat before the flesh of the calf was sufficiently done, and they did eat. **9.** And when they had done eating one of them said to him, I will return to thee according to the time of life, and Sarah thy wife shall have a son. **10.** And the men afterward departed and went their ways, to the places to which they were sent. **11.** In those days all the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of the whole five cities, were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord and they

⁴³⁹ *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 17:1-20.

provoked the Lord with their abominations, and they strengthened in aging abominably and scornfully before the Lord, and their wickedness and crimes were in those days great before the Lord. **12.** And they had in their land a very extensive valley, about half a day's walk, and in it there were fountains of water and a great deal of herbage surrounding the water. **13.** And all the people of Sodom and Gomorrah went there four times in the year, with their wives and children and all belonging to them, and they rejoiced there with timbrels and dances. **14.** And in the time of rejoicing they would all rise and lay hold of their neighbor's wives, and some, the virgin daughters of their neighbors, and they enjoyed them, and each man saw his wife and daughter in the hands of his neighbor and did not say a word. **15.** And they did so from morning to night, and they afterward returned home each man to his house and each woman to her tent; so they always did four times in the year. **16.** Also when a stranger came into their cities and brought goods which he had purchased with a view to dispose of there, the people of these cities would assemble, men, women and children, young and old, and go to the man and take his goods by force, giving a little to each man until there was an end to all the goods of the owner which he had brought into the land. **17.** And if the owner of the goods quarreled with them, saying, What is this work which you have done to me, then they would approach to him one by one, and each would show him the little which he took and taunt him, saying, I only took that little which thou didst give me; and when he heard this from them all, he would arise and go from them in sorrow and bitterness of soul, when they would all arise and go after him, and drive him out of the city with great noise and tumult. **18.** And there was a man from the country of Elam who was leisurely going on the road, seated upon his ass, which carried a fine mantle of divers colors, and the mantle was bound with a cord upon the ass. **19.** And the man was on his journey passing through the street of Sodom when the sun set in the evening, and he remained there in order to abide during the night, but no one would let him into his house; and at that time there was in Sodom a wicked and mischievous man, one skillful to do evil, and his name was Hedad. **20.** And he lifted up his eyes and saw the traveler in the street of the city, and he came to him and said, Whence comest thou and whither dost thou go? **21.** And the man said to him, I am traveling from Hebron to Elam where I belong, and as I passed the sun set and no one would suffer me to enter his house, though I had bread and water and also straw and provender for my ass, and am short of nothing. **22.** And Hedad answered and said to him, All that thou shalt want shall be supplied by me, but in the street thou shalt not abide all night. **23.** And Hedad brought him to his house, and he took off the mantle from the ass with the cord, and brought them to his house, and he gave the ass straw and provender whilst the traveler ate and drank in Hedad's house, and he abode there that night. **24.** And in the morning the traveler rose up early to continue his journey, when Hedad said to him, Wait, comfort thy heart with a morsel of bread and then go, and the man did so; and he remained with him, and they both ate and drank together during the day, when the man rose up to go. **25.** And Hedad said to him, Behold now the day is declining, thou hadst better remain all night that thy heart may be comforted; and he pressed him so that he tarried there all night, and on the second day he rose up early to go away, when Hedad pressed him, saying, Comfort thy heart with a morsel of bread and then go, and he remained and ate with him also the second day, and then the man rose up to continue his journey. **26.** And Hedad said to him, Behold now the day is declining, remain with me to comfort thy heart and in the morning rise up early and go thy way. **27.** And the man would not remain, but rose and saddled his ass, and whilst he was saddling his ass the wife of Hedad said to her husband, Behold this man has remained with us for two days eating and drinking and he has given us nothing, and now shall he go away from us without giving anything? and Hedad said to her, Be silent. **28.** And the man saddled his ass to go, and he asked Hedad to give him the cord and mantle to tie it upon the ass. **29.** And Hedad said to him, What sayest thou? And he said to him, That thou my lord shalt give me the cord and the mantle made with divers colors which thou didst conceal with thee in thy house to take care of it. **30.** And Hedad answered the man, saying, This is the interpretation of thy dream, the cord which thou didst see, means that thy life will be lengthened out like a cord, and having seen the mantle colored with all sorts of colors, means that thou shalt have a vineyard in which thou wilt plant trees of all fruits. **31.** And the traveler answered, saying, Not so my lord, for I was awake when I gave thee the cord and also

a mantle woven with different colors, which thou didst take off the ass to put them by for me; and Hedad answered and said, Surely I have told thee the interpretation of thy dream and it is a good dream, and this is the interpretation thereof. **32.** Now the sons of men give me four pieces of silver, which is my charge for interpreting dreams, and of thee only I require three pieces of silver. **33.** And the man was provoked at the words of Hedad, and he cried bitterly, and he brought Hedad to Serak judge of Sodom. **34.** And the man laid his cause before Serak the judge, when Hedad replied, saying, It is not so, but thus the matter stands; and the judge said to the traveler, This man Hedadtelleth thee truth, for he is famed in the cities for the accurate interpretation of dreams. **35.** And the man cried at the word of the judge, and he said, Not so my Lord, for it was in the day that I gave him the cord and mantle which was upon the ass, in order to put them by in his house; and they both disputed before the judge, the one saying, Thus the matter was, and the other declaring otherwise. **36.** And Hedad said to the man, Give me four pieces of silver that I charge for my interpretations of dreams; I will not make any allowance; and give me the expense of the four meals that thou didst eat in my house. **37.** And the man said to Hedad, Truly I will pay thee for what I ate in thy house, only give me the cord and mantle which thou didst conceal in thy house. **38.** And Hedad replied before the judge and said to the man, Did I not tell thee the interpretation of thy dream? the cord means that thy days shall be prolonged like a cord, and the mantle, that thou wilt have a vineyard in which thou wilt plant all kinds of fruit trees. **39.** This is the proper interpretation of thy dream, now give me the four pieces of silver that I require as a compensation, for I will make thee no allowance. **40.** And the man cried at the words of Hedad and they both quarreled before the judge, and the judge gave orders to his servants, who drove them rashly from the house. **41.** And they went away quarreling from the judge, when the people of Sodom heard them, and they gathered about them and they exclaimed against the stranger, and they drove him rashly from the city. **42.** And the man continued his journey upon his ass with bitterness of soul, lamenting and weeping. **43.** And whilst he was going along he wept at what had happened to him in the corrupt city of Sodom.⁴⁴⁰

Jasher Chapter 19

The Abominations of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Two Angels sent to Save Lot. The Cities of the Plain and all their Inhabitants Destroyed by Fire

1. And the cities of Sodom had four judges to four cities, and these were their names, Serak in the city of Sodom, Sharkad in Gomorrah, Zabnac in Admah, and Menon in Zeboyim. **2.** And Eliezer Abraham's servant applied to them different names, and he converted Serak to Shakra, Sharkad to Shakrura, Zebnac to Kezobim, and Menon to Matzlodin. **3.** And by desire of their four judges the people of Sodom and Gomorrah had beds erected in the streets of the cities, and if a man came to these places they laid hold of him and brought him to one of their beds, and by force made him to lie in them. **4.** And as he lay down, three men would stand at his head and three at his feet, and measure him by the length of the bed, and if the man was less than the bed these six men would stretch him at each end, and when he cried out to them they would not answer him. **5.** And if he was longer than the bed they would draw together the two sides of the bed at each end, until the man had reached the gates of death. **6.** And if he continued to cry out to them, they would answer him, saying, Thus shall it be done to a man that cometh into our land. **7.** And when men heard all these things that the people of the cities of Sodom did, they refrained from coming there. **8.** And when a poor man came to their land they would give him silver and gold, and cause a proclamation in the whole city not to give him a morsel of bread to eat, and if the stranger should remain there some days, and die from hunger, not having been able to obtain a morsel of bread, then at his death all the people of the city would come and take their silver and gold which they had given to him. **9.** And those that could recognize the silver or gold which they had given him took it back, and at his death they also stripped him of his garments, and they would fight about them, and he that prevailed over his neighbor took them. **10.** They would after that

⁴⁴⁰ *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 18:1-43.

carry him and bury him under some of the shrubs in the deserts; so they did all the days to any one that came to them and died in their land. **11.** And in the course of time Sarah sent Eliezer to Sodom, to see Lot and inquire after his welfare. **12.** And Eliezer went to Sodom, and he met a man of Sodom fighting with a stranger, and the man of Sodom stripped the poor man of all his clothes and went away. **13.** And this poor man cried to Eliezer and supplicated his favor on account of what the man of Sodom had done to him. **14.** And he said to him, Why dost thou act thus to the poor man who came to thy land? **15.** And the man of Sodom answered Eliezer, saying, Is this man thy brother, or have the people of Sodom made thee a judge this day, that thou speakest about this man? **16.** And Eliezer strove with the man of Sodom on account of the poor man, and when Eliezer approached to recover the poor man's clothes from the man of Sodom, he hastened and with a stone smote Eliezer in the forehead. **17.** And the blood flowed copiously from Eliezer's forehead, and when the man saw the blood he caught hold of Eliezer, saying, Give me my hire for having rid thee of this bad blood that was in thy forehead, for such is the custom and the law in our land. **18.** And Eliezer said to him, Thou hast wounded me and requirest me to pay thee thy hire; and Eliezer would not hearken to the words of the man of Sodom. **19.** And the man laid hold of Eliezer and brought him to Shakra the judge of Sodom for judgment. **20.** And the man spoke to the judge, saying, I beseech thee my lord, thus has this man done, for I smote him with a stone that the blood flowed from his forehead, and he is unwilling to give me my hire. **21.** And the judge said to Eliezer, This man speaketh truth to thee, give him his hire, for this is the custom in our land; and Eliezer heard the words of the judge, and he lifted up a stone and smote the judge, and the stone struck on his forehead, and the blood flowed copiously from the forehead of the judge, and Eliezer said, If this then is the custom in your land give thou unto this man what I should have given him, for this has been thy decision, thou didst decree it. **22.** And Eliezer left the man of Sodom with the judge, and he went away. **23.** And when the kings of Elam had made war with the kings of Sodom, the kings of Elam captured all the property of Sodom, and they took Lot captive, with his property, and when it was told to Abraham he went and made war with the kings of Elam, and he recovered from their hands all the property of Lot as well as the property of Sodom. **24.** At that time the wife of Lot bare him a daughter, and he called her name Paltith, saying, Because God had delivered him and his whole household from the kings of Elam; and Paltith daughter of Lot grew up, and one of the men of Sodom took her for a wife. **25.** And a poor man came into the city to seek a maintenance, and he remained in the city some days, and all the people of Sodom caused a proclamation of their custom not to give this man a morsel of bread to eat, until he dropped dead upon the earth, and they did so. **26.** And Paltith the daughter of Lot saw this man lying in the streets starved with hunger, and no one would give him any thing to keep him alive, and he was just upon the point of death. **27.** And her soul was filled with pity on account of the man, and she fed him secretly with bread for many days, and the soul of this man was revived. **28.** For when she went forth to fetch water she would put the bread in the water pitcher, and when she came to the place where the poor man was, she took the bread from the pitcher and gave it him to eat; so she did many days. **29.** And all the people of Sodom and Gomorrah wondered how this man could bear starvation for so many days. **30.** And they said to each other, This can only be that he eats and drinks, for no man can bear starvation for so many days or live as this man has, without even his countenance changing; and three men concealed themselves in a place where the poor man was stationed, to know who it was that brought him bread to eat. **31.** And Paltith daughter of Lot went forth that day to fetch water, and she put bread into her pitcher of water, and she went to draw water by the poor man's place, and she took out the bread from the pitcher and gave it to the poor man and he ate it. **32.** And the three men saw what Paltith did to the poor man, and they said to her, It is thou then who hast supported him, and therefore has he not starved, nor changed in appearance nor died like the rest. **33.** And the three men went out of the place in which they were concealed, and they seized Paltith and the bread which was in the poor man's hand. **34.** And they took Paltith and brought her before their judges, and they said to them, Thus did she do, and it is she who supplied the poor man with bread, therefore did he not die all this time; now therefore declare to us the punishment due to this woman for having transgressed our law. **35.** And the people of Sodom and Gomorrah assembled and kindled a fire in the street of the city, and they took

the woman and cast her into the fire and she was burned to ashes. **36.** And in the city of Admah there was a woman to whom they did the like. **37.** For a traveler came into the city of Admah to abide there all night, with the intention of going home in the morning, and he sat opposite the door of the house of the young woman's father, to remain there, as the sun had set when he had reached that place; and the young woman saw him sitting by the door of the house. **38.** And he asked her for a drink of water and she said to him, Who art thou? and he said to her, I was this day going on the road, and reached here when the sun set, so I will abide here all night, and in the morning I will arise early and continue my journey. **39.** And the young woman went into the house and fetched the man bread and water to eat and drink. **40.** And this affair became known to the people of Admah, and they assembled and brought the young woman before the judges, that they should judge her for this act. **41.** And the judge said, The judgment of death must pass upon this woman because she transgressed our law, and this therefore is the decision concerning her. **42.** And the people of those cities assembled and brought out the young woman, and anointed her with honey from head to foot, as the judge had decreed, and they placed her before a swarm of bees which were then in their hives, and the bees flew upon her and stung her that her whole body was swelled. **43.** And the young woman cried out on account of the bees, but no one took notice of her or pitied her, and her cries ascended to heaven. **44.** And the Lord was provoked at this and at all the works of the cities of Sodom, for they had abundance of food, and had tranquility amongst them, and still would not sustain the poor and the needy, and in those days their evil doings and sins became great before the Lord. **45.** And the Lord sent for two of the angels that had come to Abraham's house, to destroy Sodom and its cities. **46.** And the angels rose up from the door of Abraham's tent, after they had eaten and drunk, and they reached Sodom in the evening, and Lot was then sitting in the gate of Sodom, and when he saw them he rose to meet them, and he bowed down to the ground. **47.** And he pressed them greatly and brought them into his house, and he gave them victuals which they ate, and they abode all night in his house. **48.** And the angels said to Lot, Arise, go forth from this place, thou and all belonging to thee, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of this city, for the Lord will destroy this place. **49.** And the angels laid hold upon the hand of Lot and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hands of his children, and all belonging to him, and they brought him forth and set him without the cities. **50.** And they said to Lot, Escape for thy life, and he fled and all belonging to him. **51.** Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah and upon all these cities brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. **52.** And he overthrew these cities, all the plain and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground; and Ado the wife of Lot looked back to see the destruction of the cities, for her compassion was moved on account of her daughters who remained in Sodom, for they did not go with her. **53.** And when she looked back she became a pillar of salt, and it is yet in that place unto this day. **54.** And the oxen which stood in that place daily licked up the salt to the extremities of their feet, and in the morning it would spring forth afresh, and they again licked it up unto this day. **55.** And Lot and two of his daughters that remained with him fled and escaped to the cave of Adullam, and they remained there for some time. **56.** And Abraham rose up early in the morning to see what had been done to the cities of Sodom; and he looked and beheld the smoke of the cities going up like the smoke of a furnace. **57.** And Lot and his two daughters remained in the cave, and they made their father drink wine, and they lay with him, for they said there was no man upon earth that could raise up seed from them, for they thought that the whole earth was destroyed. **58.** And they both lay with their father, and they conceived and bare sons, and the first born called the name of her son Moab, saying, From my father did I conceive him; he is the father of the Moabites unto this day. **59.** And the younger also called her son Benami; he is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day. **60.** And after this Lot and his two daughters went away from there, and he dwelt on the other side of the Jordan with his two daughters and their sons, and the sons of Lot grew up, and they went and took themselves wives from the land of Canaan, and they begat children and they were fruitful and multiplied.⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴¹ *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 19:1-60.

We have reviewed some passages from Moses' notes called the **Book of Jasher** on the story of Abraham in preparation for his writing the Book of Genesis, especially Chapter 12 on. Now we can look at some passages from this same set of notes Moses prepared about himself and his background in preparation for writing the Book of Exodus, noting that Moses had 40 years to both write his notes and the first five books of Moses before being finally allowed to enter the Promise Land. I can imagine Moses writing rough drafts of his notes later called the Book of Jasher as well as completing the writing of the first five books of the Bible ascribed to his name. Moses had both time, the opportunity and the motive for all of these writings. Below we look at some of them trying to understand this **Man of God** who appears to be the first to have *seen the face of Evil and lived*. His was a magnificent story of the Battle of the Gods in the cosmic struggle between good and evil. That is why we have paused to give his background and motives that pushed him toward this challenge of freeing the Hebrew slaves from Egypt and building the institutional life-giving, life-saving structures that would later help them survive as a nation of people after his death. Moses' story and the story he tells is metaphor for the claims we are making throughout this work about the nature of Evil and the human struggle against the IT as a cobelligerent with God. Moses was by far the best example of one of God's cobelligerents against Evil, the evil of human enslavement in particular. Now we can turn to the notes Moses wrote about himself and his immediate family Aaron, Mariam, and supposed mother and father, that is, Jochebed and Amram (both Levites) including his adopted mother, Bathia, the daughter of Pharaoh (according to the *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 68:17) in preparation for writing the *Book of Exodus*.

Jasher Chapter 67

Aaron is Born. On Account of Pharaoh's decree, many of the Sons of Israel live apart from their Wives. The King's counsellors devise another plan to lessen the number of Israel by drowning them. The Lord finds a means of preserving the Male Children.

1. There was a man in the land of Egypt of the seed of Levi, whose name was Amram, the son of Kehath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel. 2. And this man went and took a wife, namely Jochebed the daughter of Levi his father's sister, and she was one hundred and twenty-six years old, and he came unto her. 3. And the woman conceived and bare a daughter, and she called her name Miriam, because in those days the Egyptians had embittered the lives of the children of Israel. 4. And she conceived again and bare a son and she called his name Aaron, for in the days of her conception, Pharaoh began to spill the blood of the male children of Israel. 5. In those days died Zepho the son of Eliphaz, son of Esau, king of Chittim, and Janeas reigned in his stead. 6. And the time that Zepho reigned over the children of Chittim was fifty years, and he died and was buried in the city of Nabna in the land of Chittim. 7. And Janeas, one of the mighty men of the children of Chittim, reigned after him and he reigned fifty years. 8. And it was after the death of the king of Chittim that Balaam the son of Beor fled from the land of Chittim, and he went and came to Egypt to Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9. And Pharaoh received him with great honor, for he had heard of his wisdom, and he gave him presents and made him for a counsellor and aggrandized him. 10. And Balaam dwelt in Egypt, in honor with all the nobles of the king, and the noble exalted him, because they all coveted to learn his wisdom. 11. And in the hundred and thirtieth year of Israel's going down to Egypt, Pharaoh dreamed that he was sitting upon his kingly throne, and lifted up his eyes and saw an old man standing before him, and there were scales in the hands of the old man, such scales as are used by merchants. 12. And the old man took the scales and hung them before Pharaoh. 13. And the old man took all the elders of Egypt and all its nobles and great men, and he tied them together and put them in one scale. 14. And he took a milk kid and

put it into the other scale, and the kid preponderated overall.¹⁵ And Pharaoh was astonished at this dreadful vision, why the kid should preponderate over all, and Pharaoh awoke and behold it was a dream.¹⁶ And Pharaoh rose up early in the morning and called all his servants and related to them the dream, and the men were greatly afraid.¹⁷ And the king said to all his wise men, Interpret I pray you the dream which I dreamed, that I may know it. ¹⁸ And Balaam the son of Beor answered the king and said unto him, This means nothing else but a great evil that will spring up against Egypt in the latter days. ¹⁹ For a son will be born to Israel who will destroy all Egypt and its inhabitants, and bring forth the Israelites from Egypt with a mighty hand.²⁰ Now therefore, O king, take counsel upon this matter, that you may destroy the hope of the children of Israel and their expectation, before this evil arise against Egypt.²¹ And the king said unto Balaam, And what shall we do unto Israel? surely after a certain manner did we at first counsel against them and could not prevail over them.²² Now therefore give you also advice against them by which we may prevail over them.²³ And Balaam answered the king, saying, Send now and call thy two counsellors, and we will see what their advice is upon this matter and afterward thy servant will speak.²⁴ And the king sent and called his two counsellors Reuel the Midianite and Job the Uzite, and they came and sat before the king.²⁵ And the king said to them, Behold you have both heard the dream which I have dreamed, and the interpretation thereof; now therefore give counsel and know and see what is to be done to the children of Israel, whereby we may prevail over them, before their evil shall spring up against us.²⁶ And Reuel the Midianite answered the king and said, May the king live, may the king live forever.²⁷ If it seem good to the king, let him desist from the Hebrews and leave them, and let him not stretch forth his hand against them.²⁸ For these are they whom the Lord chose in days of old, and took as the lot of his inheritance from amongst all the nations of the earth and the kings of the earth; and who is there that stretched his hand against them with impunity, of whom their God was not avenged?²⁹ Surely thou knowest that when Abraham went down to Egypt, Pharaoh, the former king of Egypt, saw Sarah his wife, and took her for a wife, because Abraham said, She is my sister, for he was afraid, lest the men of Egypt should slay him on account of his wife.³⁰ And when the king of Egypt had taken Sarah then God smote him and his household with heavy plagues, until he restored unto Abraham his wife Sarah, then was he healed.³¹ And Abimelech the Gerarite, king of the Philistines, God punished on account of Sarah wife of Abraham, in stopping up every womb from man to beast.³² When their God came to Abimelech in the dream of night and terrified him in order that he might restore to Abraham Sarah whom he had taken, and afterward all the people of Gerar were punished on account of Sarah, and Abraham prayed to his God for them, and he was entreated of him, and he healed them.³³ And Abimelech feared all this evil that came upon him and his people, and he returned to Abraham his wife Sarah, and gave him with her many gifts.³⁴ He did so also to Isaac when he had driven him from Gerar, and God had done wonderful things to him, that all the water courses of Gerar were dried up, and their productive trees did not bring forth. ³⁵ Until Abimelech of Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Pichol the captain of his host, went to him and they bent and bowed down before him to the ground.³⁶ And they requested of him to supplicate for them, and he prayed to the Lord for them, and the Lord was entreated of him and he healed them.³⁷ Jacob also, the plain man, was delivered through his integrity from the hand of his brother Esau, and the hand of Laban the Syrian his mother's brother, who had sought his life; likewise from the hand of all the kings of Canaan who had come together against him and his children to destroy them, and the Lord delivered them out of their hands, that they turned upon them and smote them, for who had ever stretched forth his hand against them with impunity?³⁸ Surely Pharaoh the former, thy father's father, raised Joseph the son of Jacob above all the princes of the land of Egypt, when he saw his wisdom, for through his wisdom he rescued all the inhabitants of the land from the famine.³⁹ After which he ordered Jacob and his children to come down to Egypt, in order that through their virtue, the land of Egypt and the land of Goshen might be delivered from the famine.⁴⁰ Now therefore if it seem good in thine eyes, cease from destroying the children of Israel, but if it be not thy will that they shall dwell in Egypt, send them forth from here, that they may go to the land of Canaan, the land where their ancestors sojourned.⁴¹ And when Pharaoh heard the words of Jethro he was very angry with him, so that he rose with shame from the king's

presence, and went to Midian, his land, and took Joseph's stick with him.⁴² And the king said to Job the Uzite, What sayest thou Job, and what is thy advice respecting the Hebrews?⁴³ So Job said to the king, Behold all the inhabitants of the land are in thy power, let the king do as it seems good in his eyes.⁴⁴ And the king said unto Balaam, What dost thou say, Balaam, speak thy word that we may hear it.⁴⁵ And Balaam said to the king, Of all that the king has counselled against the Hebrews will they be delivered, and the king will not be able to prevail over them with any counsel.⁴⁶ For if thou thinkest to lessen them by the flaming fire, thou canst not prevail over them, for surely their God delivered Abraham their father from Ur of the Chaldeans; and if thou thinkest to destroy them with a sword, surely Isaac their father was delivered from it, and a ram was placed in his stead.⁴⁷ And if with hard and rigorous labor thou thinkest to lessen them, thou wilt not prevail even in this, for their father Jacob served Laban in all manner of hard work, and prospered.⁴⁸ Now therefore, O King, hear my words, for this is the counsel, which is counselled against them, by which thou wilt prevail over them, and from which thou shouldst not depart.⁴⁹ If it please the king let him order all their children which shall be born from this day forward, to be thrown into the water, for by this canst thou wipe away their name, for one of them, nor of their fathers, were tried in this manner.⁵⁰ And the king heard the words of Balaam, and the thing pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of Balaam.⁵¹ And the king ordered a proclamation to be issued and a law to be made throughout the land of Egypt, saying, Every male child born to the Hebrews from this day forward shall be thrown into the water.⁵² And Pharaoh called unto all his servants, saying, Go now and seek throughout the land of Goshen where the children of Israel are, and see that every son born to the Hebrews shall be cast into the river, but every daughter you shall let live.⁵³ And when the children of Israel heard this thing which Pharaoh had commanded, to cast their male children into the river, some of the people separated from their wives and others adhered to them.⁵⁴ And from that day forward, when the time of delivery arrived to those women of Israel who had remained with their husbands, they went to the field to bring forth there, and they brought forth in the field, and left their children upon the field and returned home.⁵⁵ And the Lord who had sworn to their ancestors to multiply them, sent one of his ministering angels which are in heaven to wash each child in water, to anoint and swathe it and to put into its hands two smooth stones from one of which it sucked milk and from the other honey, and he caused its hair to grow to its knees, by which it might cover itself; to comfort it and to cleave to it, through his compassion for it.⁵⁶ And when God had compassion over them and had desired to multiply them upon the face of the land, he ordered his earth to receive them to be preserved therein till the time of their growing up, after which the earth opened its mouth and vomited them forth and they sprouted forth from the city like the herb of the earth, and the grass of the forest, and they returned each to his family and to his father's house, and they remained with them.⁵⁷ And the babes of the children of Israel were upon the earth like the herb of the field, through God's grace to them.⁵⁸ And when all the Egyptians saw this thing, they went forth, each to his field with his yoke of oxen and his ploughshare, and they ploughed it up as one ploughs the earth at seed time.⁵⁹ And when they ploughed they were unable to hurt the infants of the children of Israel, so the people increased and waxed exceedingly.⁶⁰ And Pharaoh ordered his officers daily to go to Goshen to seek for the babes of the children of Israel.⁶¹ And when they had sought and found one, they took it from its mother's bosom by force, and threw it into the river, but the female child they left with its mother; thus did the Egyptians do to the Israelites all the days.⁴⁴²

Jasher Chapter 68

Moses, a Child of Promise, is born. The Egyptian Women acting as Spies. Moses is discovered, and placed by his Mother in an Ark of Bulrushes. Is Found and Adopted by the Daughter of Pharaoh, and grows up among the King's Children.

⁴⁴²Book of Jasher, Chapter 67:1-61

1. And it was at that time the spirit of God was upon Miriam the daughter of Amram the sister of Aaron, and she went forth and prophesied about the house, saying, Behold a son will be born unto us from my father and mother this time, and he will save Israel from the hands of Egypt.2. And when Amram heard the words of his daughter, he went and took his wife back to the house, after he had driven her away at the time when Pharaoh ordered every male child of the house of Jacob to be thrown into the water.3. So Amram took Jochebed his wife, three years after he had driven her away, and he came to her and she conceived.4. And at the end of seven months from her conception she brought forth a son, and the whole house was filled with great light as of the light of the sun and moon at the time of their shining.5. And when the woman saw the child that it was good and pleasing to the sight, she hid it for three months in an inner room.6. In those days the Egyptians conspired to destroy all the Hebrews there.7. And the Egyptian women went to Goshen where the children of Israel were, and they carried their young ones upon their shoulders, their babes who could not yet speak.8. And in those days, when the women of the children of Israel brought forth, each woman had hidden her son from before the Egyptians, that the Egyptians might not know of their bringing forth, and might not destroy them from the land.9. And the Egyptian women came to Goshen and their children who could not speak were upon their shoulders, and when an Egyptian woman came into the house of a Hebrew woman her babe began to cry.10. And when it cried the child that was in the inner room answered it, so the Egyptian women went and told it at the house of Pharaoh.11. And Pharaoh sent his officers to take the children and slay them; thus did the Egyptians to the Hebrew women all the days.12. And it was at that time, about three months from Jochebed's concealment of her son, that the thing was known in Pharaoh's house.13. And the woman hastened to take away her son before the officers came, and she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein, and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.14. And his sister Miriam stood afar off to know what would be done to him, and what would become of her words.15. And God sent forth at that time a terrible heat in the land of Egypt, which burned up the flesh of man like the sun in his circuit, and it greatly oppressed the Egyptians.16. And all the Egyptians went down to bathe in the river, on account of the consuming heat which burned up their flesh.17. And Bathia, the daughter of Pharaoh, went also to bathe in the river, owing to the consuming heat, and her maidens walked at the river side, and all the women of Egypt as well.18. And Bathia lifted up her eyes to the river, and she saw the ark upon the water, and sent her maid to fetch it.19. And she opened it and saw the child, and behold the babe wept, and she had compassion on him, and she said, This is one of the Hebrew children.20. And all the women of Egypt walking on the river side desired to give him suck, but he would not suck, for this thing was from the Lord, in order to restore him to his mother's breast.21. And Miriam his sister was at that time amongst the Egyptian women at the river side, and she saw this thing and she said to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and fetch a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?22. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go, and the young woman went and called the child's mother.23. And Pharaoh's daughter said to Jochebed, Take this child away and suckle it for me, and I will pay thee thy wages, two bits of silver daily; and the woman took the child and nursed it.24. And at the end of two years, when the child grew up, she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh, and he was unto her as a son, and she called his name Moses, for she said, Because I drew him out of the water.25. And Amram his father called his name Chabar, for he said, It was for him that he associated with his wife whom he had turned away.26. And Jochebed his

mother called his name Jekuthiel, Because, she said, I have hoped for him to the Almighty, and God restored him unto me.**27.** And Miriam his sister called him Jered, for she descended after him to the river to know what his end would be.**28.** And Aaron his brother called his name Abi Zanuch, saying, My father left my mother and returned to her on his account.**29.** And Kehath the father of Amram called his name Abigdor, because on his account did God repair the breach of the house of Jacob, that they could no longer throw their male children into the water.**30.** And their nurse called him Abi Socho, saying, In his tabernacle was he hidden for three months, on account of the children of Ham.**31.** And all Israel called his name Shemaiah, son of Nethanel, for they said, In his days has God heard their cries and rescued them from their oppressors.**32.** And Moses was in Pharaoh's house, and was unto Bathia, Pharaoh's daughter, as a son, and Moses grew up amongst the king's children.⁴⁴³

Jasher Chapter 71

Moses slays an Egyptian and being Discovered flees from Egypt. Aaron Prophecies.

1. And when Moses was eighteen years old, he desired to see his father and mother and he went to them to Goshen, and when Moses had come near Goshen, he came to the place where the children of Israel were engaged in work, and he observed their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian smiting one of his Hebrew brethren.**2.** And when the man who was beaten saw Moses he ran to him for help, for the man Moses was greatly respected in the house of Pharaoh, and he said to him, My lord attend to me, this Egyptian came to my house in the night, bound me, and came to my wife in my presence, and now he seeks to take my life away.**3.** And when Moses heard this wicked thing, his anger was kindled against the Egyptian, and he turned this way and the other, and when he saw there was no man there he smote the Egyptian and hid him in the sand, and delivered the Hebrew from the hand of him that smote him.**4.** And the Hebrew went to his house, and Moses returned to his home, and went forth and came back to the king's house.**5.** And when the man had returned home, he thought of repudiating his wife, for it was not right in the house of Jacob, for any man to come to his wife after she had been defiled.**6.** And the woman went and told her brothers, and the woman's brothers sought to slay him, and he fled to his house and escaped.**7.** And on the second day Moses went forth to his brethren, and saw, and behold two men were quarrelling, and he said to the wicked one, Why dost thou smite thy neighbor?**8.** And he answered him and said to him, Who has set thee for a prince and judge over us? Dost thou think to slay me as thou didst slay the Egyptian? and Moses was afraid and he said, Surely the thing is known?**9.** And Pharaoh heard of this affair, and he ordered Moses to be slain, so God sent his angel, and he appeared unto Pharaoh in the likeness of a captain of the guard.**10.** And the angel of the Lord took the sword from the hand of the captain of the guard, and took his head off with it, for the likeness of the captain of the guard was turned into the likeness of Moses.**11.** And the angel of the Lord took hold of the right hand of Moses, and brought him forth from Egypt, and placed him from without the borders of Egypt, a distance of forty days' journey.**12.** And Aaron his brother alone remained in the land of Egypt, and he prophesied to the children of Israel, saying,**13.** Thus says the Lord God of your ancestors, Throw away, each man, the abominations of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt.**14.** And the children of Israel rebelled and would not hearken to Aaron at that time.**15.** And the Lord thought to destroy them, were it not that the Lord remembered the covenant which he had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**16.** In those days the hand of Pharaoh continued to be severe against the children of Israel, and he crushed and oppressed them until the time when God sent forth his word and took notice of them.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴³Book of Jasher, Chapter 68:1-32

⁴⁴⁴Book of Jasher, Chapter 71:1-16.

Jasher Chapter 72

Moses flees to Cush. At the Death of the king, he is chosen in his Stead. He Reigns Forty Years in Cush.

1. And it was in those days that there was a great war between the children of Cush and the children of the east and Aram, and they rebelled against the king of Cush in whose hands they were. 2. So Kikianus king of Cush went forth with all the children of Cush, a people numerous as the sand, and he went to fight against Aram and the children of the east, to bring them under subjection. 3. And when Kikianus went out, he left Balaam the magician, with his two sons, to guard the city, and the lowest sort of the people of the land. 4. So Kikianus went forth to Aram and the children of the east, and he fought against them and smote them, and they all fell down wounded before Kikianus and his people. 5. And he took many of them captives and he brought them under subjection as at first, and he encamped upon their land to take tribute from them as usual. 6. And Balaam the son of Beor, when the king of Cush had left him to guard the city and the poor of the city, he rose up and advised with the people of the land to rebel against king Kikianus, not to let him enter the city when he should come home. 7. And the people of the land hearkened to him, and they swore to him and made him king over them, and his two sons for captains of the army. 8. So they rose up and raised the walls of the city at the two corners, and they built an exceeding strong building. 9. And at the third corner they dug ditches without number, between the city and the river which surrounded the whole land of Cush, and they made the waters of the river burst forth there. 10. At the fourth corner they collected numerous serpents by their incantations and enchantments, and they fortified the city and dwelt therein, and no one went out or in before them. 11. And Kikianus fought against Aram and the children of the east and he subdued them as before, and they gave him their usual tribute, and he went and returned to his land. 12. And when Kikianus the king of Cush approached his city and all the captains of the forces with him, they lifted up their eyes and saw that the walls of the city were built up and greatly elevated, so the men were astonished at this. 13. And they said one to the other, It is because they saw that we were delayed, in battle, and were greatly afraid of us, therefore have they done this thing and raised the city walls and fortified them so that the kings of Canaan might not come in battle against them. 14. So the king and the troops approached the city door and they looked up and behold, all the gates of the city were closed, and they called out to the sentinels, saying, Open unto us, that we may enter the city. 15. But the sentinels refused to open to them by the order of Balaam the magician, their king, they suffered them not to enter their city. 16. So they raised a battle with them opposite the city gate, and one hundred and thirty men of the army at Kikianus fell on that day. 17. And on the next day they continued to fight and they fought at the side of the river; they endeavored to pass but were not able, so some of them sank in the pits and died. 18. So the king ordered them to cut down trees to make rafts, upon which they might pass to them, and they did so. 19. And when they came to the place of the ditches, the waters revolved by mills, and two hundred men upon ten rafts were drowned. 20. And on the third day they came to fight at the side where the serpents were, but they could not approach there, for the serpents slew of them one hundred and seventy men, and they ceased fighting against Cush, and they besieged Cush for nine years, no person came out or in. 21. At that time that the war and the siege were against Cush, Moses fled from Egypt from Pharaoh who sought to kill him for having slain the Egyptian. 22. And Moses was eighteen years old when he fled from Egypt from the presence of Pharaoh, and he fled and escaped to the camp of Kikianus, which at that time was besieging Cush. 23. And Moses was nine years in the camp of Kikianus king of Cush, all the time that they were besieging Cush, and Moses went out and came in with them. 24. And the king and princes and all the fighting men loved Moses, for he was great and worthy, his stature was like a noble lion, his face was like the sun, and his strength was like that of a lion, and he was counsellor to the king. 25. And at the end of nine years, Kikianus was seized with a mortal disease, and his illness prevailed over him, and he died on the seventh day. 26. So his servants embalmed him and carried him and buried him opposite the city gate to the north of the

land of Egypt.**27.** And they built over him an elegant strong and high building, and they placed greatstones below.**28.** And the king's scribes engraved upon those stones all the might of their king Kikianus, and all his battles which he had fought, behold they are written there at this day.**29.** Now after the death of Kikianus king of Cush it grieved his men and troops greatly on account of the war.**30.** So they said one to the other, Give us counsel what we are to do at this time, as we have resided in the wilderness nine years away from our homes.**31.** If we say we will fight against the city many of us will fall wounded or killed, and if we remain here in the siege we shall also die.**32.** For now all the kings of Aram and of the children of the east will hear that our king is dead, and they will attack us suddenly in a hostile manner, and they will fight against us and leave no remnant of us.**33.** Now therefore let us go and make a king over us, and let us remain in the siege until the city is delivered up to us.**34.** And they wished to choose on that day a man for king from the army of Kikianus, and they found no object of their choice like Moses to reign over them.**35.** And they hastened and stripped off each man his garments and cast them upon the ground, and they made a great heap and placed Moses thereon.**36.** And they rose up and blew with trumpets and called out before him, and said, May the king live, may the king live!**37.** And all the people and nobles swore unto him to give him for a wife Adoniah the queen, the Cushite, wife of Kikianus, and they made Moses king over them on that day.**38.** And all the people of Cush issued a proclamation on that day, saying, Every man must give something to Moses of what is in his possession.**39.** And they spread out a sheet upon the heap, and every man cast into it something of what he had, one a gold earring and the other a coin.**40.** Also of onyx stones, bdellium, pearls and marble did the children of Cush cast unto Moses upon the heap, also silver and gold in great abundance.**41.** And Moses took all the silver and gold, all the vessels, and the bdellium and onyx stones, which all the children of Cush had given to him, and he placed them amongst his treasures.**42.** And Moses reigned over the children of Cush on that day, in the place of Kikianus king of Cush.⁴⁴⁵

Jasher Chapter 73

The Reign of Moses, and his Strategic Warfare.

1. In the fifty-fifth year of the reign of Pharaoh king of Egypt, that is in the hundred and fifty-seventh year of the Israelites going down into Egypt, reigned Moses in Cush.**2.** Moses was twenty-seven years old when he began to reign over Cush, and forty years did he reign.**3.** And the Lord granted Moses favor and grace in the eyes of all the children of Cush, and the children of Cush loved him exceedingly, so Moses was favored by the Lord and by men.**4.** And in the seventh day of his reign, all the children of Cush assembled and came before Moses and bowed down to him to the ground.**5.** And all the children spoke together in the presence of the king, saying, Give us counsel that we may see what is to be done to this city.**6.** For it is now nine years that we have been besieging round about the city, and have not seen our children and our wives.**7.** So the king answered them, saying, If you will hearken to my voice in all that I shall command you, then will the Lord give the city into our hands and we shall subdue it.**8.** For if we fight with them as in the former battle which we had with them before the death of Kikianus, many of us will fall down wounded as before.**9.** Now therefore behold here is counsel for you in this matter; if you will hearken to my voice, then will the city be delivered into our hands.**10.** So all the forces answered the king, saying, All that our lord shall command that will we do.**11.** And Moses said unto them, Pass through and proclaim a voice in the whole camp unto all the people, saying,**12.** Thus says the king, Go into the forest and bring with you of the young ones of the stork, each man a young one in his hand.**13.** And any person transgressing the word of the king, who shall not bring his young one, he shall die, and the king will take all belonging to him.**14.** And when you shall bring them they shall be in your keeping, you shall rear them until they grow up, and you shall teach them to dart upon, as is the way of the young ones of the hawk.**15.** So all the children

⁴⁴⁵Book of Jasher, Chapter 72:1-42.

of Cush heard the words of Moses, and they rose up and caused a proclamation to be issued throughout the camp, saying.**16.** Unto you, all the children of Cush, the king's order is, that you go all together to the forest, and catch there the young storks each man his young one in his hand, and you shall bring them home.**17.** And any person violating the order of the king shall die, and the king will take all that belongs to him.**18.** And all the people did so, and they went out to the wood and they climbed the fir trees and caught, each man a young one in his hand, all the young of the storks, and they brought them into the desert and reared them by order of the king, and they taught them to dart upon, similar to the young hawks.**19.** And after the young storks were reared, the king ordered them to be hungered for three days, and all the people did so.**20.** And on the third day, the king said unto them, strengthen yourselves and become valiant men, and put on each man his armor and gird on his sword upon him, and ride each man his horse and take each his young stork in his hand.**21.** And we will rise up and fight against the city at the place where the serpents are; and all the people did as the king had ordered.**22.** And they took each man his young one in his hand, and they went away, and when they came to the place of the serpents the king said to them, Send forth each man his young stork upon the serpents.**23.** And they sent forth each man his young stork at the king's order, and the young storks ran upon the serpents and they devoured them all and destroyed them out of that place.**24.** And when the king and people had seen that all the serpents were destroyed in that place, all the people set up a great shout.**25.** And they approached and fought against the city and took it and subdued it, and they entered the city.**26.** And there died on that day one thousand and one hundred men of the people of the city all that inhabited the city, but of the people besieging not one died.**27.** So all the children of Cush went each to his home, to his wife and children and to all belonging to him.**28.** And Balaam the magician, when he saw that the city was taken, he opened the gate and he and his two sons and eight brothers fled and returned to Egypt to Pharaoh king of Egypt.**29.** They are the sorcerers and magicians who are mentioned in the book of the law, standing against Moses when the Lord brought the plagues upon Egypt.**30.** So Moses took the city by his wisdom, and the children of Cush placed him on the throne instead of Kikianus king of Cush.**31.** And they placed the royal crown upon his head, and they gave him for a wife Adoniah the Cushite queen, wife of Kikianus.**32.** And Moses feared the Lord God of his fathers, so that he came not to her, nor did he turn his eyes to her.**33.** For Moses remembered how Abraham had made his servant Eliezer swear, saying unto him, Thou shalt not take a woman from the daughters of Canaan for my son Isaac.**34.** Also what Isaac did when Jacob had fled from his brother, when he commanded him, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan, nor make alliance with any of the children of Ham.**35.** For the Lord our God gave Ham the son of Noah, and his children and all his seed, as slaves to the children of Shem and to the children of Japheth, and unto their seed after them for slaves, forever.**36.** Therefore Moses turned not his heart nor his eyes to the wife of Kikianus all the days that he reigned over Cush.**37.** And Moses feared the Lord his God all his life, and Moses walked before the Lord in truth, with all his heart and soul, he turned not from the right way all the days of his life; he declined not from the way either to the right or to the left, in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had walked.**38.** And Moses strengthened himself in the kingdom of the children of Cush, and he guided the children of Cush with his usual wisdom, and Moses prospered in his kingdom.**39.** And at that time Aram and the children of the east heard that Kikianus king of Cush had died, so Aram and the children of the east rebelled against Cush in those days.**40.** And Moses gathered all the children of Cush, a people very mighty, about thirty thousand men, and he went forth to fight with Aram and the children of the east.**41.** And they went at first to the children of the east, and when the children of the east heard their report, they went to meet them, and engaged in battle with them.**42.** And the war was severe against the children of the east, so the Lord gave all the children of the east into the hand of Moses, and about three hundred men fell down slain.**43.** And all the children of the east turned back and retreated, so Moses and the children of Cush followed them and subdued them, and put a tax upon them, as was their custom.**44.** So Moses and all the people with him passed from there to the land of Aram for battle.**45.** And the people of Aram also went to meet them, and they fought against them, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Moses, and many of the men of Aram fell down wounded.**46.** And Aram also were subdued by Moses and the people

of Cush, and also gave their usual tax.⁴⁷ And Moses brought Aram and the children of the east under subjection to the children of Cush, and Moses and all the people who were with him, turned to the land of Cush.⁴⁸ And Moses strengthened himself in the kingdom of the children of Cush, and the Lord was with him, and all the children of Cush were afraid of him.⁴⁴⁶

Jasher Chapter 76

Moses leaves Cush and goes to the Land of Midian. Reuel, taking him for aRefugee, keeps him in prison for Ten Years. Is fed by Zipporah, the Daughter of Reuel. Pharaoh smitten of the Plague. Slays a child of the Israelites every day. He dies of theRot, and his Son,Adikam, Reigns in his Stead.

And Moses the son of Amram was still king in the land of Cush in those days, and he prospered in his kingdom, and he conducted the government of the children of Cush in justice, in righteousness, and integrity.² And all the children of Cush loved Moses all the days that he reigned over them, and all the inhabitants of the land of Cush were greatly afraid of him.³ And in the fortieth year of the reign of Moses over Cush, Moses was sitting on the royal throne whilst Adoniah the queen was before him, and all the nobles were sitting around him.⁴ And Adoniah the queen said before the king and the princes, What is this thing which you, the children of Cush, have done for this long time?⁵ Surely you know that for forty years that this man has reigned over Cush he has not approached me, nor has he served the gods of the children of Cush.⁶ Now therefore hear, O ye children of Cush, and let this man no more reign over you as he is not of our flesh.⁷ Behold Menacrus my son is grown up, let him reign over you, for it is better for you to serve the son of your lord, than to serve a stranger, slave of the king of Egypt.⁸ And all the people and nobles of the children of Cush heard the words which Adoniah the queen had spoken in their ears.⁹ And all the people were preparing until the evening, and in the morning they rose up early and made Menacrus, son of Kikianus, king over them.¹⁰ And all the children of Cush were afraid to stretch forth their hand against Moses, for the Lord was with Moses, and the children of Cush remembered the oath which they swore unto Moses, therefore they did no harm to him.¹¹ But the children of Cush gave many presents to Moses, and sent him from them with great honor.¹² So Moses went forth from the land of Cush, and went home and ceased to reign over Cush, and Moses was sixty-six years old when he went out of the land of Cush, for the thing was from the Lord, for the period had arrived which he had appointed in the days of old, to bring forth Israel from the affliction of the children of Ham.¹³ So Moses went to Midian, for he was afraid to return to Egypt on account of Pharaoh and he went and sat at a well of water in Midian.¹⁴ And the seven daughters of Reuel the Midianite went out to feed their father's flock.¹⁵ And they came to the well and drew water to water their father's flock.¹⁶ So the shepherds of Midian came and drove them away, and Moses rose up and helped them and watered the flock.¹⁷ And they came home to their father Reuel, and told him what Moses did for them.¹⁸ And they said, An Egyptian man has delivered us from the hands of the shepherds, he drew up water for us and watered the flock.¹⁹ And Reuel said to his daughters, And where is he? wherefore have you left the man?²⁰ And Reuel sent for him and fetched him and brought him home, and he ate bread with him.²¹ And Moses related to Reuel that he had fled from Egypt and that he reigned forty years over Cush, and that they afterward had taken the government from him, and had sent him away in peace with honor and with presents.²² And when Reuel had heard the words of Moses, Reuel said within himself, I will put this man into the prison house, whereby I shall conciliate the children of Cush, for he has fled from them.²³ And they took and put him into the prison house, and Moses was in prison ten years, and whilst Moses was in the prison house, Zipporah the daughter of Reuel took pity over him, and supported him with bread and water all the time.²⁴ And all the children of Israel were

⁴⁴⁶Book of Jasher, Chapter 73:1-48.

yet in the land of Egypt serving the Egyptians in all manner of hard work, and the hand of Egypt continued in severity over the children of Israel in those days.**25.** At that time the Lord smote Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he afflicted with the plague of leprosy from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head; owing to the cruel treatment of the children of Israel was this plague at that time from the Lord upon Pharaoh king of Egypt.**26.** For the Lord had hearkened to the prayer of his people the children of Israel, and their cry reached him on account of their hard work.**27.** Still his anger did not turn from them, and the hand of Pharaoh was still stretched out against the children of Israel, and Pharaoh hardened his neck before the Lord, and he increased his yoke over the children of Israel, and embittered their lives with all manner of hard work.**28.** And when the Lord had inflicted the plague upon Pharaoh king of Egypt, he asked his wise men and sorcerers to cure him.**29.** And his wise men and sorcerers said unto him, That if the blood of little children were put into the wounds he would be healed.**30.** And Pharaoh hearkened to them, and sent his ministers to Goshen to the children of Israel to take their little children.**31.** And Pharaoh's ministers went and took the infants of the children of Israel from the bosoms of their mothers by force, and they brought them to Pharaoh daily, a child each day, and the physicians killed them and applied them to the plague; thus did they all the days.**32.** And the number of the children which Pharaoh slew was three hundred and seventy-five.**33.** But the Lord hearkened not to the physicians of the king of Egypt, and the plague went on increasing mightily.**34.** And Pharaoh was ten years afflicted with that plague, still the heart of Pharaoh was more hardened against the children of Israel.**35.** And at the end of ten years the Lord continued to afflict Pharaoh with destructive plagues.**36.** And the Lord smote him with a bad tumor and sickness at the stomach, and that plague turned to a severe boil.**37.** At that time the two ministers of Pharaoh came from the land of Goshen where all the children of Israel were, and went to the house of Pharaoh and said to him, We have seen the children of Israel slacken in their work and negligent in their labor.**38.** And when Pharaoh heard the words of his ministers, his anger was kindled against the children of Israel exceedingly, for he was greatly grieved at his bodily pain.**39.** And he answered and said, Now that the children of Israel know that I am ill, they turn and scoff at us, now therefore harness my chariot for me, and I will betake myself to Goshen and will see the scoff of the children of Israel with which they are deriding me; so his servants harnessed the chariot for him.**40.** And they took and made him ride upon a horse, for he was not able to ride of himself;**41.** And he took with him ten horsemen and ten footmen, and went to the children of Israel to Goshen.**42.** And when they had come to the border of Egypt, the king's horse passed into a narrow place, elevated in the hollow part of the vineyard, fenced on both sides, the low, plain country being on the other side.**43.** And the horses ran rapidly in that place and pressed each other, and the other horses pressed the king's horse.**44.** And the king's horse fell into the low plain whilst the king was riding upon it, and when he fell the chariot turned over the king's face and the horse lay upon the king, and the king cried out, for his flesh was very sore.**45.** And the flesh of the king was torn from him, and his bones were broken and he could not ride, for this thing was from the Lord to him, for the Lord had heard the cries of his people the children of Israel and their affliction.**46.** And his servants carried him upon their shoulders, a little at a time, and they brought him back to Egypt, and the horsemen who were with him came also back to Egypt.**47.** And they placed him in his bed, and the king knew that his end was come to die, so Aparanith the queen his wife came and cried before the king, and the king wept a great weeping with her.**48.** And all his nobles and servants came on that day and saw the king in that affliction, and wept a great weeping with him.**49.** And the princes of the king and all his counselors advised the king to cause one to reign in his stead in the land, whomsoever he should choose from his sons.**50.** And the king had three sons and two daughters which Aparanith the queen his wife had borne to him, besides the king's children of concubines.**51.** And these were their names, the firstborn Othri, the second Adikam, and the third Morion, and their sisters, the name of the elder Bathia and of the other Acuzi.**52.** And Othri the first born of the king was an idiot, precipitate and hurried in his words.**53.** But Adikam was a cunning and wise man and knowing in all the wisdom of Egypt, but of unseemly aspect, thick in flesh, and very short in stature; his height was one cubit.**54.** And when the king saw Adikam his son intelligent and wise in all things, the king resolved that he should be king in his stead after his death.**55.** And he took for him

a wife Gedudah daughter of Abilot, and he was ten years old, and she bare unto him four sons.⁵⁶ And he afterward went and took three wives and begat eight sons and three daughters.⁵⁷ And the disorder greatly prevailed over the king, and his flesh stank like the flesh of a carcass cast upon the field in summer time, during the heat of the sun.⁵⁸ And when the king saw that his sickness had greatly strengthened itself over him, he ordered his son Adikam to be brought to him, and they made him king over the land in his place. ⁵⁹. And at the end of three years, the king died, in shame, disgrace, and disgust, and his servants carried him and buried him in the sepulcher of the kings of Egypt in Zoan Mizraim.⁶⁰ But they embalmed him not as was usual with kings, for his flesh was putrid, and they could not approach to embalm him on account of the stench, so they buried him in haste.⁶¹ For this evil was from the Lord to him, for the Lord had requited him evil for the evil which in his days he had done to Israel.⁶² And he died with terror and with shame, and his son Adikam reigned in his place.⁴⁴⁷

Jasher Chapter 78

Moses has Two Sons. Pharaoh withholds Straw from the Israelites.

1. At that time died Baal Channan son of Achbor, king of Edom, and was buried in his house in the land of Edom. 2. And after his death the children of Esau sent to the land of Edom, and took from there a man who was in Edom, whose name was Hadad, and they made him king over them in the place of Baal Channan, their king. 3. And Hadad reigned over the children of Edom forty-eight years. 4. And when he reigned he resolved to fight against the children of Moab, to bring them under the power of the children of Esau as they were before, but he was not able because the children of Moab heard this thing, and they rose up and hastened to elect a king over them from amongst their brethren. 5. And they afterward gathered together a great people, and sent to the children of Ammon their brethren for help to fight against Hadad king of Edom. 6. And Hadad heard the thing which the children of Moab had done, and was greatly afraid of them, and refrained from fighting against them. 7. In those days Moses, the son of Amram, in Midian, took Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel the Midianite, for a wife. 8. And Zipporah walked in the ways of the daughters of Jacob, she was nothing short of the righteousness of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. 9. And Zipporah conceived and bare a son and he called his name Gershom, for he said, I was a stranger in a foreign land; but he circumcised not his foreskin, at the command of Reuel his father-in-law. 10. And she conceived again and bare a son, but circumcised his foreskin, and called his name Eliezer, for Moses said, Because the God of my fathers was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh. 11. And Pharaoh king of Egypt greatly increased the labor of the children of Israel in those days, and continued to make his yoke heavier upon the children of Israel. 12. And he ordered a proclamation to be made in Egypt, saying, Give no more straw to the people to make bricks with, let them go and gather themselves straw as they can find it. 13. Also the tale of bricks which they shall make let them give each day, and diminish nothing from them, for they are idle in their work. 14. And the children of Israel heard this, and they mourned and sighed, and they cried unto the Lord on account of the bitterness of their souls. 15. And the Lord heard the cries of the children of Israel, and saw the oppression with which the Egyptians oppressed them. 16. And the Lord was jealous of his people and his inheritance, and heard their voice, and he resolved to take them out of the affliction of Egypt, to give them the land of Canaan for a possession.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁷ *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 76:1-62.

⁴⁴⁸ *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 78:1-16.

Jasher Chapter 79

The Lord appears to Moses and commands him to go down to Egypt to Deliver Israel. Aaron meets him. Israel on hearing of his Mission greatly rejoices. Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh, who calls all the Magicians to meet Moses. They Perform Miracles as well as Moses, and thus Deceive the King. Pharaoh, not finding the Name of Jehovah on any of the Books of Records, says he does not know who He is, and will not let his People go. Moses and Aaron teach Pharaoh, but he will not hearken, but causes the labor of the Children of Israel to be increased. Moses being discouraged is told by the Lord that with an outstretched hand and heavy Plagues, Israel shall be Delivered.

1. And in those days Moses was feeding the flock of Reuel the Midianite his father-in-law, beyond the wilderness of Sin, and the stick which he took from his father-in-law was in his hand. 2. And it came to pass one day that a kid of goats strayed from the flock, and Moses pursued it and it came to the mountain of God to Horeb. 3. And when he came to Horeb, the Lord appeared there unto him in the bush, and he found the bush burning with fire, but the fire had no power over the bush to consume it. 4. And Moses was greatly astonished at this sight, wherefore the bush was not consumed, and he approached to see this mighty thing, and the Lord called unto Moses out of the fire and commanded him to go down to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to send the children of Israel from his service., 5. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, return to Egypt, for all those men who sought thy life are dead, and thou shalt speak unto Pharaoh to send forth the children of Israel from his land. 6. And the Lord showed him to do signs and wonders in Egypt before the eyes of Pharaoh and the eyes of his subjects, in order that they might believe that the Lord had sent him. 7. And Moses hearkened to all that the Lord had commanded him, and he returned to his father-in-law and told him the thing, and Reuel said to him, Go in peace. 8. And Moses rose up to go to Egypt, and he took his wife and sons with him, and he was at an inn in the road, and an angel of God came down, and sought an occasion against him. 9. And he wished to kill him on account of his first born son, because he had not circumcised him, and had transgressed the covenant which the Lord had made with Abraham. 10. For Moses had hearkened to the words of his father-in-law which he had spoken to him, not to circumcise his first born son, therefore he circumcised him not. 11. And Zipporah saw the angel of the Lord seeking an occasion against Moses, and she knew that this thing was owing to his not having circumcised her son Gershom. 12. And Zipporah hastened and took of the sharp rock stones that were there, and she circumcised her son, and delivered her husband and her son from the hand of the angel of the Lord. 13. And Aaron the son of Amram, the brother of Moses, was in Egypt walking at the riverside on that day. 14. And the Lord appeared to him in that place, and he said to him, Go now toward Moses in the wilderness, and he went and met him in the mountain of God, and he kissed him. 15. And Aaron lifted up his eyes, and saw Zipporah the wife of Moses and her children, and he said unto Moses, Who are these unto thee? 16. And Moses said unto him, They are my wife and sons, which God gave to me in Midian; and the thing grieved Aaron on account of the woman and her children. 17. And Aaron said to Moses, Send away the woman and her children that they may go to her father's house, and Moses hearkened to the words of Aaron, and did so. 18. And Zipporah returned with her children, and they went to the house of Reuel, and remained there until the time arrived when the Lord had visited his people, and brought them forth from Egypt from the hand at Pharaoh. 19. And Moses and Aaron came to Egypt to the community of the children of Israel, and they spoke to them all the words of the Lord, and the people rejoiced an exceeding great rejoicing. 20. And Moses and Aaron rose up early on the next day, and they went to the house of Pharaoh, and they took in their hands the stick of God. 21. And when they came to the king's gate, two young lions were confined there with iron instruments, and no person went out or came in from before them, unless those whom the king ordered to come, when the conjurors came and withdrew the lions by their incantations, and this brought them to the king. 22. And Moses hastened and lifted up the stick upon the lions, and he loosed them, and Moses and Aaron came into the king's house. 23.

The lions also came with them in joy, and they followed them and rejoiced as a dog rejoices over his master when he comes from the field.**24.** And when Pharaoh saw this thing he was astonished at it, and he was greatly terrified at the report, for their appearance was like the appearance of the children of God.**25.** And Pharaoh said to Moses, What do you require? and they answered him, saying, The Lord God of the Hebrews has sent us to thee, to say, Send forth my people that they may serve me.**26.** And when Pharaoh heard their words he was greatly terrified before them, and he said to them, Go today and come back to me tomorrow, and they did according to the word of the king.**27.** And when they had gone Pharaoh sent for Balaam the magician and to Jannes and Jambres his sons, and to all the magicians and conjurors and counsellors which belonged to the king, and they all came and sat before the king.**28.** And the king told them all the words which Moses and his brother Aaron had spoken to him, and the magicians said to the king, But how came the men to thee, on account of the lions which were confined at the gate?**29.** And the king said, Because they lifted up their rod against the lions and loosed them, and came to me, and the lions also rejoiced at them as a dog rejoices to meet his master.**30.** And Balaam the son of Beor the magician answered the king, saying, These are none else than magicians like ourselves.**31.** Now therefore send for them, and let them come and we will try them, and the king did so.**32.** And in the morning Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron to come before the king, and they took the rod of God, and came to the king and spoke to him, saying,**33.** Thus said the Lord God of the Hebrews, Send my people that they may serve me.**34.** And the king said to them, But who will believe you that you are the messengers of God and that you come to me by his order?**35.** Now therefore give a wonder or sign in this matter, and then the words which you speak will be believed.**36.** And Aaron hastened and threw the rod out of his hand before Pharaoh and before his servants, and the rod turned into a serpent.**37.** And the sorcerers saw this and they cast each man his rod upon the ground and they became serpents.**38.** And the serpent of Aaron's rod lifted up its head and opened its mouth to swallow the rods of the magicians.**39.** And Balaam the magician answered and said, This thing has been from the days of old, that a serpent should swallow its fellow, and that living things devour each other.**40.** Now therefore restore it to a rod as it was at first, and we will also restore our rods as they were at first, and if thy rod shall swallow our rods, then shall we know that the spirit of God is in thee, and if not, thou art only an artificer like unto ourselves.**41.** And Aaron hastened and stretched forth his hand and caught hold of the serpent's tail and it became a rod in his hand, and the sorcerers did the like with their rods, and they got hold, each man of the tail of his serpent, and they became rods as at first.**42.** And when they were restored to rods, the rod of Aaron swallowed up their rods.**43.** And when the king saw this thing, he ordered the book of records that related to the kings of Egypt, to be brought, and they brought the book of records, the chronicles of the kings of Egypt, in which all the idols of Egypt were inscribed, for they thought of finding therein the name of Jehovah, but they found it not.**44.** And Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron, Behold I have not found the name of your God written in this book, and his name I know not.**45.** And the counsellors and wise men answered the king, We have heard that the God of the Hebrews is a son of the wise, the son of ancient kings.**46.** And Pharaoh turned to Moses and Aaron and said to them, I know not the Lord whom you have declared, neither will I send his people.**47.** And they answered and said to the king, The Lord God of Gods is his name, and he proclaimed his name over us from the days of our ancestors, and sent us, saying, Go to Pharaoh and say unto him, Send my people that they may serve me.**48.** Now therefore send us, that we may take a journey for three days in the wilderness, and there may sacrifice to him, for from the days of our going down to Egypt, he has not taken from our hands either burnt offering, oblation or sacrifice, and if thou wilt not send us, his anger will be kindled against thee, and he will smite Egypt either with the plague or with the sword.**49.** And Pharaoh said to them, Tell me now his power and his might; and they said to him, He created the heaven and the earth, the seas and all their fishes, he formed the light, created the darkness, caused rain upon the earth and watered it, and made the herb and grass to sprout, he created man and beast and the animals of the forest, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, and by his mouth they live and die.**50.** Surely he created thee in thy mother's womb, and put into thee the breath of life, and reared thee and placed thee upon the royal throne of Egypt, and he will take thy breath and soul from thee, and return thee to

the ground whence thou wast taken.**51.** And the anger of the king was kindled at their words, and he said to them, But who amongst all the Gods of nations can do this? my river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.**52.** And he drove them from him, and he ordered the labor upon Israel to be more severe than it was yesterday and before.**53.** And Moses and Aaron went out from the king's presence, and they saw the children of Israel in an evil condition for the task-masters had made their labor exceedingly heavy.**54.** And Moses returned to the Lord and said, Why hast thou ill treated thy people? for since I came to speak to Pharaoh what thou didst send me for, he has exceedingly ill used the children of Israel.**55.** And the Lord said to Moses, Behold thou wilt see that with an outstretched hand and heavy plagues, Pharaoh will send the children of Israel from his land.**56.** And Moses and Aaron dwelt amongst their brethren the children of Israel in Egypt.**57.** And as for the children of Israel the Egyptians embittered their lives, with the heavy work which they imposed upon them.⁴⁴⁹

Jasher Chapter 80

After Two Years, Moses and Aaron again go to Pharaoh, but Pharaoh will not Harken. The Lord afflicts Egypt with all manner of Plagues and Afflictions. The First-born of all the Egyptians is Slain. Pharaoh sends the Children of Israel away, and all the Egyptians rise up to urge their Departure, but they will not go in the Night

1. And at the end of two years, the Lord again sent Moses to Pharaoh to bring forth the children of Israel, and to send them out of the land of Egypt.**2.** And Moses went and came to the house of Pharaoh, and he spoke to him the words of the Lord who had sent him, but Pharaoh would not hearken to the voice of the Lord, and God roused his might in Egypt upon Pharaoh and his subjects, and God smote Pharaoh and his people with very great and sore plagues.**3.** And the Lord sent by the hand of Aaron and turned all the waters of Egypt into blood, with all their streams and rivers.**4.** And when an Egyptian came to drink and draw water, he looked into his pitcher, and behold all the water was turned into blood; and when he came to drink from his cup the water in the cup became blood.**5.** And when a woman kneaded her dough and cooked her victuals, their appearance was turned to that of blood.**6.** And the Lord sent again and caused all their waters to bring forth frogs, and all the frogs came into the houses of the Egyptians.**7.** And when the Egyptians drank, their bellies were filled with frogs and they danced in their bellies as they dance when in the river.**8.** And all their drinking water and cooking water turned to frogs, also when they lay in their beds their perspiration bred frogs.**9.** Notwithstanding all this the anger of the Lord did not turn from them, and his hand was stretched out against all the Egyptians to smite them with every heavy plague.**10.** And he sent and smote their dust to lice, and the lice became in Egypt to the height of two cubits upon the earth.**11.** The lice were also very numerous, in the flesh of man and beast, in all the inhabitants of Egypt, also upon the king and queen the Lord sent the lice, and it grieved Egypt exceedingly on account of the lice.**12.** Notwithstanding this, the anger of the Lord did not turn away, and his hand was still stretched out over Egypt.**13.** And the Lord sent all kinds of beasts of the field into Egypt, and they came and destroyed all Egypt, man and beast, and trees, and all things that were in Egypt.**14.** And the Lord sent fiery serpents, scorpions, mice, weasels, toads, together with others creeping in dust.**15.** Flies, hornets, fleas, bugs and gnats, each swarm according to its kind.**16.** And all reptiles and winged animals according to their kind came to Egypt and grieved the Egyptians exceedingly.**17.** And the fleas and flies came into the eyes and ears of the Egyptians.**18.** And the hornet came upon them and drove them away, and they removed from it into their inner rooms, and it pursued them.**19.** And when the Egyptians hid themselves on account of the swarm of animals, they locked their doors after them, and God ordered the Sulanuth which was in the sea, to come up and go into Egypt.**20.** And she had long arms, ten cubits in length of the cubit of a man.**21.** And she went upon the roofs and uncovered the rafters and flooring and cut them, and

⁴⁴⁹ Book of Jasher, Chapter 79:1-57.

stretched forth her arm into the house and removed the lock and the bolt, and opened the houses of Egypt.**22.** Afterward came the swarm of animals into the houses of Egypt, and the swarm of animals destroyed the Egyptians, and it grieved them exceedingly.**23.** Notwithstanding this the anger of the Lord did not turn away from the Egyptians, and his hand was yet stretched forth against them.**24.** And God sent the pestilence, and the pestilence pervaded Egypt, in the horses and asses, and in the camels, in herds of oxen and sheep and in man.**25.** And when the Egyptians rose up early in the morning to take their cattle to pasture they found all their cattle dead.**26.** And there remained of the cattle of the Egyptians only one in ten, and of the cattle belonging to Israel in Goshen not one died.**27.** And God sent a burning inflammation in the flesh of the Egyptians, which burst their skins, and it became a severe itch in all the Egyptians from the soles of their feet to the crowns of their heads.**28.** And many boils were in their flesh, that their flesh wasted away until they became rotten and putrid.**29.** Notwithstanding this the anger of the Lord did not turn away, and his hand was still stretched out over all Egypt.**30.** And the Lord sent a very heavy hail, which smote their vines and broke their fruit trees and dried them up that they fell upon them.**31.** Also every green herb became dry and perished, for a mingling fire descended amidst the hail, therefore the hail and the fire consumed all things.**32.** Also men and beasts that were found abroad perished of the flames of fire and of the hail, and all the young lions were exhausted.**33.** And the Lord sent and brought numerous locusts into Egypt, the Chasel, Salom, Chargol, and Chagole, locusts each of its kind, which devoured all that the hail had left remaining.**34.** Then the Egyptians rejoiced at the locusts, although they consumed the produce of the field, and they caught them in abundance and salted them for food.**35.** And the Lord turned a mighty wind of the sea which took away all the locusts, even those that were salted, and thrust them into the Red Sea; not one locust remained within the boundaries of Egypt.**36.** And God sent darkness upon Egypt, that the whole land of Egypt and Pathros became dark for three days, so that a man could not see his hand when he lifted it to his mouth.**37.** At that time died many of the people of Israel who had rebelled against the Lord and who would not hearken to Moses and Aaron, and believed not in them that God had sent them.**38.** And who had said, We will not go forth from Egypt lest we perish with hunger in a desolate wilderness, and who would not hearken to the voice of Moses.**39.** And the Lord plagued them in the three days of darkness, and the Israelites buried them in those days, without the Egyptians knowing of them or rejoicing over them.**40.** And the darkness was very great in Egypt for three days, and any person who was standing when the darkness came, remained standing in his place, and he that was sitting remained sitting, and he that was lying continued lying in the same state, and he that was walking remained sitting upon the ground in the same spot; and this thing happened to all the Egyptians, until the darkness had passed away.**41.** And the days of darkness passed away, and the Lord sent Moses and Aaron to the children of Israel, saying, Celebrate your feast and make your Passover, for behold I come in the midst of the night amongst all the Egyptians, and I will smite all their firstborn, from the first born of a man to the first born of a beast, and when I see your Passover, I will pass over you.**42.** And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, thus did they in that night.**43.** And it came to pass in the middle of the night, that the Lord went forth in the midst of Egypt, and smote all the first born of the Egyptians, from the first born of man to the first born of beast.**44.** And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry throughout Egypt in that night, for there was not a house in which there was not a corpse.**45.** Also the likenesses of the first born of Egypt, which were carved in the walls at their houses, were destroyed and fell to the ground.**46.** Even the bones of their first born who had died before this and whom they had buried in their houses, were raked up by the dogs of Egypt on that night and dragged before the Egyptians and cast before them.**47.** And all the Egyptians saw this evil which had suddenly come upon them, and all the Egyptians cried out with a loud voice.**48.** And all the families of Egypt wept upon that night, each man for his son and each man for his daughter, being the first born, and the tumult of Egypt was heard at a distance on that night.**49.** And Bathia the daughter of Pharaoh went forth with the king on that night to seek Moses and Aaron in their houses, and they found them in their houses, eating and drinking and rejoicing with all Israel.**50.** And Bathia said to Moses, Is this the reward for the good which I have done to thee, who have reared

thee and stretched thee out, and thou hast brought this evil upon me and my father's house?⁵¹ And Moses said to her, Surely ten plagues did the Lord bring upon Egypt; did any evil accrue to thee from any of them? did one of them affect thee? and she said, No.⁵² And Moses said to her, Although thou art the first born to thy mother, thou shalt not die, and no evil shall reach thee in the midst of Egypt.⁵³ And she said, What advantage is it to me, when I see the king, my brother, and all his household and subjects in this evil, whose first born perish with all the first born of Egypt?⁵⁴ And Moses said to her, Surely thy brother and his household, and subjects, the families of Egypt, would not hearken to the words of the Lord, therefore did this evil come upon them.⁵⁵ And Pharaoh king of Egypt approached Moses and Aaron, and some of the children of Israel who were with them in that place, and he prayed to them, saying.⁵⁶ Rise up and take your brethren, all the children of Israel who are in the land, with their sheep and oxen, and all belonging to them, they shall leave nothing remaining, only pray for me to the Lord your God.⁵⁷ And Moses said to Pharaoh, Behold though thou art thy mother's first born, yet fear not, for thou wilt not die, for the Lord has commanded that thou shalt live, in order to show thee his great might and strong stretched out arm.⁵⁸ And Pharaoh ordered the children of Israel to be sent away, and all the Egyptians strengthened themselves to send them, for they said, We are all perishing.⁵⁹ And all the Egyptians sent the Israelites forth, with great riches, sheep and oxen and precious things, according to the oath of the Lord between him and our Father Abraham.⁶⁰ And the children of Israel delayed going forth at night, and when the Egyptians came to them to bring them out, they said to them, Are we thieves, that we should go forth at night?⁶¹ And the children of Israel asked of the Egyptians, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and the children of Israel stripped the Egyptians.⁶² And Moses hastened and rose up and went to the river of Egypt, and brought up from thence the coffin of Joseph and took it with him.⁶³ The children of Israel also brought up, each man his father's coffin with him, and each man the coffins of his tribe.⁴⁵⁰

Jasher Chapter 81

The Departure of the Israelites from Egypt with Great Riches and Flocks and Herds. After the Egyptians bury their First-born, many of them go after the Israelites to induce them to return. But they refuse to return, and fight the Nobles of Egypt and drive them home. Pharaoh resolves with the Egyptians to pursue Israel and compel them to Return. The Children of Israel are divided--some wanting to go back. Moses prays for deliverance. The Lord tells him not to cry to him, but proceed. The waters of the Red Sea are Divided. The Israelites pass Through in Safety, but the Egyptians are utterly Destroyed. The Israelites proceed on their Journey, and are fed with Manna. The Children of Esau fight Israel, but the Latter Prevail.

1. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides the little ones and their wives.² Also a mixed multitude went up with them, and flocks and herds, even much cattle.³ And the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in the land of Egypt in hard labor, was two hundred and ten years.⁴ And at the end of two hundred and ten years, the Lord brought forth the children of Israel from Egypt with a strong hand.⁵ And the children of Israel traveled from Egypt and from Goshen and from Rameses, and encamped in Succoth on the fifteenth day of the first month.⁶ And the Egyptians buried all their first born whom the Lord had smitten, and all the Egyptians buried their slain for three days.⁷ And the children of Israel traveled from Succoth and encamped in Ethom, at the end of the wilderness.⁸ And on the third day after the Egyptians had buried their first born, many men rose up from Egypt and went after Israel to make them return to Egypt, for they repented that they had sent the Israelites away from their servitude.⁹ And one man said to his neighbor, Surely Moses and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh, saying, We will go a three days' journey in the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord

⁴⁵⁰ Book of Jasher, Chapter 80:1-63.

our God.**10.** Now therefore let us rise up early in the morning and cause them to return, and it shall be that if they return with us to Egypt to their masters, then shall we know that there is faith in them, but if they will not return, then will we fight with them, and make them come back with great power and a strong hand.**11.** And all the nobles of Pharaoh rose up in the morning, and with them about seven hundred thousand men, and they went forth from Egypt on that day, and came to the place where the children of Israel were.**12.** And all the Egyptians saw and behold Moses and Aaron and all the children of Israel were sitting before Pi-hahiroth, eating and drinking and celebrating the feast of the Lord.**13.** And all the Egyptians said to the children of Israel, Surely you said, We will go a journey for three days in the wilderness and sacrifice to our God and return.**14.** Now therefore this day makes five days since you went, why do you not return to your masters?**15.** And Moses and Aaron answered them, saying, Because the Lord our God has testified in us, saying, You shall no more return to Egypt, but we will betake ourselves to a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord our God had sworn to our ancestors to give you.**16.** And when the nobles of Egypt saw that the children of Israel did not hearken to them, to return to Egypt, they girded themselves to fight with Israel.**17.** And the Lord strengthened the hearts of the children of Israel over the Egyptians, that they gave them a severe beating, and the battle was sore upon the Egyptians, and all the Egyptians fled from before the children of Israel, for many of them perished by the hand of Israel.**18.** And the nobles of Pharaoh went to Egypt and told Pharaoh, saying, The children of Israel have fled, and will no more return to Egypt, and in this manner did Moses and Aaron speak to us.**19.** And Pharaoh heard this thing, and his heart and the hearts of all his subjects were turned against Israel, and they repented that they had sent Israel; and all the Egyptians advised Pharaoh to pursue the children of Israel to make them come back to their burdens.**20.** And they said each man to his brother, What is this which we have done, that we have sent Israel from our servitude?**21.** And the Lord strengthened the hearts of all the Egyptians to pursue the Israelites, for the Lord desired to overthrow the Egyptians in the Red Sea.**22.** And Pharaoh rose up and harnessed his chariot, and he ordered all the Egyptians to assemble, not one man was left excepting the little ones and the women.**23.** And all the Egyptians went forth with Pharaoh to pursue the children of Israel, and the camp of Egypt was an exceedingly large and heavy camp, about ten hundred thousand men.**24.** And the whole of this camp went and pursued the children of Israel to bring them back to Egypt, and they reached them encamping by the Red Sea.**25.** And the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and beheld all the Egyptians pursuing them, and the children of Israel were greatly terrified at them, and the children of Israel cried to the Lord.**26.** And on account of the Egyptians, the children of Israel divided themselves into four divisions, and they were divided in their opinions, for they were afraid of the Egyptians, and Moses spoke to each of them.**27.** The first division was of the children of Reuben, Simeon, and Issachar, and they resolved to cast themselves into the sea, for they were exceedingly afraid of the Egyptians.**28.** And Moses said to them, Fear not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which He will effect this day for you.**29.** The second division was of the children of Zebulun, Benjamin and Naphtali, and they resolved to go back to Egypt with the Egyptians.**30.** And Moses said to them, Fear not, for as you have seen the Egyptians this day, so shall you see them no more for ever.**31.** The third division was of the children of Judah and Joseph, and they resolved to go to meet the Egyptians to fight with them.**32.** And Moses said to them, Stand in your places, for the Lord will fight for you, and you shall remain silent.**33.** And the fourth division was of the children of Levi, Gad, and Asher, and they resolved to go into the midst of the Egyptians to confound them, and Moses said to them, Remain in your stations and fear not, only call unto the Lord that he may save you out of their hands.**34.** After this Moses rose up from amidst the people, and he prayed to the Lord and said, **35.** O Lord God of the whole earth, save now thy people whom thou didst bring forth from Egypt, and let not the Egyptians boast that power and might are theirs.**36.** So the Lord said to Moses, Why dost thou cry unto me? speak to the children of Israel that they shall proceed, and do thou stretch out thy rod upon the sea and divide it, and the children of Israel shall pass through it.**37.** And Moses did so, and he lifted up his rod upon the sea and divided it.**38.** And the waters of the sea were divided into twelve parts, and the children of Israel passed through on foot, with shoes, as a man would pass through a

prepared road.³⁹ And the Lord manifested to the children of Israel his wonders in Egypt and in the sea by the hand of Moses and Aaron.⁴⁰ And when the children of Israel had entered the sea, the Egyptians came after them, and the waters of the sea resumed upon them, and they all sank in the water, and not one man was left excepting Pharaoh, who gave thanks to the Lord and believed in him, therefore the Lord did not cause him to perish at that time with the Egyptians.⁴¹ And the Lord ordered an angel to take him from amongst the Egyptians, who cast him upon the land of Ninevah and he reigned over it for a long time.⁴² And on that day the Lord saved Israel from the hand of Egypt, and all the children of Israel saw that the Egyptians had perished, and they beheld the great hand of the Lord, in what he had performed in Egypt and in the sea.⁴³ Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, on the day when the Lord caused the Egyptians to fall before them.⁴⁴ And all Israel sang in concert, saying, I will sing to the Lord for He is greatly exalted, the horse and his rider has he cast into the sea; behold it is written in the book of the law of God.⁴⁵ After this the children of Israel proceeded on their journey, and encamped in Marah, and the Lord gave to the children of Israel statutes and judgments in that place in Marah, and the Lord commanded the children of Israel to walk in all his ways and to serve him.⁴⁶ And they journeyed from Marah and came to Elim, and in Elim were twelve springs of water and seventy date trees, and the children encamped there by the waters.⁴⁷ And they journeyed from Elim and came to the wilderness of Sin, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from Egypt.⁴⁸ At that time the Lord gave the manna to the children of Israel to eat, and the Lord caused food to rain from heaven for the children of Israel day by day.⁴⁹ And the children of Israel ate the manna for forty years, all the days that they were in the wilderness, until they came to the land of Canaan to possess it.⁵⁰ And they proceeded from the wilderness of Sin and encamped in Alush.⁵¹ And they proceeded from Alush and encamped in Rephidim.⁵² And when the children of Israel were in Rephidim, Amalek the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, the brother of Zepho, came to fight with Israel.⁵³ And he brought with him eight hundred and one thousand men, magicians and conjurers, and he prepared for battle with Israel in Rephidim.⁵⁴ And they carried on a great and severe battle against Israel, and the Lord delivered Amalek and his people into the hands of Moses and the children of Israel, and into the hand of Joshua, the son of Nun, the Ephrathite, the servant of Moses.⁵⁵ And the children of Israel smote Amalek and his people at the edge of the sword, but the battle was very sore upon the children of Israel.⁵⁶ And the Lord said to Moses, Write this thing as a memorial for thee in a book, and place it in the hand of Joshua, the son of Nun, thy servant, and thou shalt command the children of Israel, saying, When thou shalt come to the land of Canaan, thou shalt utterly efface the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.⁵⁷ And Moses did so, and he took the book and wrote upon it these words, saying,⁵⁸ Remember what Amalek has done to thee in the road when thou wentest forth from Egypt.⁵⁹ Who met thee in the road and smote thy rear, even those that were feeble behind thee when thou wast faint and weary.⁶⁰ Therefore it shall be when the Lord thy God shall have given thee rest from all the enemies round about in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven, thou shalt not forget it.⁶¹ And the king who shall have pity on Amalek, or upon his memory or upon his seed, behold I will require it of him, and I will cut him off from amongst his people.⁶² And Moses wrote all these things in a book, and he enjoined the children of Israel respecting all these matters.⁴⁵¹

Jasher Chapter 82

The Ten Commandments are Given. While Moses is in the Mount, Aaron makes a Golden Calf, and Israel Worships it. Civil War. The Lord has a Sanctuary Built for His Worship in the Wilderness.

⁴⁵¹ *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 81:1-62.

1. And the children of Israel proceeded from Rephidim and they encamped in the wilderness of Sinai, in the third month from their going forth from Egypt. 2. At that time came Reuel the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses, with Zipporah his daughter and her two sons, for he had heard of the wonders of the Lord which he has done to Israel, that he had delivered them from the hand of Egypt. 3. And Reuel came to Moses to the wilderness where he was encamped, where was the mountain of God. 4. And Moses went forth to meet his father-in-law with great honor, and all Israel was with him. 5. And Reuel and his children remained amongst the Israelites for many days, and Reuel knew the Lord from that day forward. 6. And in the third month from the children of Israel's departure from Egypt, on the sixth day thereof, the Lord gave to Israel the ten commandments on Mount Sinai. 7. And all Israel heard all these commandments, and all Israel rejoiced exceedingly in the Lord on that day. 8. And the glory of the Lord rested upon Mount Sinai, and he called to Moses, and Moses came in the midst of a cloud and ascended the mountain. 9. And Moses was upon the mount forty days and forty nights; he ate no bread and drank no water, and the Lord instructed him in the statutes and judgments in order to teach the children of Israel. 10. And the Lord wrote the ten commandments which he had commanded the children of Israel upon two tablets of stone, which he gave to Moses to command the children of Israel. 11. And at the end of forty days and forty nights, when the Lord had finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, then the Lord gave to Moses the tablets of stone, written with the finger of God. 12. And when the children of Israel saw that Moses tarried to come down from the mount, they gathered round Aaron, and said, As for this man Moses we know not what has become of him. 13. Now therefore rise up, make unto us a god who shall go before us, so that thou shalt not die. 14. And Aaron was greatly afraid of the people, and he ordered them to bring him gold and he made it into a molten calf for the people. 15. And the Lord said to Moses, before he had come down from the mount, Get thee down, for thy people whom thou didst bring forth from Egypt have corrupted themselves. 16. They have made to themselves a molten calf, and have bowed down to it, now therefore leave me, that I may consume them from off the earth, for they are a stiffnecked people. 17. And Moses besought the countenance of the Lord, and he prayed to the Lord for the people on account of the calf which they had made, and he afterward descended from the mount and in his hands were the two tablets of stone, which God had given him to command the Israelites. 18. And when Moses approached the camp and saw the calf which the people had made, the anger of Moses was kindled and he broke the tablets under the mount. 19. And Moses came to the camp and he took the calf and burned it with fire, and ground it till it became fine dust, and strewed it upon the water and gave it to the Israelites to drink. 20. And there died of the people by the swords of each other about three thousand men who had made the calf. 21. And on the morrow Moses said to the people, I will go up to the Lord, peradventure I may make atonement for your sins which you have sinned to the Lord. 22. And Moses again went up to the Lord, and he remained with the Lord forty days and forty nights. 23. And during the forty days did Moses entreat the Lord in behalf of the children of Israel, and the Lord hearkened to the prayer of Moses, and the Lord was entreated of him in behalf of Israel. 24. Then spake the Lord to Moses to hew two stone tablets and to bring them up to the Lord, who would write upon them the ten commandments. 25. Now Moses did so, and he came down and hewed the two tablets and went up to Mount Sinai to the Lord, and the Lord wrote the ten commandments upon the tablets. 26. And Moses remained yet with the Lord forty days and forty nights, and the Lord instructed him in statutes and judgments to impart to Israel. 27. And the Lord commanded him respecting the children of Israel that they should make a sanctuary for the Lord, that his name might rest therein, and the Lord showed him the likeness of the sanctuary and the likeness of all its vessels. 28. And at the end of the forty days, Moses came down from the mount and the two tablets were in his hand. 29. And Moses came to the children of Israel and spoke to them all the words of the Lord, and he taught them laws, statutes and judgments which the Lord had taught him. 30. And Moses told the children of Israel the word of the Lord, that a sanctuary should be made for him, to dwell amongst the children of Israel. 31. And the people rejoiced greatly at all the good which the Lord had spoken to them, through Moses, and they said, We will do all that the Lord has spoken to thee. 32. And the people rose up like one man and they made generous offerings to the sanctuary of the Lord, and each man brought the offering of

the Lord for the work of the sanctuary, and for all its service.³³ And all the children of Israel brought each man of all that was found in his possession for the work of the sanctuary of the Lord, gold, silver and brass, and everything that was serviceable for the sanctuary.³⁴ And all the wise men who were practiced in work came and made the sanctuary of the Lord, according to all that the Lord had commanded, every man in the work in which he had been practiced; and all the wise men in heart made the sanctuary, and its furniture and all the vessels for the holy service, as the Lord had commanded Moses.³⁵ And the work of the sanctuary of the tabernacle was completed at the end of five months, and the children of Israel did all that the Lord had commanded Moses.³⁶ And they brought the sanctuary and all its furniture to Moses; like unto their presentation which the Lord had shown to Moses, so did the children of Israel.³⁷ And Moses saw the work, and behold they did it as the Lord had commanded him, so Moses blessed them.⁴⁵²

From these selected passages in the **Book of Jasher** (that we surmise are his own book notes) we can see that Moses had an excellent source as a basis for his story about Abraham starting with Genesis 12 and also later to weave his own family in with the origins of Abraham, where he needs to be a member of the Levite tribe (through his father's line of descent). Here I want to make a bold conjecture that the so-called "Book of Jasher" was actually written by Moses. It has all the marking of draft manuscript of notes from which a more formal set of texts like Genesis and Exodus could be drawn: (1) because material found in the Book of Jasher are similar and selected and others are omitted from both Genesis and Exodus; and (2) because Moses himself includes his own story in the Book of Jasher and treats it the same way by selecting some materials and omitting other passages for his formal writing. It is very likely the writer of Joshua found Moses' book notes and called them the "Book of Jasher", and (3) Jasher is not a person or author of this work but means "the book of the upright," or "the upright or correct record" taken from Hebrew **סֵפֶר הַיָּשָׁר** *Sephir Ha Yasher*; "The Book of Righteousness":

The title of the book in Hebrew, *Sephir Ha Yasher*, literally means "the book of the upright," or "the upright or correct record." Some have thought that "Jasher" was the name of a Hebrew judge in Israel, and a publication that arose in the middle of the eighteenth century (circa 1750 A. D.), purported itself to be a translation into English from a Hebrew manuscript of "Jasher" found at Gazna in Persia. That book appears to have been a fictitious book, a fraud, and most probably the work of some agnostic, cynical English skeptic, written in imitation of the language of Scripture. Its author, in his ignorance, presumed "Jasher" to have been the personal name of an ancient Hebrew figure, the original writer. But the mischievous deed was recognized by true scholars of Hebrew, for the pronoun "the" ("ha" in Hebrew) never precedes or is prefixed to proper names.

That appellation "the upright" obviously could apply to any person; but who better to wear that title than Moses! Moses would not have thought to put his name as the author on his own history notes because they were never meant to be published as a "book." The five books of Moses that made it into the canon were not autographed either because they were meant to be read by the community of Hebrew ex-slaves and everyone in that community knew by oral tradition that they are the works of Moses. As we said notes we conjecture were never meant to be published and were kept as archival manuscripts passed down within the Hebrew community until someone else decided to publish them as a "work" independent of its original purpose. The *Book of Jasher* (as we know it now) had one purpose:

⁴⁵² *Book of Jasher*, Chapter 82:1-37.

to serve as notes from which Moses could later write the formal stories in Genesis and Exodus (telling the story of Abraham the ancestors of the Hebrew slaves and to tie his family genealogy into that of Abraham so that he could legitimize his leadership before Pharaoh and especially before the Hebrew slaves). At age forty when Moses took his first bid at leadership over these rag-tag quarrelsome and ungrateful people he was met with a retort from one of them that sent shockwaves through his mind where he assumed wrongly that his leadership over the Hebrew slaves (by them) would be welcomed. How wrong this assumption was:

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and saw their forced labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsfolk. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrews fighting; and he said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow Hebrew? He answered, "**Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?**" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "Surely the thing is known." When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh. He settled in the land of Midian, and sat down by a well. (Exodus 2:11-15, NRSV).

With the *Book of Jasher* as his main source Moses was enabled also to establish the Aaronid priestly-line by anointing his elder brother Aaron, creating the Aaronid priestly line of descent. Moses could do this because (1) he himself was a Osirian priest and claimed Levite ancestry, and (2) because God commanded him to do so. Thus the Aaronid family line (i.e. high priests of the Hebrew) was created as well. Note that both Elisabeth the mother of John the Baptist, and Mary the mother of Jesus belonged to this Aaronid priestly line of descent; demonstrating that both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ were members of the Aaronid family of high priests. Jesus here through his mother Mary would belong to the Tribe of Levi and not the Tribe of Judah, *according to the flesh* (See Luke 1:5-7; 34-37; 3:23-37 for biblical proof of these assertions that Jesus was *according to the flesh* an Aaronid in order to be *our High Priest*, as declared in the Epistle of Hebrews 4:14-16. Jesus was only a member of the Tribe of Judah (heir to the throne of David) *only because* he was **adopted** as Joseph's son, who was a member of this tribe. According to Scripture itself Joseph was not Jesus' father *according to the flesh*, but Joseph's adopted son. The genealogy in the Gospel of Luke attests to this adoption, and the fact *this is the genealogy of Joseph not that of Jesus*. Jesus true genealogy *being black according to the flesh* comes through his mother Mary who belonged to the priestly Tribe of Levi and of Aaronid descent:

MOTHER'S BABY, DADDY'S MAYBE !

²³ And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being **(as was supposed)** *the son of Joseph*, which was the son of Heli,²⁴ Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph,²⁵ Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge,²⁶ Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda,²⁷ Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri,²⁸ Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er,²⁹ Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,³⁰ Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,³¹ Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan,

which was the son of David,³² Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,³³ Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,³⁴ Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,³⁵ Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,³⁶ Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,³⁷ Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,³⁸ Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of **Adam, which was the son of God.** (Luke 2:23-38, KJV).

MARY'S BABY (Tribe of Levi; Aaronid By Descent)

1. Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2.even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3.it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4. that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed. 5.*There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia.and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.*6.And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7.And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. 8. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9.according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10.And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. 11.And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12.And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13.But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14.And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15.For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16.And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17.And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 18.And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. 19.And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. 20.And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. 21.And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. 22.And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. 23.And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. 24.And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, 25.Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

The Annunciation:

26.And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, **27.**to a virgin espoused **to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David;** and the virgin's name was Mary.**28.**And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. **29.**And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. **30.**And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. **31.**And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. **32.**He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.**33.**and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. **34.**Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?**35.**And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.**36.**And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. **37.**For with God nothing shall be impossible.**38.** And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. **39.**And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; **40.**and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. **41.**And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: **42.**and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. **43.**And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? **44.**For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. **45.**And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

The Magnificat:

46.And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, **47.**And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. **48.**For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. **49.**For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; And holy is his name. **50.**And his mercy is on them that fear him From generation to generation. **51.**He hath shewed strength with his arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. **52.** He hath put down the mighty from their seats, And exalted them of low degree. **53.**He hath filled the hungry with good things; And the rich he hath sent empty away. **54.**He hath holpen his servant Israel, In remembrance of his mercy; **55.**As he spake to our fathers, To Abraham, and to his seed forever.

56.And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. **57.**Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. **58.**And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her. **59.**And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. **60.**And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. **61.**And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. **62.**And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. **63.**And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. **64.**And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. **65.**And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judæa. **66.**And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

The Benedictus:

67.And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68.Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; For he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69.And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us In the house of his servant David; 70. As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71.That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72.To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant; 73.The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, 74.That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies Might serve him without fear, 75. In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76.And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77.To give knowledge of salvation unto his people By the remission of their sins, 78.Through the tender mercy of our God; Whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79.To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace. 80.And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel. (**Gospel of Luke. Chapter 1:1-80**).

Moses himself was an Osirian priest as demonstrated in Joseph. Moses carefully gives Abraham a black origin as being born in **Ur**, one of the great city-states of **Sumer** in Akkadian cuneiform

𒌦𒍪𒊩 = *Su-Me-Ru*.⁴⁵³

Ur is just one of the city-states belonging to the Sumerian Empire and they were thought to be mixed black and yellow people, that is, Asiatic. The others being **Kish**, **Umma**, **Lagash**, and **Uruk**. Ur would be most important for this project for this is the city from which Abraham and his family comes from. *"Now Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and led them out from Ur of the Chaldeans, to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there."* (Genesis 11:31, OSB). With this data we will demonstrate below that Abraham was a Sumerian, who called themselves "Black Headed People."



Left: Sculpture of the head of Sumerian ruler [Gudea](#), c. 2150 BC. Right: [cuneiform](#) characters for *Sag-gig* (𒌦𒌦), "Black Headed Ones", the native designation for the Sumerians. The first is the pictographic character for "head" (𒌦, later 𒌦), the second the character for "night", and for "black" when pronounced *gig* (𒌦, later 𒌦).

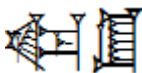
⁴⁵³The term "Sumerian" is actually an [exonym](#) (a name given by another group of people), first applied by the [Akkadians](#). The Sumerians described themselves as "the black-headed people" (*sag-gi-ga*) and called their land *Ki-en-gi*, "place of the civilized lords". The Akkadian word *Shumer* possibly represents this name in dialect. The Sumerians, with a language, culture, and, perhaps, appearance different from their [Semitic](#) neighbors and successors are widely believed to have been invaders or migrants, although it has proven difficult to determine exactly when this event occurred or the original geographic origins of the Sumerians. Some archeologists have advanced the notion that the Sumerians were, in fact, local to the Mesopotamian plains. Others suggest that the term 'Sumerian' should only be applied to the [Sumerian language](#), positing that there was no separate 'Sumerian' ethnic group. Sumerian itself is generally regarded as a [language isolate](#) in [Linguistics](#) because it belongs to no known language family, as compared, for example, to [Akkadian](#) which belongs to the [Afro-Asiatic languages](#).



The black historian and scholar Dr. Du Bois states that Sumerians or the People of Sumer were of mixed origins and the black Dravidians among them were called “black heads (See W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The World and Africa* (New York: International Publishers, 1946, p. 98). Josephus in *Antiquity of the Jews*, Book 1, Chapter 8, infers that Abraham was a Sumerian (p. 33), and he later states that the Hebrews were called *sooty heads*, that is, “black heads” by the ancient historian and poet Cherilus, Book 1, “Flavius Josephus Against Apion,” (pp. 614-615).



Sumerian Cuneiform Clay Tablet



Note: = *Eme-gir* “Native Tongue”

Where in Sumerian *Eme* = “tongue” or “language” and *Gir* = “native” or “local”

The term “Sumer” (Sumerian: *eme-gi* or *eme-gir*, Akkadian:  *šumeru*) is the name given to the language spoken by the “Sumerians”, the ancient non-Semitic-speaking inhabitants of southern Mesopotamia, by their successors the East Semitic-speaking Akkadians. The Sumerians referred to their land as *Kengir*, the ‘Country of the noble lords’ (, *k-en-gi(-r)*, lit. ‘country’ + ‘lords’ + ‘noble’) as seen in their inscriptions.

The origin of the Sumerians is not known, but the people of Sumer referred to themselves as "Black Headed Ones" or "Black-Headed People" (𒂗𒂗𒂗, *sag-gíg*, lit. 'head' + 'black', or 𒂗𒂗𒂗𒂗, *sag-gíg-ga* phonetically /saggiga/, lit. 'head' + 'black' + 'carry'). For example, the Sumerian king Shulgi described himself as "the king of the four quarters, the pastor of the black-headed people". The Akkadians also called the Sumerians 'black-headed people', or *šalmat-qaqqadi*, in the Semitic Akkadian language.

The Akkadian word *Šumer* may represent the geographical name in dialect, but the phonological development leading to the Akkadian term *šumerû* is uncertain. Hebrew שׁוּמֶרֶן *Šin'ar*, Egyptian *Sngr*, and Hittite *Šanhar(a)*, all referring to southern Mesopotamia, could be western variants of *Sumer*. (**SUMER**: From *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

SUMERIANS: COUSINS OF THE EGYPTIANS



EGYPTIANS: COUSINS OF THE SUMERIANS



Getty Images/ Universal Images Group

a	á	e	é	i	í	u	ú
ba	bá	bà	be	bé	bè	bi	bí
bi	bu	bú	bù	da	dá	de	dè
di	dí	du	dú	dù	du4	ga	gá
ge	gé	gè	gi	gí	gi	gi4	gi5
gu	gú	gù	gu4	gu5	gu6	gu7	ha
há	hà	ha4	he	hé	hi	hí	hu
ka	ká	kà	ke	ké	ki	kí	ku
kú	kù	ku4	la	lá	là	le	lé
li	lí	lu	lú	ma	má	me	mé
mè	mi	mí	mi	mu	mú	na	ná
ná	nà	na4	ne	né	ni	ní	nu
nú	pa	pá	pe	pé	pi	pí	pi
pu	pú	pù	ra	rá	re	ré	ri
rí	ru	rù	sa	sá	sà	sa4	se
se	sé	si	sí	su	sú	sù	su4
sa	sá	sà	se	sè	sí	sù	su
sú	sù	su4	ta	tá	te	ti	tì
ti4	tu	tú	tù	za	zá	ze	zé
zi	zì	zì	zu	zú			

Figure 1. SUMERIAN SYLLABIC GLYPHS

ab	áb	eb	éb	ib	íb	ub	úb
ad	ád	ed	id	íd	ud	úd	ag
ág	eg	ég	ig	íg	ug	ah	áh
eh	ih	uh	úh	ak	ek	ik	uk
al	ál	el	él	il	íl	ul	úl
am	ám	em	im	ím	um	úm	
an	en	èn	in	in4	in5	un	ún
ap	ép	ip	íp	up	úp	ar	ár
er	ir	ip	ur	úr	as	es	és
is	ís	ús	aš	aš	eš	éš	
iš	iš	uš	úš	at	át	et	it
ut	út	az	ez	éz	iz	íz	uz
úz	ùz						

Figure 2. SUMERIAN SYLLABIC GLYPHS

Source for the above table "Sumerian Syllabic Glyphs"

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuneiform>

We really do not know the name the Egyptians had for Sumer or Sumerians, However, we can surmise as above that the hieroglyphics for the name they used are **Sngr**. Even with this bit of information we cannot at the moment pronounce the name. By convention Egyptologist places a letter "e" as the vowel between the consonants of Ancient Egyptian words, so that in the case of the "name" above so that it is pronounceable it may be written thus **Senger**. Very likely this is not how the Egyptians pronounced the name for Sumer or Sumarian. However, an grammatical analysis or the hieroglyphic domains related to **Sngr** will give us more confidence that we are on the right track. However before this analysis makes sense we need to know a little more about Sumer and the Sumarians:

"The ancient Sumerians created one of humanity's first great civilizations. Their homeland in Mesopotamia, called Sumer, emerged roughly 6000 years ago along the floodplains between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in present-day Iraq and Syria." (www.discovermagazine.com, Nov. 10, 2020).

"What [were] Sumerians known for? [They were] known for their innovations in language, governance, architecture and more. Sumerians are considered the creators of civilization as modern humans understand it. Their control of the region lasted for short of 2,000 years before the Babylonians took charge in 2004 B.C." (www.history.com, Dec. 7, 2017).

"The **Sumarians** were the people of southern Mesopotamia whose civilization flourished between c. 4100-1750 BCE. Their name comes from the region which is frequently- and incorrectly – referred to as a "country". **Sumer** was never a cohesive political entity, however, but a region of city-states each with its own king. Sumer was the southern counterpart to the northern region of **Akkad** whose people gave Sumer its name, meaning "land of the civilized kings". The Sumarians themselves referred to their region simply as "the land" or "the land of the black-headed people." The Sumerians were responsible for many of the most important innovations, inventions, and concepts taken for granted in the present day. They essentially "invented" time by dividing day and night into 12-hours periods, hours into 60 minutes, and minutes into 60 seconds. There other innovations and inventions include the first schools, the earliest version of the tale of the Great Flood and other biblical narratives, the oldest heroic epic, governmental bureaucracy, monumental architecture, and irrigation techniques. After the rise of the Amorites in Mesopotamia, and the invasions of the Elamites, Sumer ceased to exist and was only know through references in the works of ancient writers, including the scribes who wrote the biblical Book of Genesis." (*World History Encyclopedia. Sumerians.* www.worldhistory.org.)

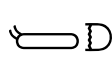
Sumerian Science: "Sumerians had a system of medicine that was based in magic and herbalism, but they were also familiar with processes of removing chemical parts from natural substances. They are considered to have had an advanced knowledge of anatomy, and surgical instruments have been found in archeological sites. One of the Sumerians greatest advances was in the area of hydraulic engineering. Early in their history they created a system of ditches to control flooding, and were also the inventors of irrigation, harnessing the power of the Tigris and Euphrates for farming. Canals were consistently maintained from dynasty to dyanasty. Their skill at engineering and architecture both point to the sophistication of their understanding of math. The structure of modern time keeping, with sixty seconds in a minute and sixty minutes in an hour, is attributed to the Sumerians." (*Sumer* by History.com Editors, updated: October 8, 2019 | Original: December 7, 2017, www.history.com).

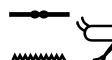
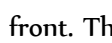
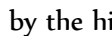
The Sumerians had a genius for adopting and modifying ("reverse engineering") things for their own purposes. They had need of a writing system so they initially adopted Egyptian hieroglyphics and later created Sumerian cuneiform writing as shown in the chart below:

	3200 BCE	3000 BCE	2400 BCE	1000 BCE
sag 'head'				
gin 'to walk'				
šu 'hand'				
še 'barley'				
ninda 'bread'				
a 'water'				
ud 'day'				
mušen 'bird'				

"Sumerian Ancient Cuneiform Writing" (www.ancientworldwonders.com, November 2, 2012)

The above synopses on the contributions and material cultural of Sumer and Sumerians will help us understand through our hieroglyphic analysis of **Sngr** what the Egyptians both knew and understood about the Sumerians and especially their contributions in hydraulic engineering and irrigation to control flooding. It is undoubted in the analysis that the Egyptians chose a name for the Sumerians that most reflected their own interest in Sumerian science of hydraulics, irrigation, ditch digging, and canal building, this because of the Ancient Egyptians own struggle to both forecast and control the annual flooding from the Nile River, which by the way depended a lot on mathematical science in order to both forecast and build these kinds of flood systems. No claim is being made here as to priority in respect to Egyptian borrowing some of its irrigation science from the Sumerians. However, it is undoubted that with the two oldest black civilizations (Egyptian and Sumer) so close in time and geography that some borrowing took place between both civilizations, one African and the other Afro-Asian. We will look at the hieroglyphics for **Sen** + **Ger** to make up the Egyptian name for *Sumerian* conjectured to be **Senger** using the closely related semantic domains that governs the meaning of each. These meanings should align very close to what we already learned about the Sumerians allowing us to say with more confidence that these two elements of the Egyptian word for Sumer is in fact what they meant to signify or express when they thought about *Sumerians*:

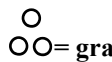
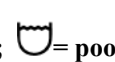
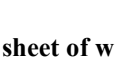
 **Sen** = plowshare (i.e. plow blade).

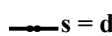
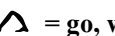
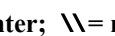
 **Sen** = to open, to expand, to throw open a door, to pass over or away from, to pass in front. The hieroglyphic meaning  to “lock in place” referring locking water in place represented by the hieroglyphic .

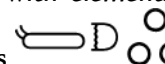
 **Sen** = to copy, to make a likeness or transcript of anything.

Now we can look at the various pictograms or elements within the sematic domains of all three words:

 **Sen** = go, pass, like, similar, also signifies or in the same semantic domain represents cakes, loaves, bread, sacrificial cake.

 = grain, powder;  = pool, lake, sheet of water;  = n = nu = water.

 = door-bolt;  = go, walk, enter;  = mathematical sign of the dual.

We need to first look at the Egyptian hieroglyphic word **Sen** with elements belonging to same or closely related semantic domains. The first word we encounter is  meaning “plowshare”, that is, “plow blades.” Interesting because like the Egyptians the Sumerian intellectual and scientific culture was based on agricultural techniques that allowed them to feed their people. The revenues from agriculture capitalized a material and intellectual culture allowing some Egyptians and Sumerians to have the leisure to dabble in intellectual pursuits, exploration, inventions, and various technological improvements, including agricultural tools like plows and plowshares. The element  represents

“cakes,” “loaves,” “bread,” “sacrificial cakes”; and the element  represents “grain” from which the cakes and loaves of bread are made. The grain comes from planting in the ground for which you need agricultural instruments like plows with good plow blades. The bread is the basic food stuff needed to feed oneself and people if you are a leader of such a people, country, or town, or groups of towns or cities (i.e. like the Sumerian city-states or like the Egyptian Nome’s). We note here that the Egyptians understood that systematic human manpower and activity was needed to work the plows so that aligned the words in the semantic domains with the pictograph  for “to walk”, “to go”, “to enter” demonstrates human capital for the agricultural enterprise the main element needed to build the intellectual, religious, and material culture of both civilizations. Further, nothing would be possible

without water,  (i.e. well-water, a well that holds water ) demonstrating how water is harnessed (locked in place, controlled) into pools, man-made lakes and dams, and various irrigation systems that control water flow and flooding. We have already seen above in various synopses that the Sumerians were great inventors of such systems; something we already knew about the Egyptians as well. Finally, we point out that Egyptians in naming the Sumerians made sure they were understood and so provided

the hieroglyphic  for the letter S, and  for the letter N, so that we now have S + N but without a vowel. The Egyptians fixed that problem too by providing the hieroglyphic whole word  transliterated **Sen** so that no scribe would mistake it for another similar word in the same semantic domain. Now we can take a close look at **Ger** using a similar kind of grammatical analysis:

 = **ger** = to furnish, to found.

 = **ger (gerg)** = possessor, owner, master.

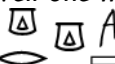
 = **ger, gerg** = to found, to establish, to settle a country or district, to make ready or make habitable, to equip, to furnish, to prepare.

 = **g** = stand for a jar.

 = **mer** = hoe, cultivate, plough, digging tool, love, a pick to excavate a pool for water.

 = A hieroglyphic determinative that has no sound and used at the end of words to help define meaning for words with the same semantic domain. This is a roll of papyrus tied around the middle. It represents the idea of book, deed, document, register, something grouped together and put behind hieroglyphics that express abstract ideas.

 = **grg** = a pick to excavate a pool of water.  = **r, ra** = the mouth, speech, etc.

The basic hieroglyphic word for **Ger** is  and means “to furnish” or “to found” something; and when the determinative for “man” is added  it means “possessor,” “owner,” or “master” of something. But possessor, owner or master of what? Well one meaning is “the owner of what you have founded.” That idea is captured in the hieroglyphic  which not only means *to found* or *to establish*, but specifically, *to settle a country or district* by making it ready, habitable; finding ways and means to equip it, furnish and prepare the district or country one has founded. These words

in the same semantic domain are generic enough to apply to any country or people that establishes a city or country. But when one thinks about the Sumerians it is an intriguing idea that the Egyptians likely were talking about the Sumerians, especially when the two hieroglyphics (SNGR) that is **Sen** + **Ger** are combined, and we as we understand the meaning for both and know the background and

character of the Sumerians. The last word submitted for **Ger**   is inclusive of the word **mer**

 *hoe, cultivate, plough, digging tool, love, a pick* to excavate a pool for water along with the letter

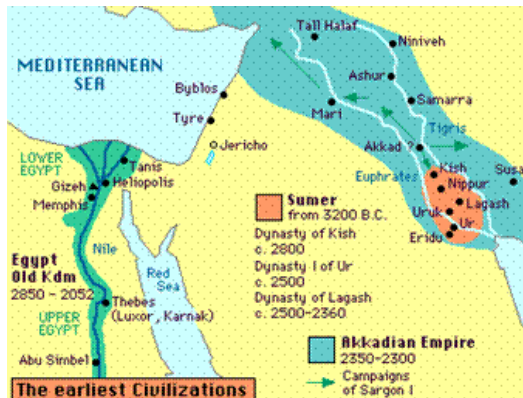
 **g** = a stand to hold jars of water, both included in the same word signifies what we already know about the Sumerians that they were experts in devising irrigation systems to control water for agricultural processes where one needs the use of such tools as hoes, ploughs, digging tools of various kinds, picks to dig out or excavate holes to create pools of water and systems and furniture for storing jars of water, the one all important element or resource for growing food stuffs like grain. We note here the word for “pickaxe” used to excavate pools of water is **grg** or **gerg** . Again in spelling the

word element **Ger** the Egyptians left nothing to chance but provided the letters  = **g** and  = **r** so that no scribe or person reading any word for **Ger** would mistake its spelling. Again it is admitted that **Senger** for **Sumer** or **Sumerian** is conjecture; but we are sure that the Egyptians used the vowelless elements **SNGR** in their word for either Sumer or Sumerian and when the hieroglyphics with their meanings are taken together we have made a compelling case that Egyptians were talking about this specific people; not for curious reasons but because the Egyptians were extremely interested in their techniques and science related to irrigation to control floods (which left unattended can destroy property and life) the vital water needed to grow food stuffs to feed their people and build life-saving, life-giving institutions and a material intellectual civilization. It can be inferred that both Abraham, a Sumerian “Black Head” hailing from the Sumerian city-state **Ur** and the black Hebrews are Afro-Asian people like the Sumerian **black-heads** and thus members of the Hamitic race like their cousins the Egyptians. (See Genesis 10, containing the “Table of Nations” and Rev. Walter Arthur McGray’s (1990) *The Black Presence in the Bible and the Table of Nations, Genesis 10:1-32*; C. McGhee Livers’ 1999), *Biblical History of Black Mankind*, Chapter 9, “Noah’s Three Sons: Jepheth, Shem, Ham”).

Before we show the Hebrew variation for the name of Abraham, we need to look briefly at his Sumerian original name **AVRAM** OR **ABRAM** =  = **Ab**  = **Ra** +  = **Am**; i.e.   = **ABRAM** or “Abram” before God = Yaweh began to change his identity with a new name “**ABRAHAM**.” Moses gave a clue about Abram’s identity; but yet hid Abraham’s ethnic and even priestly identity in his name, where *Abraham* becomes over time the *Father of the Many Nations*, with Israel set aside as God’s special and chosen people; holy nation initial lead and ruled by priests. In Genesis 17:5 God changes Abraham’s name from **Abram** = “*Exalted Father*” to **Abraham** = “*Father of a Multitude*” or “*Father of Many Nations*,” according to meaning commonly given to it by biblical writers and translators. However, the Hebrew word itself betrays the true meaning of Abraham’s name. The Hebrew name is אַבְרָהָם = **Ab** + **ra** + **kham** (where **Ab** = Father + **Ra** = Hidden One + **ham** = Burnt People (Hamites). The name can be translated as “Priest of Ra, Father of the Black People”. The name **Ab-Ra-Ham** appears to be Egyptian in origin and it is a circumlocution of the name **Abram** (Sumerian in origin **AVRAM** as we have shown above meaning “father’s favorite”). “First, his [Abram’s] name is Sumerian and is not Akkadian. He was born in a Sumerian city (Ur), devoted to the moon god Nannar.” Secondly, Abram was a priest from the royal line of his father Terah (Sumerian **TIRCHU**). Robert D.

Mock, MD in his essay “*Abraham – the Son of a Sumerian Oracle Priest*” using the **Book of Jasher** and other extra-biblical sources provides support for these claims.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁴ Essay *Abraham- the Son of a Sumerian Oracle Priest (Part I)* by Robert D. Mock MD, (www.biblesearchers.com) follows in this footnote:



The walls of Erech (Uruk) were built on the foundation of a pre-Flood city. Gilgamesh claimed, from his reading of tablets engraved on Lapis lazuli and secreted in a “copper tablet box” loosened with “the ring-bolt made of bronze” that this city was built by the seven sages or patriarchs of the Cainite prediluvian society and was not the city of his possessions. (Gardner, John and John Maier, *Gilgamesh*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. New York, 1984 Tablet I, Lines 4-6, 22-25)

Birth of Abram

In the height of the military prowess of the Nimrodian dynasty, the prince of the military hosts was led by the capable leadership of the **Terah, the high priest of Ur, the royal heir to the House of Shem, and later high priest of Harran.** and a leader which the “king and the princes loved him, and they elevated him very high... and dignified him above all his princes that were with him. (*Book of Jasher 7:49,51. ibid, p. 16*)

At the pinnacle of greatness, second in command of the empire of Sumer, **Terah was wed to Amthelo, the daughter of Cornebo.** To this union was **born a son, Abram.** In celebration of his birth, a **great party** was thrown and the guest lists included heads of state (wise men) and conjurors. The evening of the party, they witnessed an **exploding star** which came from the east which caused a vast luminescence and rapidly spread and covered the whole night time sky on the Mesopotamian delta. This spectacular celestial scene prompted the wise men, the Magi, to give their oracular interpretation to Nimrod that Terah's son, Abram would become powerful and kill all the kings of the earth, an international dynastic coup.

Nimrod, the king of Kish, offered Terah a **bribe to purchase Abram, which included a gold and silver enough to fill Terah's house,** with the knowledge that Abram would be killed. A three-day waiting period was given for consultation, and during that time, a son of Terah's servant was substituted for Abram. The **king immediately threw the child down and dashed the head against a stone,** secure in his mind that a future political coup had been prevented.

Abram was secreted out of the city to a rural cave hideout with his mother and nurse and there lived 10 years in exile and isolation. At the onset of puberty, Abram left his family and traveled north near the site of the Great Ship south of the Ararat Mountains, where Noah and Shem apparently were living in the same area. There he “learned the instruction of the Lord and his ways, ...and **Abram served Noah and Shem his son for a long time,**” (*Book of Jasher 9:5, ibid, p. 19.*) isolated from the cosmopolitan center of higher learning of Shinar. Within the foothills of the Armenian mountains, visible in the distance the peaks of Ararat, and within the political influence of the **tribal mountain people, the Khaldini of Urartu,** Abram received the instruction and wisdom of Yahweh Elohim. This Wisdom passed from Adam to Methuselah, directly to Noah and then to Abram. The oral traditions and the tablets of the Book of Adam were studied and learned by the young man, Abram.

Ur of the Chaldeans (Khaldinis)



David Fasold, his book, *The Ark of Noah*, while detailing the archeological finds of a ship remains in Armenia and describing the path of the drogue stones, or stone anchors depicting the path of this ancient ship, gives his thoughts on the Armenian connection of Abram. The area of Armenia lies north of the Mesopotamian valley in the area of **Lake Van**. An ancient historian of the **Armenian, Moses Khorenatsi, called by some the "Herodotus of the Armenians"** noted that the local tribesmen called themselves *Hai*, pronounced by the people in the Lake Van region as *Kh(o)ai*, meaning Ram. They recognized themselves as the **People of the Ram and their supreme deity was (K)Hal-di**. Thus was derived the **land of the original Khaldini**, later corrupted by Greeks in the times of Achaemenian to *Chaldea*. (Fasold, David, *The Ark of Noah*, Wynwood Press, New York, NY, 1988. p 184)

According to Josephus, **Shem, the third son of Noah, had five sons** who colonized the land from the Euphrates delta valley to the Indian Ocean. The **Persians** were in descent from Elam, and the Elamites. The **Assyrians** came from Asshur who dwelled in Nineveh. Arphaxad descendants were called the Arphaxadites, now known as the **Chaldeans**. The **Syrians** came from the Aramites, or the son Aram and the **Lydians** were in descent from the son, Laud, and his descendants, the Laudites. (Josephus, Flavius, *The Complete Works of Josephus*, translated William Whiston A.M., Kregel Publication, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49501, 1981, p. 33)

David Fasold, believes that the thirteen B.C.E. Urartu was in reality the area of the Khaldini and consistent with the claims of descent from Arphaxad, born twelve years after the flood from an offshoot of Kesed, reputed son of Nahor (Fasold, Ibid. p. 185) In the *Book of Jubilees*, it confirms this idea with a long genealogy

Terah as noted earlier resided in Harran and was the oracle high priest of the temple of Harran, copied after the divine city of Nippur. Tell Harran, recognized as a typical tell in the Mesopotamian valley, located eighteen kilometers from the modern Syrian border therefore became the focal center of the Abram story, the area of his roots, in the land of the People of the Ram from the House of Terah. In **Daniels time, the Chaldeans spoke Syriack** (Daniel 2:4 KJV), now known as **Armenian, or the language of ancient Syrian**. In the Jewish Kabballah, when the divine visitors announced to Abram that Sarai, his wife was in child, he laughed and said, "No! Not Sarah! As a child, my Lord, I spent much time jesting with the young men of the mountains of Urartu. Yes, I played satire with the men of Ur..." (Fasold, Ibid, p. 186) In Ezekiel's day, (Ezekiel 1:3 KJV, Greek spelling) the land of the Chaldeans was by the **river Kebar, or in Ur Kasdim** by the modern Khabor River in upper Mesopotamian valley. Therefore, Ur of the Chaldea was the area above the bifurcation of the Euphrates River in the area of Padan Aram, near the Khabor River and the Syrian border in the town of Harran, now known as Tell Harran. The people are known today as Armenians, who spoke the ancient language of Syriack in the land near the mountains of Urartu. The linkage of Abram to Ur of Sumeria and Ur in Chaldea which has puzzled historians and archeologists for years, may reside in the fact that Abram probably lived and received social notoriety in both the rural and cosmopolitan region.

Terah, the Oracle Priest

Terah was a worshipper of Marduk, the celestial warrior god, Mars. The **Tower of Babel was dedicated to this orbiting celestial proto planet**, which returned to an avenging destructive path to earth about every 52-54 years. Imagine the fear, respect and terror created by this protoplanet as every two years it made a commentary pass by over the earth. Each pass by was closer and closer until its nearest and most destructive orbital visit came on a fifty plus year anniversary. An entire governmental department of that early Shinar was devoted to scientific evaluation of this cometary visitor. This department included the conjurors, which developed a whole system of predictive celestial sciences and the Magi, wise men, who studied the philosophical, religious, and sociological implication of these semi-centennial visits. Rituals and religious symbolism were developed to appease Marduk (Mars) and what better than to fashion images in stone or wood and use them in effigies to be placed in their homes for worship. This is the earliest historical depiction of idol worship (Jasher 9:7)

In his urban estate, **Terah built twelve large statues**, which resided in his private temple, constructed of stone and wood and no doubt reflected the highest quality of artistry and craftsmanship in the Shinar peninsula. Each effigy represented a **deity for the month**, representing the calendric system utilized in Nippur, developed since the Noachian flood and the catastrophe which forced the earth to a new and further orbit from the sun increasing the yearly calendar from 290 to

300 days per year to 360 days per year. The Zodiac system was begun, and **Terah came from a long line of Oracle priests and the first disciples of the Zodiacian secret mysteries.**



In the *Book of Jasher*, it recounts the story of Arphaxad, who had a son by Rasuja, named Kainan, not to be confused with Kainan, the son of Ham and father of the Canaanites. This **Kainan came under the special tutelage of his father and learned the art of writing.** One day on the foothills, he uncovered a **stone stele with writings which he soon identified as the writings of the Watchers, the fallen angels,** who wrecked such genetic havoc in the antediluvian world. These writings included the “astrology of the sun and the moon and the stars and in all the signs of heaven” (Jubilee 8:3; compare with Book of Enoch 8:1) **Kainan** hid the writings from the knowledge of Noah but **passed the secret mysteries to his son, Kesed** and then **to his son, Ur,** the builder of the city of Era of the Chaldees. It was Ur, who transported this information to the **new mystery religion** of the Chaldees and was the first to sculpt molten images for worship. The **formation of idol worship was started by Ur, the father of the Chaldeans.**

The author of the *Book of Jubilee*, viewed behind the super-dimensional aspects of the story, stating, “And the **prince Mastema** gave his power to make all this, and through the angels who had been given under his hand, he sent out his hand to do all wickedness and sin and all transgression, and to destroy and to murder and to shed blood over the earth.” (Jubilee 11:5)

The **priestly dynasty passed down through the daughter of Ur, called On,** who was the **mother of Nahor, the grandfather of Abram.** The traditions were then passed on to **Terah and Abram.** While Abram was secreted away from the deadly grasp of Nimrod, he learned the art of writing and the mysteries and secrets of the heavens from his father. The oracular mysteries were confined within the dynasty of his family. The power and social acclaim were his birthright.

Even so, **Abram went to live with Noah and Shem who resided in the foothills of the Armenian** mountains and resided there for thirty-nine years. It was stated that “Abram knew the Lord from three years old” (Jasher 9:6) In his youth he also pondered the meaning of worship the sun and the moon but came to the thoughtful conclusion that the Creator God was greater than these. In the solitude of the Armenian hillside, the true worship of the Creator God and the family traditions in the family of Adam, preserved and transcribed by Noah were given to Abram.

At the age of fourteen, a **plague of ravens** settled in the hillside and began to eat the grain as it was being sown and cast across the fields in the springtime. As soon as they cast the grain, the bird would eat it up and the villagers knew that a disaster harvest was ahead. Wherever Abram went, he had the magic to dispel the ravens, which flew in great clouds. By diligently working with his countrymen, he saved the harvest, and his fame went throughout the land. That winter, Abram, designed a novel invention to be placed on the crook-timber of the plows whereby they would drop seed into furrows and the ravens could not find the seed to eat. Thus, at the age of **fifteen, Abram became the inventor of the seed furrow planter.**

During this era the massive building project of the empire was the **Tower of Babel.** In the plains of Shinar, the inhabitants of early Sumer now numbering about six hundred thousand citizens (Jasher 9:23) began the first national work building program using mortar and brick. The megalithic (giant stones) era of the antediluvian era was over. The land of Sumer did not have limestone as quarried in Egypt and so brick, bitumen used, as mortar became the commercial building material. Their ruler, Nimrod, who gained power and prominence using the hand wrought garments made by Yahweh Elohim, now began to believe the power and glory of his reign and thought to assume the role of a national god, an imperial monarch. It was the national custom to create your god, the first ‘me’ generation. “And the inhabitants of the earth made unto themselves, at that time, every man his god; gods of wood and stone. (Jasher 9:6)

The **arrogance turned to vengeance as the Sumerian war lords,** comforted in the security of their borders turned their attention thinking they **could fight the Elohim** who has brought the flood ten generations prior. Their ruler, now ruling over **seven generations of inhabitants** by subjugating his cousins and imposing a military rule, now sought to fight the ‘gods’ in the heaven in direct assault by building a tower up to their abode in the clouds and using it as a military staging ground.

Tower of Babel



In Genesis, the second time recorded that the Lord God is translated as a plurality, said, Let us do down there and confuse their speech..." (Genesis 11:7) This was amplified by the author of Jasher by stating "to the seventy angels who stood foremost before him, to those who were near to him, saying, **Come let us descend and confuse their tongues, that one man shall not understand the language of his neighbor, and they did so unto them.**" (Jasher 9:32) It is of interest that scholars suggest that seventy tribes or nations came out of the Tower of Babel experience.

Elohim to the ancient writers, though monotheistic in their understanding of a Supreme God and Creator, also viewed the pantheon of supernatural beings created by and in the presence and at the service of the Almighty One, as gods consistent with the Sumerian world view of religious thought. **Yahweh Elohim, the manifestation of the Elohim to mankind,** was viewed by the Hebrew thought as reflective of the **One God**, yet the message and visual imagery came many times by emissaries sent by the direct charge of the Elohim. That they, the angelic beings created in the higher dimensions who served next to the Creator God, would at times be viewed as God, was not inconsistent with the postdiluvian Hebrew thought.

The debacle of the ultimate catastrophic collapse of the Babel including earthquakes, massive earth fissuring which swallowed up a third part of the tower, also included a strange phenomenon in which the population became aphasic to their mother tongue, they could hear, but could not comprehend, and when they spoke, their language was different. Was it the role of the angels to carry a new root language to each different family tribe with impressions of oracular vibrations still unknown to this day? Some scholars have suggested **that language was by mental telepathy** and that the telepathic powers of the brain were diminished so man had to communicate by oral speech. From Babel, they migrated and settled in new homelands: the Indus Valley, China, Egypt, the proto-Mediterranean basin and Meso-America.

The **empire of Nimrod was dispersed**, vast migrations moved out to all corners of the globe. The early Sumerian empire was subdued, but the power of Nimrod was not broken. His heart was hardened, and his people consolidated around him. Yet the glory days were over and fading fast. The world, as envisioned by Hancock, in *Footprints of the Gods*, had already been mapped, explored and the cardinal points had been determined. **Pangea was still intact**, her subterranean crust fractured by the Noachian flood, and the continental drift had not yet begun.

The post-Babel empire of Nimrod was significantly reorganized and whereas before the Babel debacle, Nimrod controlled his empire by the might of his own sword, he now sought military alliances to maintain primacy in the military-diplomatic arena. **Nimrod's subjects also renamed their leader, Nimrod, to Amraphel.** According to the author of Jasher, the title of Amraphel was given because, "at the tower his princes and men fell through his (Nimrod's) means" (Jasher 11:6) **One of Nimrod/Amraphel's earliest allies was the king of Elam, Chedorlaomer, who had subdued the children of Ham who lived in the vail of Shiddon in the cities of the plains.**

The Return of Abram to Sumeria

Still in his youth, at the **age of forty-nine**, as sexual maturity took longer to achieve in those days, Abram knew it was time to return to the land of his family. It was the first jubilee (forty-nine years) of Abram's life when **Nahor, Abram's grandfather died.** A large family reunion was called in Sumeria. **Peleg, the great grandfather of Nahor had died a year earlier.** The name of Peleg meant 'division'. **Upon his birth, the continents of the earth were split** and were divided and **upon his death, the Babel experience caused the massive migration and division of the children of Noah.** The political unrest was settling down and Nimrod, now called Amraphel with his allies were finishing the consolidation of the remnant of his post-Babel empire.

Abram, now absent from his father's house for thirty-nine years and commencing the celebration of his fiftieth birthday, he returned to the funerary celebration of his noted grandfather, also revered sage and priest of the Sumerian cults. It was at this funeral celebration that the religious reformationist, Abram sought to start a **revolt in the Sumerian religious hierarchy.** At his father home, Abram watched and observed the twelve statues of Terah, noting that by placing food before the altars, the idols were unable to reciprocate and eat. He confronted his father, who acknowledged that the religious and political power was so interwoven in the early Sumerian culture, that to initiate such a reform would be political and personal suicide for him and his family.

Abram settled down, and **married his half-sister, Sara**, while **Nahor also married, Milcah**, the daughter of Haran, and they both started their own families. One day, Abram took a **hatchet and destroyed all the idols except the largest central idol in which he placed the hatchet**. He then told his father that when placing the food before the idols they all reached and grabbed the food before the senior idol was able to reach the food, so he therefore chopped them up. The fact that Terah did not believe his son, only highlighted the fact even Terah did not believe the idols were capable of any animate activity.

This incident was transmitted by Terah to the king, Nimrod, who had **Abram imprisoned** after Abram directly implicated the king with the religious deception, "O foolish, simple and ignorant king, woe unto thee forever. I thought thou wouldst teach thy servants the upright way, but thou hast not done this, but hast filled the whole earth with thy sins and the sins of thy people who have followed thy ways." (Jasher XI:56-57) **This** admonition turned to warning, "if thy wicked heart will not hearken to my words to cause thee to forsake thy evil ways, and to serve the eternal God, then wilt thou die in shame in the latter days, thou, thy people and all who are connected with thee, hearing thy words or walking in thy evil ways." (Jasher XI: 60)

Ten days later, **Abram with his brother Haran, now eighty-two years old, were thrown in a fiery furnace**. Haran was implicated by his father, Terah, as the instigator of the initial deception/ploy of switching the boy Abram for a servant's son, who was then earlier killed by the king. As reminiscent in the later incident of Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego, Abram was not killed in the fiery inferno, but his brother was reduced to ashes.

Three days in the fiery inferno, before the Akkadian multitudes, Abram stayed according to ancient sources. After this, Nimrod asked "Abram, O servant of the God who is in heaven,"..."come hither before me". (Ibid XII:32) **Abram was sent away in peace with many gift, gold, silver and pearls including many of the king's servants including Oni, and the most faithful one, Eliezar plus three hundred men.**

Two years of peace reigned between Abram and Nimrod until one day **Eliezar heard rumors within the court of Nimrod that an assassination attempt was to be made on Abram's life**. The king had a prophetic dream that Abram came after him with a sword and when he turned around, he threw an egg on him, which became a river, which drowned his troops. The river turned back into an egg from which came forth birds, which came down and plucked out the eyes of Nimrod as he was escaping from the scene of battle. A **wise man in the court of Nimrod, Anuki**, interpreted the dream that Nimrod/Amrophel and Abram would one day meet on the battlefield in the vale of Siddim and Abram would destroy not only his troops but the hardened warriors of his three allies after their victory over the Kings of the Cities of the Valley of Siddim. The memory of the exploding star fifty-two years prior came back to the king, vowing now to eliminate Abram not only as a rival to the throne but as an enemy of the empire

Abram realizing that he would not dissuade his father to destroy the idols decided to appoint himself the **vindicator of God's justice**. One night he arose in the middle of the night and **set the whole temple complex on fire**. The fires leapt high engulfing all the idols and religious icons when his brother ran into the complex trying to save the idols. The ceilings collapsed and his brother **Nahor died in the flames**. His two brothers were now dead, and Terah knew that Abram was his only salvation. Some biblical critics have blamed Abram for the death of his brothers, Nahor, in the temple inferno, and Haran, earlier in the fiery furnace and for if he had only tempered his reformationist zeal, and both of his brother's life might have been spared.

Abram flees Ur Casidim (Khaldini)

The **exodus from Ur Casidim by Abram and the family of Terah was one in haste**. This fact has puzzled theologians for centuries, not knowing the threat of assassination on Abram by Nimrod as depicted in the book of Jasher. With the **death of Nahor in the fiery temple inferno and Haran in the fiery furnaces of Nimrod of Casidim** at the age of eighty two, Abram, along with his family and retinue, **fled again to the house of Noah**, who along with Shem had persuaded Terah to leave Ur Casidim and head towards Canaan. There they settled or started a **new city, Harran, named for Abram's deceased brother**. It was near the entrance to Canaan and Lebanon yet out of the political sphere of Nimrod's saboteurs.

Terah retired away from the cosmopolitan area of Sumer and went back to the foothills of the Taurus Mountain in northwestern Armenia. There he **built a new estate and temple complex** at Harran. **Tel Harran**, now identified in the **Ebla tablets** was a noted town of commerce, built at the major northern crossroad center between Sumer and western Asia. The temple complex built in Harran has been reconstructed by archeologists and noted to be a **mirror image of the central Sumerian religious complex to Nannar/Sin in Ur**.

What is of interest in the saga of the **dream of Nimrod, is that the wise man, a Chaldi, who interpreted the dream was called Anuki**. This returns us to the works of Zecharia Sitchin in which the name **Annukian** referred to those peoples who initially colonized earth as inhabitants when they came from the planet, Marduk, and was translated from Sumerian as

Thus, the biblical Abraham, or Abram, was actually a Sumerian. Based only on this genealogical information, it is possible to assert about the unusual origin of Abraham. His Sumerian name AVRAM means "father's favorite" - quite a fitting name for a son, finally born to a seventy-year-old man. The name of his father, Terah, comes from the Sumerian epithet

"Those who from Heaven to Earth came." (Sitchin, Zecharia, *When Time Began*, Avon Books, The Hearst Corp., NY p. 10) According to the author of the *Book of Jubilees*, a tenth of spirits forms of the antediluvian Nephilim with the Angel Mastema were allowed to interact not physically but in the spirit with the inhabitants of the post-flood era. (*Jasher 10:8*)

Abram, the Scion of the Sumerian Head of State' At the age of seventy-five, Abram is living in the vicinity of Harran and possibly at this time he **assumed kingship a Damascus**, a noted foreigner with an armed retinue. Here we see a family involved in the political and religious life of Samaria, a **high-class family of noble birth** who lived and mingled with the high echelons of Sumerian society. **Nicholas of Damascus**, reporting in his fourth book states, "Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner who came with an army out of the land *above* Babylon called the land of the Chaldeans. But after a long time he got up, and removed from the country also with his people, and went into the land the called the land of Canaan but now the land of Judea" (italics supplied) (Fasold, *Ibid.* p. 186.) For fourteen years, Abram lives on the corridor of the fertile crescent before descending into the land of Shem's Inheritance, Canaan. On a crystal-clear night, he was observing the heavens to predict the rains and seasonal changes, when the Lord spoke to him.

"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee; and I will make of thee a great nation and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen 12:1-3)

AB RAM , his Sumerian name meant "Father's Beloved". Terah, his father, not only was the head of the royal hosts of Nimrod, but also high priest of Ur and accepted in the highest ranks to performs the religious ceremonies at Nimmir.

The **Abram** as some picture in the Hebrew scriptures **was not a marauding nomad**. When arriving in Egypt, he is immediately taken to **the presence of the king of Egypt**. From there he engages in social, scientific and political discourse and negotiates treaties with dignitaries at high levels. When cohabitating with the Canaanites, we find Abram careful to avoid local conflicts even with local rights such as water wells. Here we see a person **trained in the fine arts of negotiation and diplomacy**.

Ancient linguists early compared the Hebrew word *Ibri* with the word *Hapiru* which the Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonians in the seventeenth and eighteenth century called groups of western Semites who pillaged and invaded the borders of the civilized city states. They were the bandits of the era. Yet when we see Abraham becoming involved in the War of the Kings, he refuses to take any booty for himself, reflecting the high conduct of a person of his stature.

The Royal Lineage of Abram

Here was a **family of royal lineage**, who claimed descent from the first born from the House of Shem: Arphaxad, Selah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abram. Yet it is to **Eber** in which the **biblical name Hebrew or Ibri** is derived which gives the family of Abraham its greatest identity. Sitchin claims that the root word means "to cross" and rather than the Semitic origin we must look to Sumerian linguists for the meaning. He therefore directs us to look to the biblical **suffix i when applied to a person means "a native of"**. Therefore, Gileadi meant a native of Gilead. In the same token, Ibri meant a native of the place called "Crossing", which was the Sumerian name for Nippur: **NI.IB.RU**. To Sitchin, this was the Original Navel of the Earth, the pre-diluvium center of civilization. When transferring linguistics from Sumerian to Akkadian/Hebrew, the *n* was dropped off. So Abram, the Ibri, was actually **Abram of Ni-ib-ri, a man of Nippurian origin**. (Sitchin, Zechariah, *The Wars of Gods and Men*, Avon Books, The Hearst Corp. 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 p. 294-295)

Nippur was noted in ancient Sumerian society as a consecrated city, the navel or center of Sumerian religious society. It was the nerve center where astronomy was utilized and entrusted to the priestly caste and where the **Nippurian calendar originated** as soon as the orbits of the post-diluvium sun, earth, and moon were calculated. Scholars know today this calendar was **synthesized about 4000 BC in the age of Taurus**. The **Hebrew calendar was derived from this Nippurian calendar as it based its origin on the beginning year of 3760 BC (where 1997 is the Jewish year of 5757)** The Jewish sages recount that these are the years that have passed **"since counting [of years] began"** (*Ibid* p.296)

So, Abram, turned his sights and the destiny of his family south, to the land of the Canaanites. A new era in his life was about to begin. The identity as the son of the Sumerian Oracle Priest would soon evolve in the life of a Western Potentate, and one who had a special destiny to fulfill.

TIRCHU, which was the name of the priests-soothsayers who watched heavenly signs or received prophecies from the gods and explained or transmitted these prophecies to the king. The name of Abram's wife SARAI (later Sarai in Hebrew) means "princess", and the name of Nahor's wife, Milka, translates as "royal," which indicates that both women belonged to the royal family. Subsequently, it turns out that Abram's wife was his half-sister - "she is my father's daughter, but not my mother's daughter," as Abram himself explained - and this means that Sarai / Sarai's mother also came from a royal family. Thus, the family of Abraham belonged to the highest Sumerian society, which consisted of the descendants of kings and priests.⁴⁵⁵

This change of names (from *Abram* to *Abraham*) makes sense if Moses was an Osirian priest trying to create for the Hebrew people a national identity as a holy nation associated with the unknown God of Heaven and Earth, denying their identity with the black Egyptians, but affirming their black identity with Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees. Ur was one of the great cities of the Sumerians and Dr. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois declared that the Sumerians were made up of Negroid Dravidians and Mongoloid Sumerians. Du Bois states:

The development in Mesopotamia in the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates, which flows into the Persian Gulf and thence to the Indian Ocean, is striking. Before the year four thousand B. C. there is evidence that Negroid Dravidians and Mongoloid Sumerians ruled in southern Asia, in the Asia Minor, and in the valley of the Tigris-Euphrates. Negroids followed them under Sargon, and Sargon boasted that "he commanded the black heads and ruled them."⁴⁵⁶

In Egyptian or Kamau hieroglyphics the word Ab =  , that is, "Father", translated the same way as the Hebrew אב = "Ab" in Abraham's new name. Instead of giving the morphology of Abraham's name as **Ab-Ra-Ham** as the Hebrew clearly suggests, biblical scholars obscure the true meaning of the term by breaking up the morphology elements as **Ab-Rah-Am**, knowing that "Am" in Hebrew means "people or nation." With that word they are able to say that Abraham is the "Father of many nations," of course never explaining what the morphological element "Rah" means. But the Hebrew morphology broken up this way hides the fact that Abraham is a compound Egyptian or Kamau word used by Moses, who certainly as an Osirian priest, knew Egyptian hieroglyphics and Hebrew, as well. Biblical translators therefore try to escape the true meaning of Abraham's name as given by Moses and obscure "Ra" in his name (because it is too close to the meaning of Egyptian "Ra" the name of the Creator God of the Egyptians) and so substitute the morphological element "Rah" (which element makes no sense). If they did the morphology divisions correctly, they would be forced to betray Abraham's ethnic identity as a black man, who is "Father of Black Jews" or "Father of Black Hebrews." How so? Josephus in "Flavius Josephus Against Apion," states in the *Antiquities* that:

Cherilus also, a still ancients writer, and poet, makes mention of our nation and informs us that it came to the assistance of king Xerxes, in his expedition against Greece; for in his enumeration of all those nations, he last of all inserts ours among the rest, when he says: "At

⁴⁵⁵ *Scientists have proven the Sumerian origins of the Biblical "Abraham and Sarah" -Alternative view in Secrets of History, 2023.*

⁴⁵⁶ W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The World and Africa: An Inquiry into the part which Africa has played in world history.* New York: International Publishers, 1965.

the last there passed over a people, wonderful to be beheld; for they spake the Phoenician tongue with their mouths; they dwelt in the Solymean mountains, near a broad lake: *their heads were sooty; they had round rasures on them: their heads and faces were like nasty horse-heads* also [my emphasis], that had been hardened in the smoke.” I think, therefore, that it is evident to everybody that Cherilus means us, because the Solymean mountains are in our country, wherein we inhabit, as in also the lake Asphaltitis; for this a broader and larger lake than any other that is in Syria: and thus does Cherilus make mention of us.⁴⁵⁷

Now if you construe the penult morphological [second] element in Abraham’s Hebrew name as “Rah” in order for the ultima morphological [third] element to read “Am” for “people” or “nation” then “Rah” would lend itself to Josephus’ ethnic identification of the Hebrews as black people, identified by their sooty heads and faces that looked like *nasty horse-heads*, e.g. black horse faces and black horse manes of hair, for morphological element of “Rah” is in the Hebrew word רָמָה; *ra’-mah*, meaning “horses mane that waves, vibrates or is quivering,” so to speak. This would indicate that Abraham then is the “Father of sooty looking people that have heads and faces like horse-heads of hair that have been *hardened in the smoke*.” Abraham would then be the “Father of Sooty People” whose faces and hair looked like smoke,” that is, a group of black Hebrews or black Jews. I am sure the biblical translators did not mean to lead those of us who understand both Hebrew and Egyptian in this direction, but God embedded this knowledge within these languages. However, there is a primitive root according to Strong’s 7451, *rah*, “an abstract concept, adjectival form, meaning “*wicked*,” coming from Strong’s H7489 רָעָה *raah*, a primitive root meaning “*to be wicked*.” The first instance where this term appears in the Bible is Genesis 2:9:

And out of the ground YHVH God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good [טוֹב, *to-wb*] and evil [וְרָע, *wa-ra’*].

Certainly, the biblical exegetes do not want to make **Ab-Rah-Am** too then mean “**Father of Evil Nations**.” Biblical exegetes and translators cannot have it both ways, using the historical derivation of Abraham’s name. Moses, however, gives the name its Osirian theological meanings as we began above, by hiding Abraham’s Egyptian name in Hebrew morphology, that only an Osirian initiate would know the meaning. This is how we will proceed in order to decode what Moses was trying to tell those who have a need to know about their Black Hebrew heritage. As above, the Hebrew word אֲבִרָהָם = Ab + ra + kham. The next morphological element in Abraham’s name will show that Moses wants to describe Abraham, as the Father of a holy nation of priests and avenger of God on sinful mankind. He in fact wants them to serve the same God that Moses, as an Osirian priest serves, that is, Osiris-Ra (i.e. Osiris-Neb-ankh “Lord of Life”; Osiris-Neb-er-tcher “Lord, Almighty”; Osiris-Neb-tchet “Lord of Eternity”; Osiris-Khneti-Amentt “Lord of the Hidden Place” and Osiris-Sa “Shepherd of the Sons of God” or Amen-Ra = the “Hidden God,” the “Neter-ua,” God-One.⁴⁵⁸ All of the above Egyptian theological meanings in the Yahweh Religion Moses constructed for the Hebrew ex-slaves are

⁴⁵⁷ Josephus, “*Flavius Josephus Against Apion*,” *Antiquities of the Jews*, pp. 614-615.

⁴⁵⁸ See E. A. Wallis Budge, *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1978), pp. 52, 86-87, 403, 418.

implicitly connected with the Egyptian god Osiris-Ra, as seen in the morphological element Ab-Ra-Ham's name, that is,  "Ra", Egyptian. According to E. A. Wallis Budge, this name has the same meaning as Hebrew  as the Hebrew morphological element in the Hebrew word  ra'mah, given above, and refers to the Sun-God, or the Great God.⁴⁵⁹ Abraham's name as given by Moses has the two Egyptian morphological elements derived from the Hebrew as;   Ab + Ra, "Father of the God." This Egyptian/Hebrew phrase has the same designation and meaning as given by the Yoruba when they describe a *Doctor of Religion* of Olorun as "Baba-Lowa" or "*Father of the Religion of Olorun, Father of Secrets*" in the Yoruba language (i.e. baba = father, lowa = "secret knowledge." So far Moses has described Abram's (i.e. Father of the Nation) first name before God changed it as "*Father of the Religion [of the God]*". In Genesis 17:1-5, after thirteen years of going where God told him to go, and being ninety-nine years old, God changes Abram's name and adds the last morphological element, to show that Abram had been fully initiated into the religion of the Hidden God, and under His covenant and covenant promises as Abram's great future reward. Abram had now past all of the tests of the initiate into the Osirian religion from the perspective of Moses, who wrote the story, again around 1450 B.C. at Mount Sinai in the midst of liberating the Hebrew slaves, and in preparing them as a holy nation in a new home (the Promised Land) along with a new national identity under God. Moses tells the following story:

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers." Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you father of many nations [NIV].

Again, the use of "Am" for many nations (i.e. a multitude of peoples) obscures the fact that in the ultima of Ab-Ra-Ham's new name is embedded the Hebrew word "Ham" and the Egyptian word "Kham" designating the people Abraham would be father of as **a multitude of black people, who like Abraham are to be a holy people of faith to God Almighty**. This initially would be the **black Hebrews** or **black Jews** as we described above, but later to include an innumerable world population of **black people of faith**. How so? In Hebrew the word Cham means "hot" like in "burnt" [e.g. Ethiopians as "burnt faces"]. Ham would be the Father of all of the "burnt faces" or southern peoples in the so-called ancient Middle East and Africa, including the Canaanites (the only black people that God had to destroy for their wickedness by means of the holy black nation of Hebrews) in the Promise land later taken over by the black Egyptianized Hebrews, later to take the name "Jews" from the tribal clan Judah. According to definitions in BibleWorks 4, the word "Ham" is a Hebrew collective term for the burnt face people of Egypt, as well.⁴⁶⁰ Rev. Walter Arthur McCray in his *The Black Presence in the Bible and Table of Nations, Genesis 10:1-32* says that the Hamitic Black/African Genealogical Line of Ham is "Cush" [Nubia = Northern Ethiopia = Southern Chem or Kemit], Mizraim [Egypt], "Put" [Southern Arabia and South-East Ethiopia], and Canaan in the Promise Land.⁴⁶¹ The Egyptian derivation

⁴⁵⁹ Sawa, p. 418.

⁴⁶⁰ BibleWorks Supplemental CD in *BibleWorks 4: The Premier Biblical Exegesis and Research Program* (BibleWorks, LLC, 1999).

of the last morphological element in Abraham's name, which God gave him in Moses' account, elevates him to "Doctor of the Religion of the Hidden God," which took 23 years of initiation and experience, from his age of 76 to the age of 99 years old. The morphological element is "Ham" or "Kham" or

"Kam" = , "to be black", or "Kam-t" =   for "being black" or a "black thing." At first there is no indication what the black thing is until you understand, according to Budge that

the ideographic determinative for "lock of hair" [] means also "color" or "complexion." Color could be applied to either man or animal, but *complexion* is a human designation or trait for skin color. That being the case the "black thing" being described by complexion in Abraham's name are definitely people who are black or dark in complexion. God therefore, as understood through Moses' black Uni-Theology as an Osirian priest, hid Abraham's name and purpose in the Egyptian morphology by encoding it in Hebrew, knowing full well that the future initiates of the "Religion of the Hidden God" would someday understand that Moses was describing **Ab-Ra-Ham** as the **"Father of the Religion of the Hidden God of the Black People of Faith."** Now we know why Moses brings Ab-Ra-Ham in his narrative down to Egypt, so Abraham could finish his initiation into the **black Old Time Osirian Religion** (from which both Judaism and Christianity are derived in terms of their doctrines of God, the Horus Christ, the Resurrection, Doctrine of Heaven and Hell, the Lake of Fire, and the Trinity). This is likely why Moses begins Abraham's story in Sumer = Ur of the Chaldeans [Genesis 11:31], and later passed up both Heran in Syria as his permanent and strangest of all "passed through" Canaan the very land promised by God in order to do so. Why did Moses write the story of Abraham so he had to go to Egypt?⁴⁶²

⁴⁶¹ Rev. Walter Arthur McCray, *The Black Presence in the Bible and the Table of Nations, Genesis 10:1-32*, Vol. 2. (Chicago, Illinois: Black Light Fellowship, 1990), p. 76.

⁴⁶² We note here that Jesus Christ probably ended up in Egypt within God's providence for the same purpose of initiation in Egypt as did Abraham. This would have to occur before he could begin his ministry of salvation among the Jews of his day, so that the Scripture which states, "Out of Egypt I called my son," [Matthew 2:15, NIV] could be fulfilled. The fulfillment would be the Old Testament prophesy, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son," [Hosea 11:1, NIV]. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ goes down into Egypt as a two years old baby boy [Jesus born around 6 B.C. E., which is based on Herod's reason for killing the baby boys in Bethlehem two years old and under; after the Maji from the East saw the star that led them to the Christ child in a house in Bethlehem, Matthew 2:16-18, calculated from Herod's death in and around 4 B.C.E.]. Jesus does not appear again in person until he is twelve years old, that is, *lost and found* by his parents, while sitting at the feet of Jewish doctors of the Law and scribes, both asking them questions and answering their examination questions [Matthew 2:13-23; Luke 2:41-50]. How was Jesus able to stand as an auditor or student being examined by the Jewish doctors of the Law of Moses? It was because he already had sat at the feet of the Doctors of the Osirian religion in Egypt before returning with his parents from Egypt to Israel, sometime after the death of Herod in 4 B.C.E. Cheikh Anta-Diop in his classic work *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology* (1981) says that "Moreover, Christ, in his youth, took a trip to Egypt where he was initiated into the mysteries," [p. 336]. It is evident that Jesus had problems with claims about his ancestry as one reads the genealogical depiction's in the books of Matthew and Luke and the statements throughout where his origins and birth were questioned. For example:

When they heard this saying, many of the people said, "This is truly the prophet!" Others said, "This is the Christ!" Still others said, "What? Does the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was? And so, there arose a division in the crowd because of him. Some of them would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him. And so, the officers returned to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers answered, "No one has ever spoken like this man!" At this, the Pharisees replied, "You are not also led astray, are you? Have any of the rulers believed in him, or the Pharisees? But this multitude that does not know the law is accursed." Nicodemus (who had come to him by night, being one of the Pharisees) said to them, "Does our law judge someone without first hearing from him personally to find out what this person is doing?" They answered him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and see that no prophet has arisen out of Galilee." (John 7:40-52, EOB).

Jesus returned to Israel when he was a lad, somewhere between the ages of 4 and 12 years old. This was sometime after the Angel told Josephus that Herod was dead, that is, sometime during the rulership of Herod's son Archelaus over Judea, that is, from 4 B.C.E. to 6 C.E., depending on when the Angel told Joseph that Herod was dead and his discovery that Archelaus was ruling in Herod's, his father's place [Matthew 2:19-23]. Extra-biblical historical records show [Josephus, *Antiquities*, See Book 17, Chapters 8, 9-13, pp. 366-375] that Archelaus was disposed by Caesar in 6 C.E. because of complaints by the Jews. Since Jesus was born in 6 B.C.E. two years before Herod's death, and was taken to Egypt by his parents because his life was being threatened by Herod, who died in 4 B.C.E. (close to March 13th, 4710 of the Julian Calendar, the year of the eclipse of the moon, according to Josephus, *Antiquities*, p. 365) it is possible that Jesus return could have been anywhere between 4 B.C.E. and 6 C.E. The length of time from 6 B.C.E. to 6 C.E. is exactly 12 twelve years when Jesus is found in the temple with the Jewish doctors of the Law of Moses, that is, in the year Archelaus was disposed, and the last possible threat against his life from member of Herod's family eliminated. Jesus' stay in Egypt was at least 2 years according to Matthew's account. However, it could have been another six to eight years since there is no biblical data on when the angel of God actually contacted Joseph about Herod's death. All the account says is that Joseph got up and went back to Israel and apparently on his way to Judea, he was warned in a dream that Herod's son Archelaus was ruling in his father's, that is, Herod's place. Joseph therefore went to Nazareth out of the jurisdictional reach of Archelaus. If Jesus stayed in Egypt from age two to about twelve, he undoubtedly got the beginnings of an Egyptian education and considering how youth were educated in the Ancient East, he could have been sitting at the feet of Osirian theologians for at least six of those years as a novice in the Religion of the Hidden God, as was his ancestor Abraham in the story of Moses given in Genesis, beginning at chapter 12.

In fact we have it from an ancient Greek philosopher, Celsus, who wrote a book called the *True Doctrine* (170 C.E.), some 137 years after the death of Jesus, but nevertheless an apology against the account of the early Christian church, suggesting that Jesus' father was actually **a black Roman soldier by the name of Panthera = the Black Panther**, and that his mother Mary ended up in Egypt on the run from Joseph and certain death by stoning for her adultery. This story of course runs counter to the Matthean account, but it is important and cannot be merely ignored in order to maintain the biblical orthodox view of Jesus' birth, because it is an extra-biblical source and testimony to the very fact that Jesus was a historical figure, irrespective of the veracity of the account itself. Theologically the account denies the doctrine of the virgin birth, and therefore would offend and disturb Christians (who read Celsus) in respect to the truth of traditional biblical account. What is important for our study of the historical Jesus here is that Celsus mentions that *Jesus grew up in Egypt*, became a hired worker as a young man, and apparently acquired his miraculous powers from what he learned from Egyptian priests and "there tried his hand at certain magical powers on which the Egyptians pride themselves; he returned full of conceit because of the powers, and on account of them gave himself the title the Son of God" [Robert L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 109]. Here we are not interested in the theological import of this claim but in the chronology, purpose and duration of Jesus stay in Egypt. The Matthean account would suggest that from about twelve to thirty years old, that is, about eighteen years, Jesus spent the time (the so-called missing years) studying the Old Testament Hebrew Bible. If Jesus did receive a prior Egyptian education, it is likely that he spent the intervening year of whatever length relating his Hebrew education to his early education in Egypt, that is, *decoding it* and applying the two contextual intellectual traditions to the cultural and political environment, spiritual condition, and situation of his people under Roman oppression and Herodian indirect rule, the political puppets of the Roman authorities. In the meantime, John the Baptist was preaching (holding down the fort so to speak, i.e. Just a Voice calling in the desert making straight the Way of the Lord, John 1:23) preaching and telling everybody during this eighteen-year period before the public ministry of Jesus, that the Messiah was on the way and people ought to get their house in order. Both John the Baptist and Jesus would ultimately die at the hands of the Jews for the preaching the Kingdom of God, (Already Come) in the person of Jesus Christ, a kingdom that would eventually overthrow all human kingdoms and demand the allegiance of all men to God, the Father and reconcile all men back to God. The preaching of the kingdom of God, even in its spiritualized form, so-called non-threatening form, is in fact an explicit threat against all earthly authorities, whether they take it serious or not, as in the case of Pilot, who at first tried to dismiss the idea that *Jesus is Lord!* (i.e. the Lord's Messiah) over against the claim by men that *Caesar is Lord!* However, even Pilot was convinced for both personal and political reasons that the implication of the Jesus Movement (i.e. the Way) was in fact politically dangerous and that even though he washed his hands of the matter he must defend the *Pax Romana* (i.e. Roman Peace) grounded in the authority and sovereignty of Caesar over *all men* and all institutions whether secular or religious as can be seen in the religious titles that Roman emperors began to assume upon accession to the Imperium (e.g., *Pontifex Maximus*, the high priest of the College of Pontiffs, meaning "greatest pontiff" or "greatest bridge-builder". The title was subsumed within the Roman Imperial office of Caesar with Augustus and later applied to the Roman Catholic Pope). In the end Pilot was concerned about Jesus' claims and the accusations of the Jews that he claimed to be the King of the Jews. The implications of this claim against Caesar's authority (both secular and religious) and what would happen to his career if he failed to do something about it were too much for him. Pilot could not afford to be classed as "No Friend of Caesar" if he let Jesus go. [See John 18:28-40; 19:1-16].

Finally, is there some way to reconcile the Matthean biblical account and that of the extra-biblical account of Celsus, so that the Matthean biblical account is not refuted but upheld, in respect to how long Jesus stayed in Egypt in support of my thesis that Jesus received an Egyptian theological education as a youth which empowered him to speak

before the Jewish doctors of the law at twelve years old and later do great miracles, reputed to be the domain and special province of Egyptian wisdom? We can do this in part by analogy. The Hebrews stayed in Egypt for 430 years, or about six [6] generations, from when Jacob, whose name was changed to "Israel" in Genesis 32:27-28, prior to moving his entire family to Egypt, because of a famine in Canaan around 1876 B.C.E. to when Moses liberated them and brought them out in 1446 B.C.E. A generation in Hebrew reckoning is about 70 years based on Psalms 90:10. The Hebrews stayed in Egypt for about 430 years [30 years free and 400 years as slaves] supported by Scripture in Exodus 12:40. This would make the sojourn 6.2 generations [that is, 430 divided by 70]. If this is applied typologically to Jesus' sojourn in Egypt, we can say that Jesus was about 8 years old when he left Egypt [2 years old when he went and 6 years later, being 8 years old when he returned in around 3 C.E., the seventh year of Archelaus' reign in Judea. Are there other typological analogies that could support my thesis? Yes, there are. First, Jacob was born in 2006 B.C.E. and went down to Egypt in 1876 B.C.E., making it 1.9 generations [2006 – 1876 = 130 year divided by 70 = 1.9, or about 2 years]. Jacob as Israel literally went down as a "baby" of about 2 years old and came to the Promise land as the nation of Israel with over 1.6 million people, whose typological age by analogy would be 8 years old, reckoned by 70 generational periods = 430 [that is, 430 divided by 70 = 6 + 2 = 8]. The Hosea prophesy in 11:1 and the Matthean affirmation of this prophesy in Matthew 2:15, that is, by analogy makes the story of Israel's liberation and exodus and Jesus' exodus from Egypt as a boy child the fulfillment of this prophesy, supports a my thesis that Jesus likely left Egypt at a much later date than suggested by a first reading of the Matthean account, which traditional date is only arrived at by extra-biblical sources as well. My thesis that Jesus came back at about 8 years old (3 C.E.) rather than 4 years old (4 B.C.E.) is well within the purview of the Matthean account, because it does not violate the biblical record that shows that Jesus returned with his parents from Egypt during the reign of Archelaus, which did not end until 6 B.C.E., the year Jesus first appears publicly at age 12 before the Jewish doctors of the law.

Secondly, since the nativity of Jesus is really a biblical narrative of salvation history surrounding the incarnation of the Son of God as the redeemer of mankind, and finally avenger of God's wrath against disobedient angels and men, where in the typology does Jesus missing four years fit in, culminating with his being in the temple at 12 years old conversing with the Jewish doctors of the law of Moses? Continuing our mathematical analogy, from 8 years old to 12 years old Jesus would have been back in Israel but raised in Nazareth. However, his parents annually went to Jerusalem for the Passover feast, around the period of time the Jews call for a young man's *bar mitsvah* = barmirtzvah [about 13 years of age], literally the "son of duty," or the age of responsibility. This goes along with Jesus' stern reply to his mother, who chided him for disappearing for three days from the caravan and spending that time in Solomon's restored temple [rebuilt by Herod the Great] talking with the Jewish doctors of the law, saying "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" [Luke 2:49, NIV]. Other translations say, "must be about my Father's business," [KJV], with the verse 52 saying "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men," [NIV].

Jesus was merely replying to his mother that he was becoming a "son of duty" to God the Father, which his mother nor his adopted father Joseph at the time understood. He was claiming that he was the Son of God, the "Kinsman-Redeemer" and "Avenger," that is, the *Golim* of God. Where within the 4 generational periods of 70 years x 4 = 280 years after the Exodus of the Children of Israel, corresponding typologically to Jesus' age of from 8 years old to 12 years old do we find the biblical record pointing to Jesus as the "Redeemer" and "Avenger" of God, that is the "One who ransoms" the lost or saves the lost from their captors? The corresponding 4 generational period would be 1166 B.C.E. This puts the typological period during the time of the Book of Ruth, that is, about 1200 to 1150 B.C.E. What happened during this period that points to Jesus Christ as the kinsman-redeemer? Without recounting the whole story of Ruth, the Scriptures show that she had a son named Obed by her husband Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer of Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law. The Scripture is clear that Obed was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, the spiritual line of descent through which Jesus came as the adopted son of Joseph. But more importantly than this, Obed is called the "Kinsman-Redeemer." The women in celebrating his birth says to Naomi, "Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer" [Ruth 4:14b, NIV]. In other words, this ancestor of Jesus was born in the likeness of Jesus, the spiritual kinsman-redeemer of all mankind. What was Obed? He was a גא'ל *ga'al*. This *Ga'al* or *Golim* means "one who redeems," "one who ransoms from slavery," or "one who avenges the oppressed." We note here that this birth occurred in the 12th generational period from the birth of Jacob, renamed "Israel" [from 2006 to 1166 B.C.E.] the same age of Jesus at 12 years old, whose typology the story of birth of Obed points too. It is not to be missed here that Jesus later at age 30 inaugurated his ministry of redemption and reconciliation (telling men to repent because the Kingdom of God was at hand) with the words of Isaiah "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19, NIV). However, is Jesus the avenging *Ga'al* as well? Yes, but he must be cautious in making this claim so he did not finish the verses in Isaiah 61 that would suggest that his purpose went beyond spiritual renewal of the people but also their actual liberation from Roman oppression. Isaiah 61:1b-3 says: "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair." A full reading of Isaiah 61 will show the political implications of Jesus ministry in opposition to the

Josephus clearly states, based on the biblical story Moses wrote that Abraham himself went down to Ta-Mera to sit at the feet of the black Kamau professors and priests so as **"...to become an auditor of their priests."** In other words, he went to Ta-Mera to be an *auditor* = "to hear" = "to learn" = "to become a initiate" of Kamau cosmogony, i.e. metaphysical, scientific, philosophical and theological knowledge in order to measure Kamau learning against that which he had learned in Ur of Chaldeans

as a *Sumerian black-head*. Josephus then states that the Kamau  = *Nesut Bit* = *The Fari or Per Ur* = *Great House* = *Pharaoh of Upper and Lower Ta-Mera*, gave Abraham "leave to enter into conversation with the most learned among the Egyptians....He [Abraham] communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for before Abram came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt and from thence to the Greeks also."⁴⁶³ Here Josephus is letting it slip that Abraham was a Sumerian priest with a Sumerian knowledge base of science; and obviously was trying to measure what he knew of science and technology with what the Egyptians knew. However, Josephus is making claims for Abraham here that is beyond the pale. One can hardly believe, nor need we, that the Kamau People waited thousands of years for a mere Sumerian priest to bring them such knowledge about mathematics and astronomy, because thousands of years before Abraham was even born the Kamau People were using advanced mathematics and astronomical science to create the foundations of their material civilization. For example, one of the oldest mathematical works, the *Rhine Mathematical Papyrus*, was based on a copy which had its origins during the Old Kingdom. The conventional chronology puts this work sometime between 2650 B.C.E. and 2150 B.C.E. Abraham, according to the conventional chronology was born during the late part of this period in 2166 B.C.E. and therefore could not been more than 16 years old when it was completed. In addition, Abraham did not arrive in Canaan until 2091, and so was in Egypt sometime between this period, when he was around 76 years old and the birth of Ishmael (2080 B.C.E.) and/or the birth of Isaac (2066), when he was near one hundred years old. Abraham, if he knew mathematics at all, could only have learned it from the Egyptian mathematical font of knowledge, which was already well established. The mathematical theorems noted in the *Rhine Mathematical Papyrus* were in full use at least three-and-one half centuries to five centuries before Abraham's time.⁴⁶⁴ In respect to astronomy, E.A. Wallis Budge, who with Josephus agrees that the Greeks got this knowledge from the Chaldeans [which people then supposedly gave it to the Kamau] had to admit that *the Zodiac of Dendera was discovered in Ta-Mera*, i.e. Egypt. He claims the originators of this astronomical chart to be the Babylonians and or Sumerians, who passed it on to the Egyptians during

Roman Imperium that final ended his life with the charged that he was the "King of the Jews."

⁴⁶³ Josephus, *Antiquities Of The Jews*, trans. by William Whiston (Kregel Publications, 1960), 33. It should also be noted here that despite E.A. Wallis Budge's usual alliance with the Ancient Model of Antiquity over the Aryan Model of Antiquity [Bernal, *Black Athena*, vol. 1], giving the Kamau People and their civilization primacy over Greek civilization, says the contrary to Josephus, and even goes farther than Josephus, positing the idea that the Kamau received the knowledge of astrology from the Greeks, who learned that science and the signs of the Zodiac from the Babylonians or Sumerians, i.e. the Zodiac of Dendera, and then they, the Greeks gave this knowledge to the Kamau late, very late in their history. How anyone could seriously entertain such a notion is much beyond me. See E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods Of The Egyptians*, vol. II, pp. 314-315.

⁴⁶⁴ Adolf Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), 364; David M. Rohl, *Pharaohs and Kings: A Biblical Quest* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1995), pp. 24, 30; John H. Walton, "Chronology of the Patriarchs," in *Charts of the Old Testament: Chronological Background* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), p. 15.

the Ptolemaic period.⁴⁶⁵See the Getty images below:



TEMPLE OF HATHOR, DENDERA, EGYPT

"The main temple was built by Ptolemy XII and nearly completed by Queen Cleopatra VII, around 54 to 20 BCE. There is evidence of temples and other structures that date back all the way to 2500 BCE. Hathor is the Egyptian sky goddess of sexual love, fertility, music and dancing." **Hathor Temple – Dandarah, Egypt -Atlas Obscura,** (May 25, 2018).



The ceiling inside the Hypostyle Hall of the Temple of Hathor contains vividly painted scenes and hieroglyphic inscriptions relating to astronomy, astrology, cosmology and the zodiac - The ceiling inside the Hypostyle Hall of the Temple of Hathor contains vividly painted scenes and hieroglyphic inscriptions relating to astronomy, astrology, cosmology and the zodiac. Ritual procession of gods and zodiacal beings sailing on the Sun God Res's sacred barque as it journeys along the sun's path. Egypt. Ancient Egyptian. Graeco Roman period 304 BC 395 AD. Denderah. (Photo by Werner Forman/Universal Images Group/Getty Images)



ORION AND SIRIUS

⁴⁶⁵ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Vol. 2 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), 314-315.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

PSYCHIC-SPIRITUAL GENETICS BASED ON THE EGYPTIAN ORIGINAL

We propose to present in this chapter a paradigm (model) for the psycho-spiritual genetic place and connection of the *Osirian traveler* within *Celestial History* in fact *how persons who are followers of Osiris = Horus = Jesus Christ* can travel *safely* through the perils of *Time and Eternity* avoiding as it were those human persons influenced by demonic experience or coming under such influence themselves. Paul declared that “*we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,*”(Ephesians 6:12, NIV). And Jesus suggested the way through this darkness was through him as the incarnate “*way, the truth and the life,*” for the interior traveler from this side of eternity to that of the next. There is hardly anyone whether religious or not that is not moved or knows something about Psalms 23, especially when it says in verse 4 (NIV): “*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*” What people may not know or understand is that this pericope and this verse is talking about a psychic-spiritual interior journey of the *psychic mind* or what Ethiopian Orthodox Christian philosophers like *DabtaraZara Yacob* (ጳጳሴ ዘረያዕቆብ, b. 1592 C.E.) in his philosophical treatise *Hatata* (አተታ) would call the *rational heart*, where the soul itself goes through the dark caverns of demonic experience that lurks within humans, in human society, and/or wherever the human personality travels whether on this side of eternity or in the next. The “way” through these hidden and dark dwelling places has been the subject of mystics, theologians, philosophers, priests and even psychologists, but still we have not learned all that we should know about the journey because that knowledge important as it is for our contemporary society assailed is with demonic experiences in every conceivable form negatively affecting our *life-world* and *lived-experience*. The negative effects are not limited to war, racism, or genocide but include a whole range of evils that are destructive of the human psychic mind and human society. Therefore this project (focused on the ontology of evil and its varied aspects) is not an academic one but one of critical concern to all humans disturbed about the moral and spiritual advancement of human society that is now dwarfed by the brilliance of modern technology, but not yet gone very far in advancing positive human behavior; but rather delights and indulges in various forms of demonic experience and its pleasures centered on self-gratification. We do not intend here to map out every aspect of the journey which in itself is primarily psychic-spiritual in nature. Those aspects of the journey have already been mapped out by Jeremy Naydler in his *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (1996). What we hope to do here is provide a model of how each individual comes equipped for this journey *even before they were conceived in their mother’s womb*, in other words the *innate psycho-spiritual genetic capacity* to travel through time and eternity given to each person first born in the *Earth of Eternity* prior to their physical birth in the *Earth of Time*. There is a divine cosmic connection between us and God that can never be broken. It was E. A. Wallis Budge who said that the Egyptians believed that

even a man’s *name* =  *ren* meaning that which characterizes his fundamental essence, i.e. which says who he is and is to be; that part of him which is bound together inseparably with the totality of his fundamental essences, his *natural body, spiritual body, heart, his soul and his form, which according to the Egyptians exists in heaven* with God who made him and keeps him connected to God even

while he is in the *Earth of Time*.⁴⁶⁶ There are some Biblical scriptures that support these Egyptians conceptual notions:

But you have come to Mount Zion to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, *whose names are written in heaven*. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, . . .” (Hebrews 12:22-23, NIV).

The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. *The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world* will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come. (Revelation 17:8, NIV).

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the *hidden manna*. I will also give him a *white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it*. (Revelation 2:17, NIV).

Notice in Revelation 17:8 above it is implied by the biblical writer that the *saved* ones (not the lost ones) i.e. *Christians* or (in the Egyptian Original) *the Osirian travelers* in the *Earth of Time* have their *names written in the Book of Life before the Creation of the world*! In other words, if I may be so bold given the Egyptian conception that a man’s name is part of his essence, i.e. his immortal personality and being, the *Finger of God* has somehow *spiritually inscribed* on the heart and soul of each person their *unique psychic-spiritual genetic make-up*. This suggests that we are *spiritually branded* as belonging to our Creator and Maker as *the Elect* and *given purpose before birth* in the *Earth of Time*. God signifies this truth by saying to Jeremiah: “*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations*” (Jeremiah 1:4-5, NRSV). As we shall see (using the Egyptian Original texts for the most part) that in the *first birth in heaven*, i.e. the *Earth of Eternity* we are *encoded spiritually* with all that we are, i.e. our being and all that we are to do according to God’s will and purpose for each human person as we travel through *Time and Eternity*. The Egyptians put emphasis on our being an Osirian traveler, i.e. a *time/eternity traveler who ultimately ends up returning to God* for the Judgment (giving account for all that we have done in the flesh whether good or evil). This journey is completed in the *third moment* of our departure from the *Earth of Time* as we *return and journey back safely to the Father*. This is the reason for the funeral preparations and *utterances* found in the so-called *Book of the Dead*,

i.e., the  *Per-em-Heru* or *Book of Coming Forth into the Day*. The Egyptians believed that the human person *came from the Father by means of the differentiation of his Holy Essence* and that we must give account to Him for the gift of human/divine life (e.g. “breath of life” from the Hebrew perspective that made us a “Living Soul” or “rational soul”). God, the Father vouchsafed this *rational living soul* to us as stewards under His original command in *the Garden* to “*subdue the Earth and be fruitful and multiply*.” The Egyptian *Per-em-Heru* or what is erroneously called the “Book of the Blessed Dead” (the B.B.D) gives expression to the *doctrine of the differentiation*. In this divine process of creation both the gods (*the heavenly created beings*) and human/divine beings (*spiritual being clothed in flesh*) were given birth. This process of differentiation does not include birds and animals since we

⁴⁶⁶ Budge, *Book of the Dead*, p. lxix.

are the only “living souls” given the divine “beath of life” from God Himself and “made in God’s image.” Accordingly, from the Christian self-understanding we were created just “a little lower than the heavenly beings,” the Elohim or angels (Psalms 8:5) and according to Jesus “worth more than many sparrows” in God’s eyes. (Matthew 10:31). The B.B.D. can be regarded as the *summary gospel of the Egyptian doctrine of God*, and the origins of His eternal being out of the **Nu** or **Nun** (i.e. Celestial Black Void or Living Waters) as the Creator God. The B.B.D. states in Utterance (Re) XVII:

Speak, Universal Master; he says after having become: It is I the becoming of Khepera, when I became the becoming of those who became after my becoming, for numerous are the desires coming out of my mouth, when the Earth had not yet been formed, when the sons of the Earth were not yet made, . . . no place was found for me where I could stand up. I found my heart that which should be useful to me: and in the void that (would serve me) as foundation, when I was alone, when I had not begotten Shu (air, empty space), when I had not yet spat out Tefnut (water), when no other divinity that would have been made with me had yet become. (Therefore) I conceived myself in my own heart and the becoming of my numerous becoming’s of my becoming’s in the becoming’s of the children, and in the becoming’s of their children. . . . Says my father Nun: “They have weakened my eye (my consciousness, my attention) being them since the secular periods that have distanced themselves from me” [meaning the periods have passed, during the stage of the creation of the universe in potentiality]. *After having been only one God, it is three Gods* that I became for myself and for Shu, certainly, and Tefnut came out of Tefnut gave birth to Geb [the Earth, my insertion] and Nut [the Sky, my insertion], Geb and Nut begat Osiris, . . . Set, Isis, and Nephthys; from the womb, one after another, they gave birth to their [children] who then multiplied on the earth.⁴⁶⁷

In the text to follow after some more foundational statements I present by means of my theory of spiritual genetics explicitly what the Kamau-Egyptians only implied, signified and/or inferred in their doctrine of differentiation, that is, how we *came to be* and why we are imprinted, that is *encoded with God’s own essence, made in His image* (Genesis 1:27) but additionally why we innately know it but are not completely or fully conscious of the fact that our being, our purpose was given to us at our birth in Heaven, the *Earth of Eternity* before we were born. I suggest by working backward through the Egyptian texts related to this idea that when we passed from the *Earth of Eternity* through the *veil* of the *Earth of Time* we came through in a state of *psycho-spiritual amnesia*, i.e. *forgetfulness*.

In this chapter, I will clearly show that the Egyptians believed that we came in this way forgetting who we are and our purpose; yet all of that innate spiritual knowledge was/is kept safe and contained in our psycho-spiritual make-up, our *spiritual-genetic encoding*. It was because of the Egyptians innate understanding of our human nature as psychic-spiritual beings that caused them to produce the *Pert-em-hru* (“the Coming Forth in the Light”) or the B.B.D. (as we have called it) so that they as *Osirian* (interior space) *travelers* would have the psycho-spiritual weapons i.e. *utterances* that would prevent them from *forgetting their hearts*, that is, their psychic mind (i.e. rational mind or rational heart or soul or personality = who they are, where they came from, and where they are going, etc.) on the return journey (we call in this project the *U-turn of Death*) so that they would arrive safely at the *place of examination*, the *Hall of Judgment* before the great Egyptian God, Osiris. Because of this psycho-spiritual state of the Osirian traveler both coming to the Earth of Time from the Earth

⁴⁶⁷ Anta-Diop, *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*, Translated from the French by Yaa-Lengi Meema Ngemi (Lawrence Hill Books, 1991), pp. 328-329.

of Eternity and going back to it *a book of life is required* so that the traveler does not forget their way or *the way* and brought safely through the *Valley of the Shadow of Death* into the Day back to the Father of Lights. The Hebrew-Jewish revelation in the Bible was meant to show us *the way*, the meaning of our being and purpose in relationship to God because in the psychic impact of passing through the *Vale of Time and Eternity* we *forgot* what God told us to do by means of *spiritual genetic encoding* when we arrived from the *Earth of Eternity* to the *Earth of Time*. Ephesians 5:14b (NIV) talks about this kind of *awakening* of the psychic-mind for the Children of Light: “*Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.*” However, the Egyptians were more interested in producing a *book of revelation* (i.e. *Book of the Blessed Dead*) for the return journey from the *Earth of Time* back to the *Earth of Eternity* the place *from which we originally came*. This was a major concern for them because they knew that at death they would be subject *again* to the danger of *spiritual amnesia* described as *being shipwrecked* so that they could not find their way back to the Eternal Father in Heaven (i.e. for them Osiris-Ra). The object-goal of the Osirian traveler using the revelatory road map contained in the “Book of the Blessed Dead,” is to walk through the psycho-spiritual dangers lurking in portions of *Amen-ta*, the Hidden-land, the Biblical *valley of the shadow of death* whose rivers and streams (of the psychic mind) “were filled with hostile beings which sought to bar his progress, and lucky indeed was that soul which triumphed over all obstacles, and reached the City of God.”⁴⁶⁸ There is little doubt from the perspective of the Egyptian that this horrific journey of the Osirian traveler is no chance event for his entire being as a creature that is made by God is kept in a divine *Register* called the *Tablet of Destiny* kept in *Amen-ta* by the Judge of the Blessed Dead, Osiris.⁴⁶⁹ In Christian terms this scenario is based on Revelation 20:12 (KJV): “*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works*”). A dialogic map of the soul of the Osirian traveler will come later in the text. In the meantime, Revelation 2:17 suggests that in our becoming the “New Being” in Christ,⁴⁷⁰ our *transformed person as the Osirian traveler through time and eternity* will culminate in receiving a complimentary *new name* written on a *white stone* and the text says that name will be “known only to him who receives it.” This is parallel to Egyptian theology and cosmology; the idea that the *New Being* or the *psychic-spiritual Osirian traveler* who has arrived before the judgment seat of Osiris, God, Christ Jesus to receive his reward will be given *power over his new being*, that is, his heart, mind, and his *immortal personality such that no one else will have power or control over him through the hiddenness of his name*. Egyptians and other Africans believed that if a person knew your *secret name*, the essence of your psychic-spiritual personality they also would acquire power over your person, heart, soul, and/or mind. The legend of Ra and Isis in the **BBD** illustrates this Egyptian conception. According to the text Isis is the goddess, that is, *Sirius*, the *MorningStar* and she is skilled in the *Words of Power* or *Heka* and who esteemed the gods and the blessed dead higher than she did that of men and so *rebelled in her heart or mind* against the divine authority of Ra and thought that if she could be like Ra who had power both in heaven and earth she could make herself the mistress of earth, i.e. to gain control over these regions and beings and rule men as she pleased. However, in order to do so she had to gain power and control over Ra himself as the first order of business in a *celestial coup*

⁴⁶⁸ Budge, *The Book of the Dead*, London edition of 1900, 137.

⁴⁶⁹ Budge, pp. 378-379.

⁴⁷⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. one (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), pp. 49-50.

d'etat. We have already pointed out a similar biblical story in Isaiah 14:12-17 about Satan called in that text the *Morning Star* and *Son of the Dawn*, apparently the male aspect of the star Sirius, which rose just ahead of the *dawn of the Sun*, just as Isis is the female aspect of Sirius. In the text of Isaiah Satan says *in his heart* that “*I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.*”

How will Isis achieve this result as well, that is *becoming like the Most High* which is the same thing Satan suggested to Eve to be *like God, knowing good and evil* (Genesis 3:5)? In the BBD text she has to *know the name of Ra* in order to gain control and power over him. This she does by making a *sacred serpent* that bites Ra poisoning him so that the *fire of life* begins to drain from his body. Ra in his terror assembles the gods to discover what has happened to him; find out who did this to him and perhaps discover a cure through the use of *Words of Power*; However, none could help him accept Isis who is of course the culprit. In a vain attempt to cure himself Ra spews out the fact which Isis already knew that the basis of his power and authority was his name *hidden in his body* so that none could have power over him. Isis who the text declares has skill in the use of the *Words of Power* and has within herself the *breath of life* offers to help Ra through incantations, but she of course cannot do it unless Ra tells her his name! Ra is reluctant to blurt out his secret name because all the gods would know it and then they would all have power over him. Nevertheless Ra agrees out of his extreme pain to allow himself “*to be searched out by Isis,*” and “*shall come forth my name from my body into her body,*” and so Ra is saved and Isis gains the power she sought over the Creator-God of the Egyptian *Orisha*.⁴⁷¹ Does this story signify the hidden name given to the one who overcomes (e.g. Christian, Osirian Traveler, saint of God, etc.) written on the *white stone* that no one knows but them in Revelation 2:17? Does it have its origin in Egyptian religion? It seems that it indeed does. The late scholar Gerald Massey states:

On the judgment day, in the Ritual, those that overcame are those who passed in triumph through the searching examination of the judgment-hall. As we read in Revelation, “he that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith. To him that overcometh, to him will I give the hidden manna, and *I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it*” (ch. 2,17). This was given to the initiate both in the totemic ceremonies and religious mysteries. In the mysteries of Amenta a white stone, or “pillar of crystal” is given to the initiate. As he comes forth in triumph from the examination he is asked what the judges have awarded him, and he replies, “a flame of fire and a pillar of crystal” (ch. 125).⁴⁷²

We take note here that the *flame of fire* associated with the possession and gift of white stone, the *pillar of crystal* that contained the secret name of the Osirian traveler seems the same as the *fire of life* that was painfully leaving the body of Ra and was in the same way related to the secret name of Ra. The flame of fire then could only mean the power one has over his own *spiritualized being* by receiving and keeping secret his *new name*. This could be the name given to each human soul prior to passing from Heaven, the Earth of Eternity into the Earth of Time. This gift name that gives us power over our own being (i.e. the *flame of fire* or *fire of life* breathed into us by God) is *hidden*

⁴⁷¹ Budge. *The Gods of the Egyptians: Studies in Egyptian Mythology*. Vol. I (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969), pp. 372-387.

⁴⁷² Gerald Massey. *Ancient Egypt The Light Of The World*. Vol. II (Baltimore, MD: Black Classic Press, 1992, first published 1907), pp. 696-697.

within each of our spiritual genetic codes but lost as a result of *psychic-spiritual amnesia* as we pass from the Earth of Eternity to the Earth of Time. However, on the return journey this knowledge is restored to our memory as suggested by the imagery in the text of Revelation 2:17 and the text of the BBD by means of the imagery and symbolism of the *white stone* or *the pillar of crystal*. I suggest here the hypothesis (considering what we have said above about the importance of a person's name in

Egyptian religion) that the  , *ren*, or the *divine name* of the human person is the *psycho-spiritual genetic* link between heaven and earth that keeps us anchored to the Father and that makes us immortal and keeps our person from disintegrating into the feared *nothingness* or becoming one with the anti-God, anti-human *No-Thing* that opposes God and the completion of our deiform transformation, the object and aim of *Evil* through imbibing the pleasures of *demonic experience*. Perhaps the reader will think that we are here stretching the truth contained in both texts, that is, making the *white stone* of Revelation the same as the *pillar of crystal* in the BBD (Book of the Blessed Dead, or the Ritual as Budge calls it). In fact, we *are not*. The actual text in the BBD reads, "*What then did give they to thee? A flame it was of fire, together with a tablet of crystal*," as translated by

E. A. Wallis Budge.⁴⁷³ The Egyptian text,      transliterated is *uatenthehen*. *Uat* means "*tablet*" and there is no problem with that because it correlates well with the idea, we have presented concerning a person's *psycho-spiritual identity*, that is, their *ren* or "divine name" is *written* on the object they are given during their return journey to the Father or judgment seat of Osiris. But is *Thehen* translated as "*crystal*" the same as the "*white stone*" of the Revelation 2:17? The answer is

yes. The Egyptian phrase *testhehen*,    is translated "*a sparkling stone*" but can be translated "*a white precious stone*," as suggested by the cognate meaning of its derivatives within the same semantic domain.⁴⁷⁴ The Greeks seem to have borrowed the Egyptian word for stone with the word *θεῖον*, *Theion* (Egyptian, *Thehen* as above) which instead of being translated as a "white precious" or "sparkling stone" in the New Testament becomes a "*burning hot stone*" or "*fiery red stones*" translated in Luke 17:29 as "*fire and brimstone*."

However, the "*burning red stone*" in the N.T. corresponds in the BBD to the "*flame of fire*,"   , *set-t* meaning "*divine fire*" given to the Osirian traveler. Taking our queue from the N.T. which interprets the Egyptian "white stone" as a "red stone" we can surmise in the BBD that the Osirian traveler is given both a "red stone of fire" and a "white sparkling stone" both together. It seems that the N.T. has confused the imagery of the BBD and taking the Egyptian word for *white stone* and giving it the meaning for *fiery red stone*, nevertheless showing that the Greek word *Theiou* and Egyptian word *Thehen* have been blended into both ideas. Confusing the matter even more Revelation 2:17 does not even use the word *Theiou* so that we can make a clear connection with Egyptian *Thehen* but uses the Greek common purely descriptive phrase for *stone* and *white*, that is, *ψηφονλευχὴν*, *psephonleuchen* which has no grammatical link to the BBD original at all; even though Luke 17:29 remains a witness to the fact that some N.T. writers had sources that allowed them to carry forth the Egyptian conception of the red and white stone with their blended meaning between the Greek *Theiou* and the Egyptian *Thehen*. So how do we make sense of this confusion? There is no sure way

⁴⁷³ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Dover edition, 1967, p.208.

⁴⁷⁴ Budge, *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, vol. II, p. 844.

accept to say that while Luke 17:29 holds on to the Egyptian Original expression in its correct grammatical form and partial meaning, Revelation 2:17 merely paraphrases it with Greek common terms and phrases hiding what the true original word relied upon. This would be something akin to how English bibles paraphrase the Greek original (with explaining in a note that there is another reading) which should never be relied on for technical grammatical meaning and form and which cannot be translated back in the original text form because there is no word-to-word correspondence. This blended form/meaning of the Egyptian *Thehen* by the Greek *Theiou* in the N.T. may be understood in another way and help us understand why the Osirian traveler was given both *a flame of fire* and *a sparkling white stone*.

Jeremy Naydler has an interesting theory that the laws of the physical world for the Osirian traveler, the blessed dead making his/her way back to God are not the same as the dream/vision state of the psycho-spiritual world that the Osirian traveler is passing through.⁴⁷⁵ He says elsewhere that the unfortunate traveler who has not breathed *ma'at*, that is, "truth" while in the Earth of Time will in the psycho-spiritual state of the so-called *Duat* or "Underworld" that is *airless* experience the atmosphere as *suffocating*.⁴⁷⁶ If we apply this conception to the Osirian traveler receiving both a *fiery red stone* in hand as well as a *sparkling white stone* (using the N.T. as translator) we can see why in the N.T. the Egyptian word *Thehen* for "white sparkling stone" becomes the Greek blended form *Theiou* for "fiery red stone" because those who transmitted this conception blended its form (not necessarily the Lukan writer) understood that when applied to the psycho-spiritual state the person (our Osirian traveler) would experience the touch of the *fiery red stone* (which *should burn his hand*) as the cool touch of the *sparkling white stone*. If this is how he or she experiences this stone during his or her examination by the gods *he or she had passed the test of life with a clear conscience* and has led a life of *Ma'at* or "truth" that enables them to handle the *fiery red stone* and experience it only as a *cool sparkling white stone*. This would mean that the Osirian Traveler's *conscience is not on fire or can be set on fire from a life of wrongdoing* while living in the **Earth of Time**.

Completing our thought on the biblical passages suggesting the journey and the link between the Osirian traveler and his name that is "written in heaven," Hebrews 12:22-23 will show that the Osirian traveler (the blessed dead, the living one, the saved Christian) has arrived at his or her journey's end at the City of God. They will stand before "the judge of all men," that is, Osiris, the Judge of the Dead in the House of Ma'at, or House of Truth. The statement "you have come to Mount Zion" is the City of God, where is the Judgment Hall of *Ma'at*. The outcome of this journey is by no means guaranteed in the tortured psychic mind of the Osirian traveler but made sure because his/her name was *already* written in heaven. There is a doctrinal statement in the *Papyrus of Ani* that underscores the fact that the name, soul, personality of the Osirian traveler is already written or established in Heaven, that is, the *psychic-spiritual genetic essence* of the Osirian traveler is and has always been linked to heaven. According to E. A. Wallis Budge this idea is expressed differently in different dynastic periods, but the doctrine is the same:

⁴⁷⁵ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, p. 221.

⁴⁷⁶ Naydler, p. 237.

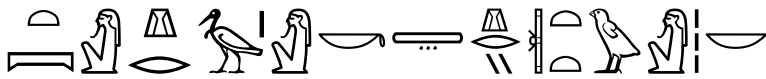
5th DYNASTY (2498-2345 BC)

1. 
 baar pet sat ar ta
 [The] soul to Heaven [the] body to Earth.

6th DYNASTY (2345-2181 BC)

2. 
 mu - k er pet Kha - k er ta
 Thy essence is in Heaven, thy body to Earth

PTOLEMAIC PERIOD (305-30 BC)

3. 
 pet kherba - k ta kheri tut - k
 Heaven hath thy soul Earth hath thy body⁴⁷⁷

The Osirian traveler makes a declaration of wisdom when he finally arrives, that is, when all things are finally made clear to him that *he has been safe all along* he understands now that his name has been written in the *Register*, the *Tablet of Destiny*, the *Book of Life* and that Osiris or Jesus(the Horus-Christ) is the owner of that book and the *only one* who is able or worthy to open its seals [Revelation 5:1-12] for:

I know the god who dwelleth therein. Who is this? It is Osiris. . . the god who dwelleth in Amentet is the phallus [power of] of Ra, wherewith he had union with himself . . . I am the Benu bird which is in Anu . . . I am the keeper of the volume of the book (i.e., the Register, or the Tablet of Destiny) of things which have been made, and of the things which shall be made. Who is this? It is Osiris. . . Others say that the things which have been made are Eternity, and the things which shall be made are Everlastingness, and that Eternity is the Day, and Everlastingness the Night. ⁴⁷⁸

Not only does the Osirian traveler or Christian know that he or she is safe but for the first time they feel *complete* and *whole* because their *soul is now completely re-united with their psycho-spiritual being or the Self*. Apparently what happened to them in their journey from the *Earth of Eternity* to the *Earth of time* was a process of *psycho-spiritual differentiation* or *distance from the Self*, that is, a spiritual and emotive *hole in their soul* used by God to remind the human person that something is missing and ultimately to lure them toward Self rediscovery by making them confront Evil ever lurking in the rational heart/mind to devour their very soul. This could be the same thing that God experiences in the process of Creation through *differential of His essence which causes a feeling of wanting to reunite with that which appears lost but really never can be, and so causes a need for fellowship with the Self once again we hue-mans interpret as love in divine communion and therefore oneness of the Trinity* (Divine Love between God, the Father, God, the Son, and God, the

⁴⁷⁷ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. lvii-lviii.

⁴⁷⁸ Budge, *The Book of the Dead*, pp. 379-380.

Holy Spirit, *God One*, i.e. *God, the One, God made One in Love*). Certainly the Osirian traveler experiences this process of psycho-spiritual distance from the Self even as we infer that God does (in terms that process theology would find congenial) and therefore God longs for and experiences joy at the prospect of re-union with His human creation. It is not just a re-union between the psycho-spiritual self a reunion with God Himself who the is true divine essence the human Self belongs too. This is the final divine-human reunion described by Teresa of Avila in her “Seventh Dwelling Place” of the *Interior Castle* (1577) where she mentions that the interior traveler has finally acquired the truth because the scales have fallen from their eyes. They now know what was hidden from them and so has an awakening in reunion with God. Teresa of Avila states:

In this seventh dwelling place the union comes about in a different way: Our good God now desires to remove the scales from the soul's eyes and let it see and understand, although in a strange way, something of the favor He grants it. When the soul is brought into that dwelling place, the Most Blessed Trinity, all three Persons, through an intellectual vision, is revealed to it through a certain representation of the truth.⁴⁷⁹

The revelation of the “truth” in Teresa of Avila is the same as the revelation of *ma’at* for the Osirian interior traveler of the BBD. However, before this final revelation that makes one whole in union with God, the interior traveler in the BBD has an experience of *psycho-spiritual distance* from the *Self* resulting in the ultimate culminating experience the Osirian traveler has that can only be described as *psycho-spiritual amnesia*, that is, *the forgetting of the self*, a *terrifying prospect* for the traveler who now knows in part who he/she is. Here is what the Egyptian doctrine suggests is one of the primary goals the Osirian traveler has besides being found innocent in the Judgment Hall of Osiris. Two passages read together contains both ideas of *reunion* withand innocence before the *Three-and-One God*, that is,  or the *Neteru* :

1. 
i - nek ba - k am neteru
 Cometh to thee thy soul which is amongthe gods.

2. 
uabba - k am neteru
 Pure is thy soul among the gods.⁴⁸⁰

The Egyptian view that the Osirian traveler is brought home to port and will not be shipwrecked on the way is certainly the same as that of the Christian believer in the resurrection and the life, including the doctrine of *once saved, always saved*, i.e. **doctrine of preservation** as assured in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (NIV): “Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He

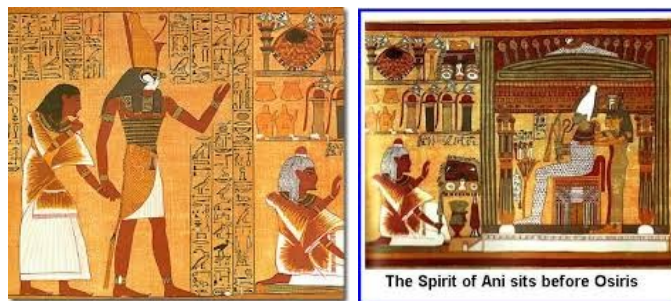
⁴⁷⁹ Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle* trans. by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 175.

⁴⁸⁰ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, p. lxxv.

anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." This same biblical writer connects this idea with the *resurrection and the life*, where the Christian traveler is marked or sealed by the Holy Spirit; and so comesto their final heavenly resting place, a place by the way that has already been *made eternal in the heavens*. The writer says in Corinthians 5:1-5 (NIV):

Now we know that if the earthy tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwellings, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV) says: *"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession --- to the praise of his glory."* The phrase "you also were included in Christ," is made clearer in 2:6-7 suggesting that while we are here in the *Earth of Time* we are *already translated into the heavens because we are in Christ* or as in the Egyptian original *devotees and owned by Osiris*. That verse says: "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus." One final notion or correlation exists in Hebrews 12:22-23 (NIV) and the BBD. This text says: *"You [the Osirian Traveler] have come to God [Osiris-Ra], the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect [the blessed dead], to Jesus [Horus-Christ] the mediator of a new covenant"* (correlative insertions in this text are mine). In Hebrews who are these *spirits of righteous men made perfect*? We have already indicated that they are the *blessed dead*. However, they are more than that in the BBD. The N.T. phrase *spirits made perfect* suggests a correlation with the BBD notion of the *shining ones*, that is, human/divine deiform (spiritually) spirits denoted by their hair now being turned white.



The Osirian Traveler like Ani above whose hair was black as he is led to Osiris-Ra by the Horus-Christ is now in the second depiction with white hair, signifying that he is now a *perfected deiform transformed spirit*. The Osirian Traveler (according to the Egyptian Original) has now gone through their trial and examination and now are perfected in *Ma'at* or *Truth* and who are now called , *maa-kheru*, those *declared to be true of voice* as they sit before Osiris-Ra in the Hall of

Judgment. They are *declared* to be innocent (although they are not completely so but by divine grace) are held not guilty and justified before Osiris-Ra. They are *justified by faith and declared innocent by the blood of the lamb!* These are the *shining ones*, the ones who are the *none-shipwrecked made perfect* and who have made it *to shore, the other side of the river, having safely crossed over the River Jordan*. They are the *shining ones* Jesus spoke about saying:

The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. As the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather out of his Kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and those who do evil, and he will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be weeping and the gnashing of teeth. *Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* (Matthew 13:39b-43, EOB).

The righteous one (i.e. the Osirian Traveler “righteous” made perfect by faith) must be so in his/her “heart” or “soul” (i.e. psychic-mind) as Job is reminded by one of his erstwhile friends come to “comfort” him in his sorrow. Zophar states:

If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear: Because thou shalt forget thy misery and remember it as waters that pass away: *And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.* And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety. (Job 11:13-18, KJV).

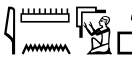
Another salient idea is manifest in the final deiform transformation of the “righteous” shining one who is brought to shore safely after his/her heart is weighed in the balance with the use of the Egyptian term , *maa-kheru* in the BBD. It is not only what is in your heart that brings the Osirian Traveler safely to shore through the Valley of the Shadow of death. His or her heart must combine this with the truth of what one says with the tongue or voice (i.e. *confession*, where it says in Romans 10:9 “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth that the Lord Jesus, and shalt believed in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*” (KJV)). The hieroglyphic

word , *wedjem* means *riverbank* or *tongue of land* and the , *kheru* means *oar* and depicts a rudder or a ship or *that which guides one to shore* and also means *voice* or *speech* and reminds one of a statement by the author of the Book of James, where the voice (true voice) is the means by which men are guided safely to shore or knocked off course by that same voice or use of unwise or boastful words or speech set on fire by hell itself, which influences the emotive psychic-mind to seek demonic pleasures of MONEY, POWER and/or SEX.

Likewise, the tongue is a little member, but it boasts great things! See how a small fire can spread to a large forest! The tongue is also a fire! Among all our members, the tongue is a world of wrongdoing which defiles the whole body. It sets on fire the course of nature and it is set on fire by the fires of hell. (James 3:5-6, EOB).

The notion of *psycho-genetic spiritual amnesia* in my project calls for additional comment and some proof. Here we wish to present the textual grammatical evidence from the BBD or “Book of the Blessed Dead” or the “Ritual” as it is sometimes called to show that such a notion existed in the minds of the Egyptians and is not something that this writer made up as a fanciful and fantastic notion. Later in the text we will present a pictographic summary of the same notion. There is some evidence of this notion in the biblical texts that we have already mentioned. Prime among these is Ephesians 5:14 that says “*Wake up, O Sleeper,*” and 2 Corinthians 4:4 about “*the god of this age,*” has put a veil over the eyes or minds of men to keep them from the light of truth, in this case so they will not remember their *psychic-spiritual genetic imprinting*, that is, their *mission, purpose* in the *Earth of Time* and the fact of deiform *new being* given them by God at their *first birth* in the *Earth of Eternity*, that is Heaven. However, we hold that the BBD is more explicit and it shows that the Egyptians believed when the human soul passes from this mortal life into immortality the soul experiences *psycho-spiritual amnesia* during this transfer, that is, they forget what one has done either good or bad (one of the greatest dangers in the land of *Amen-ta* that may keep you from finding your way safely to the Great Hall of Judgment).

We had this phenomenological experience when we first pierced the *veil of forgetfulness* coming from the *Earth of Eternity* into the *Earth of Time* where we forget our purpose and aim given to us by God. Apparently, we experience psycho-spiritual amnesia going in both directions from being immortal to mortal and from being mortal back to being immortal. In all of this we are the consummate *spiritual time travelers* that no conception of Jules Verne’s earthly time machine can rival. We shall also show that this conception or notion existed in the reverse among the ancient Greeks who borrowed it from the Egyptians as seen in Plato’s *theory of recollection*, which he gave as proof of the *immortality of the soul*. For Plato the immortal soul *must have existed* in the realm of the *Forms*, the *Ideal Principle of Being* before each soul came into the mortal realm. In conjunction with this discussion on the *theory of recollection* we hope to explain the meaning of *spiritual age veils* and *memory veils* and their connection with the **static** nature of *calendrical time dated systems* and their *date points* we call either *future time* and or *elapsed time*. We will see that eternity has its final say and while we try and conform our lives to the clock and to the calendar in fact the events that happens, which are occasions of good or evil that arise in our lives and its length are governed by an *eternal time clock* which is *predetermined*. These events or occasions are *pre-set* in terms of our *spiritual age* and the *memory veils* that we pass through we mistakenly call *dejavu* (e.g. “I been here before!”). We begin to see (with Redfield) that indeed *there are no coincidences* and that every event and occasion as we experience both temporal and spiritual phenomenon has meaning for which we have been *preconditioned* in our emotive psychic-mind by other or prior events and/or occasions by means of the *lure of God*.

The *veil of forgetfulness* in the Egyptian understanding of *psycho-spiritual amnesia* is seen clearly in *Reor Utterance 27* of the *Pert-em-Hru*, specifically “The Chapter of the Heart Not Being Carried Off.” It is within that chapter one can discern in the grammatical usage the Egyptian understanding their fear of *psycho-spiritual amnesia* as the Osirian traveler passes through the *veil of forgetfulness* safely from this life into the next. The Osirian traveler goes from the *Earth of Time* into the *Earth of Eternity*, that is, into,  *Amen-ta* the “hidden land”, “the west”, “the abode of the dead”, “the Dead-land” where the Osirian Traveler can hide and so find  *Amen-t*, *sanctuary* (safety) for his *heart, mind* and *soul* (his/her psychic-mind from torture, e.g. a guilty

conscience, self-recrimination, absence of peace of mind) in this *hidden place*. Safe from who? Safe from  the **Amen**, the *hidden one*, or *Evil One*, the *accuser* or *prosecutor* called the *Devil* or *ha-satan*. Psycho-spiritual amnesia, that is, having one's *heart and or mind being carried off* (lost) was one of the great evils and dangers along the path of the Osirian traveler had to go from this life into the next. To have that happen could cause the Osirian traveler to lose his/her way before one was able to reach the Great Hall of Judgment and the hope of being declared justified as a truth speaker before the Egyptian god Osiris. In Egyptian cosmology and theology there were *two births* as well as *two deaths*, that is, *death a second time*. Given birth in the *Earth of Eternity*, that is, in Heaven one received their *psycho-spiritual genetic imprint*, i.e. *mission and purpose spiritually inscribed by the Finger of God on the mind*, and so passed from the *Earth of Eternity* into the *Earth of Time* through the *veil of forgetfulness*, so *being born again* but *forgetting what one was* or *what one was sent here to do*. Jesus himself (spending some of his young life in Egypt and claimed by the ancient Roman writer Celsus to have trained in Egypt as a *Heka Master*, a powerful magician that merely *speaks the word and things happen*) hinted at this when he told Nicodemus, *"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying; You must be born again"* (John 3:5-7). Jesus was telling Nicodemus (understood from an Egyptian perspective) that no traveler on the path to the Kingdom of God coming to God seeking to be justified in the Great Hall of Justice, before the Judgment Seat of God can do so unless they are *reborn* that is, by the renewing of their psychic mind, heart, soul. They must transform anew into what they already are but do not realize it, that is, by the renewing of their psychic-mind become a new creature in Christ created by God as a special order of spiritual being clothed in flesh. (2 Corinthians 5:17). This is why Jesus told Nicodemus *flesh gives birth to flesh but the Spirit gives birth to spirit*. When Jesus said that one must be *born of the water* and *born of the Spirit* he merely pointed out an Egyptian understanding of the *two births*; where *born of the Spirit* signifies the *first birth* in the *Earth of Eternity* as a *spirit being* (soul) and the *born of the water* signifies being incarnated (not *re-incarnated*) in the water/blood flow of the birth canal of the mother as a *flesh being*, as one passes through the *Earth of Eternity* to the *Earth of Time*.

Nevertheless, Nicodemus was not stupid when he asked *could a man go back into his mother's womb and be born a second time?* After all he was a member of the scribal class (sect) of Pharisees that believed in the resurrection of the body and also a member of the Jewish ruling elite. Nicodemus being a Jew of both of these professional classes could not have been totally confused and mystified at Jesus' supposed doctrine which appeared to him "foreign" (likely because of its Egyptian origin) or strange doctrine (to him) because he did not know the Egyptian Original a textual tradition more ancient than that of the Hebrew text, he would be more familiar with. We take note here that the Hebrews were both born as a nation, and spewed out threw the water birth canal of the *Reed Sea* being born as a nation and free people a second time as they came through fire baptism of the water and the blood so that this concept of a *second birth* was not entirely "foreign" to Nicodemus who feigned ignorance. This is why Jesus was astonished at his play on ignorance and said: *"You are Israel's teacher. . . and do you not understand these things?"* (John 3:10, NIV). For Jesus and the Egyptians (i.e. Kamau) this *composite New Being*, that is, this new creature in-Christ who is a *special order of spiritual being clothed in flesh* we call human was in fact spiritually dead because having passed through the *veil of forgetfulness* they forgot God's instructions for their lives, their spiritual genetic imprinting, including who they in fact are and what they in fact were sent to the *Earth of Time* by God

to do in terms of participating in the concrescence of good over evil, or overcoming evil with good as Paul would say (Romans 12). Jesus knew through his Hebrew-Egyptian spiritual understanding that this composite being could not become the New Being that they in fact are unless they are *born again* in their psychic-mind, that is, by a *renewing of their* mind as Paul would explain so as to become aware of who they are becoming and what God's will is for them as deiform spiritual transformed persons. They could not properly make it in this life nor in the next unless they became this new creation, new creature, New Being in Christ (Paul Tillich) like the Egyptian Horus-Christ who leads them to the Father through the veil of forgetfulness, to the truth of their true being, hidden from them by evil and their propensity to participate in the pleasures of demonic experiences inherent to the emotive psychic-spiritual dangers of the mind. This emotive psychic-spiritual struggle of the mind or soul is experienced as the Osirian Traveler makes their way through the Valley of the Shadow (i.e. spiritual attacks on the emotive psychic-mind/soul) toward safe-harbor in Amen-Ta, the Hidden Land or the emotive psychic interiority of Teresa's Interior Castle of Dwelling Places in the Soul. It is not for nothing that Jesus said that he was the *way, the truth and the life* and the *resurrection and the life* innately understanding his role as the Messiah (e.g. the Horus-Christ) leading his followers safely to port back to the Father and Creator of all men, that is, to God who is *all in all* (1 Corinthians 15:28).

The Egyptians gave expression to this whole idea of becoming aware of who they in fact are or were, that is, who God had made them by meditating on the philosophical dictum *Man, Know Thyself*. For the human person to know themselves they had to be awake, have an awakening (i.e. be spiritually born again) an idea contained in the New Testament declaration: *"Awake, you sleeper, arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you"* (Ephesians 5:14, EOB). It was Jesus' mission to *awake the sleeper*, and then *shine the light of God's truth* on them in order to *make men aware that God had called them as New Beings* so that their travel in this life and the next would bring them safely to port and not shipwrecked on the shores of sin and evil which causes separation from God. It is apparent from this Egyptian understanding that the purpose of God sending Jesus with the gospel message that *men must be born again* was done as a mercy to *awaken the sleeper* so that they could follow God's will in this life and prepare for the psychic-spiritual travel through the valley of the shadow of death as they approached new life in God's Garden (i.e. Paradise). However, the Egyptians did not want to leave this journey to chance, especially the journey we in this project call the *U-turn of death*, that is, *passing from the Earth of Time back to the Earth of Eternity*, so they created a *Book of Utterances* (i.e. the *Pyramid texts*, the *Coffin texts*, chief among others that include various Papyrus, as well) representing their *sacred books of life* to help guide them safely to port. This great work has variously been called *the Book of the Dead*, *the Book of Coming into the Light*, the *Ritual*, and what we have called here the *BBD* or the *Book of the Blessed Dead*.

Coming to the *Earth of Time* from the *Earth of Eternity* the spiritual traveler had nothing to prevent their *psychic-spiritual amnesia* as they passed through phenomenological impact of the *veil of forgetfulness*. However, on the return journey after they made the U-turn of death it was crucial that they be able or enabled to *remember the utterances* of the *Book of the Blessed Dead*, the saying or utterances of which would protect them from evil, demons and demonic experience as they approached the Hall of Judgment in *Amen-ta*. This is also why it was important for them to have Osirian priests and/or family members to recite these utterances for them as they lay in their coffins and why the inside of the coffins and the tombs had these utterances written everywhere just in case, they forgot because of the terrors from fiends they would face on the journey. It is also why a papyrus copy of the BBD would ordinarily be found placed between their legs so they could recite it aloud on the journey should all who those loved ones left behind either forgot them or neglected their duty to

the dead. These Egyptian religious ideas about the dead having an vital existence somewhere beyond death might seem farfetched in postmodern Western culture today but biblical evidence shows that in the New Testament Church once practiced ritual baptism for the dead (associated with the hope the resurrection) apparently for those who were believers but had died before being baptized. Paul therefore states: *"Now if there is no resurrection what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?"* (1 Corinthians 15:29, NIV). In their minds these people were very much alive because their loved ones were baptized for them *in their place*. They believed what Jesus inferred about spending three days in Hades or Hell with the spirits of the dead as he spoke about the sign of Jonah: *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to this generation except for the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah the prophet was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"* (Matthew 12:39-40, EOB). Church tradition understood that Jesus was affirming the resurrection from the grip that death had on him for three days and nights but more over that while in Hades or Hell he was preaching the gospel to those souls who were lost (and had not heard the Good News) in the long forgotten past and so needed to be released from the long grip of death that their Lord Jesus had experienced. Fragments of this Christian belief are found in the Ritual or BBD. Gerald Massey states:

Osiris is "the Lord of the resurrections" Jesus is likewise portrayed as the Lord of resurrections. He is said to have risen on the third day' also on the fourth day, after being three nights in the earth . . . and when he rose up from the dead with power to pass where doors were shut, and to impart the Holy Spirit (John xx. 19) to his followers, the same as Horus in the Ritual (ch. 1). The first act of Horus in his resurrection is to free his right arm from the bandage of the mummy. The next is to cast aside the seamless swathe in which the body had been wrapped for burial.⁴⁸¹

Since death could not hold their Lord (either Jesus for the Christians or the Horus-Christ for the Osirian Traveler) then it could not hold their acolytes and devotees (i.e. disciples) which was celebrated in the Ritual or BBD. According to W.A. Budge the Egyptians believed that the dead person is very much alive because of the power of Osiris for which they praised him:

Homage to thee, O my father Osiris, thy flesh suffered no decay, there were no worms in thee, thou didst not crumble away, thou didst not wither away, thou didst not become corruption and worms; and I myself am Khepera, I shall possess my flesh forever and ever, I shall not decay, I shall not crumble away, I shall not wither away, I shall not become corruption. . .", and further "I germinate like the plants," "My flesh germinateth," "I exist, I exist, I live, I live, I germinate, I germinate," "thy soul liveth, thy body germinateth by the command of Ra himself without diminution, and without defect, like unto Ra for ever and ever."⁴⁸²

Biblical evidence shows that Christians held similar beliefs about Jesus as Lord of the Resurrection and the Life that are found in both Ephesians and 1 Peter. Paul states: "When he ascended

⁴⁸¹ Gerald Massey. *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World*. Vol. II. (Baltimore, Maryland: Black Classic Press, 1992), p. 887.

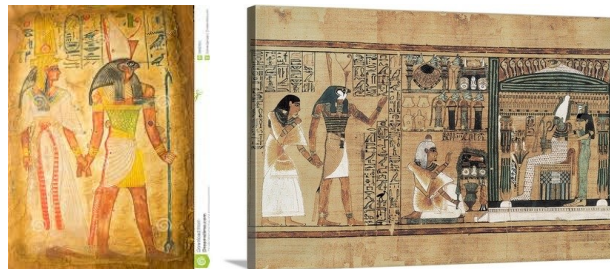
⁴⁸² E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), p.lx.

on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.” (Ephesians 4:8-10, NIV). While some may dispute that this has nothing to do with Jesus going down into hell to preach to the lost spirits living there who had forgotten their way because they had experienced the emotive psychic attack on their minds but the biblical record is clear that the early Christians believed this. Apostle Peter writes:

Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that he might bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh but [made] alive in [the] spirit. Thus, he also descended and preached to the spirits in prison, to those who in the past had been disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built. In this [ark], a few (that is eight souls) were saved through water. This is an antitype of baptism, which now saves us. (1 Peter 3:18-21, EOB). . . . However, they will give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead! For this reason, the Good News was preached even to the dead, so that they might in the flesh undergo the judgment that faces all human beings, but [then] live in the spirit as to God. (1 Peter 4:5-6, EOB).

We make note here that in the inward dark depths of their mind one of the jobs of the fiends was to terrorize the Osirian traveler so as to rob their understanding of who they were as New Beings achieved as God wanted in the Earth of Time. This is why in addition to all of the other precautions above the Osirian Traveler did not want to go through the Valley of the Shadow of death alone but would often be pictured as being with the Horus-Christ leading them by the hand reminiscent of the Christian who recites *Psalms 23* without understanding that it comes directly from the Egyptian Original when they say:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul (i.e. my emotive psychic-mind). He leads me in the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley (valley of the shadow of death), I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord (Amen-ta, God's Garden, the New Jerusalem, etc.) my whole life long. (Psalms 23:1-6, NRSV, my insertion).



(Horus leading a deceased female dignitary by the hand with his *staff of power*(thy rod and thy staff that comforts me) in the first papyrus and in the second leading Ani by the hand before the Throne of Judgment as Ani's advocate before Osiris-Ra)

The possible biblical correspondences with the Egyptian Original are the reason why Western scholars like to deprecate the *Utterances* as mere magic *spells* conveniently forgetting to explain that there is an *Egyptian theology* and religious doctrinal and textual tradition behind these so-called *magic or Heka spells*. We will look at only one of these so-called “spells”, that is, Utterance 27, Re or Chapter in order to see that the Egyptians believed that we experienced *two births* as we pass through a veil of time and eternity where the mind is attacked and harassed by *Evil*. They also believed that we were subject to experiencing *two deaths* as a result of passing through the *veil of forgetfulness* a second time that we have already called the *U-Turn of Death*. The notion of *two births* or *being twice born*

the Egyptians called  *temuhem*, “born a second time anew” (as Jesus affirmed “You must be born again”). However, it was the *second death* mentioned as described in Revelation 2:11b and 20:6,

that is , *mitemuhemor* “death a second time” that concerned them most. The reader will notice that the hope of the Christian traveler is the same as the hope of the Osirian traveler. In Revelation 2:11b (NIV) it says, “He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.” The

Egyptians gave expression to this hope in similar terms: , *n mut-t emuhem*; “*He shall never die a second time.*” What is unique about the Kamau-Egyptian statement of hope and faith is the fact that the sentence contains the whole meaning of what they meant by *death*.

The word *mut*, “to die” derived from *mut-t*, “he dies” is reversed with the negative sign ,

however what is important is that within the word *mut* the sign , an owl with the top of *his head cut off* refers to the fact that the interior traveler has his *mind cut off* or *emptied* or is *taken from him*. This is a clear reference to experiencing on this journey *psychic-spiritual amnesia*, i.e. “the death of the mind” or *not knowing* or *forgetting* who one is or where one is or how to find ones way, perhaps the equivalent in the physical realm of Alzheimer’s disease in the Earth of Time, which is nothing less than the *slow walk* or *sleep of death* in the land of the living. This spiritual condition on the ontological level of being will hopefully be reversed for the Egyptian who knows what to *utter* in Amen-ta (the Hidden-land of the mind) as he travels from death to new life as a New Being. The Hebrews believed that there is no knowledge in Hell and by inference no knowledge of the Self is possible as a permanent inmate of that place. **Ecclesiastes 9:10** says “*Whatever thy hand is able to, do it earnestly; for neither work, nor reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge shall be in Hell, whither thou art hastening.*”

So given the nature of Hell or the Nether-world where there is “neither work, nor reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge” the whole objective for the Osirian Traveler is not to forget what he/she has partially become and learned in the *Earth of Time*. The Egyptian doctrine of spiritual transformation *a spiritualized deiform being* is preeminent. The Osirian Traveler before making the *U-turn of Death* knows who he/she is as in “Man, Know Thyself” or is shaken into alertness by the voice of Lord saying, “Awake, O Sleeper!” But where does this battle of the mind against the concrescence of evil and demonic experience take place ontologically? It takes place initially outside the Self for the Osirian psychic-spiritual traveler but ends up being a question of what is in the Osirian travelers’ heart because as Jesus states: “*Out of the good treasure of his heart, a good person brings out what is good, but out of the evil treasure of his heart, one who is evil brings out what is evil. For out of the overflowing of the heart the mouth speaks*” (Luke 6:45, EOB). Therefore, from the Egyptian horizon of thought the

heart must be weighed in the final judgment and must be found to be light as the *ma'at feather of truth*, that is, balanced against the word the human person speaks (what is *true of voice*) in harmony with the divine *Word of Truth*. In all of this the Osirian traveler is seeking to be declared  = *maa-kheru* (i.e. to be *declared innocent* like Osiris, *true of voice*) by Tehuti (who writes down the verdict) and where the Osirian Traveler's  = *ab* or heart should be lighter than a  *ma'at* feather when weighed in the  *scales of justice* or  the *scales of mercy* (where the heart is hanging by a thread draped over the scales) and additionally "assisted" by Anubis in balancing the human heart (i.e. *emotive psychic-mind*, Zara Yacob's [ዘረ፡ያዕቆብ] *rational heart* as described in his Ethiopian treatise [ሐተታ] *Hatata*) against one the other in favor of the blessed dead (i.e. as an expression of divine mercy). In all of this trial the Osirian Traveler has an advocate; the Horus-Christ before Osiris-Ra as is shown fully in the papyrus below:



The final judgment takes place in , *tetttta*, "the land where eternity is," or "the land where eternity exists." Here we have called this place throughout the *Earth of Eternity* or the *Egyptian heaven* which is the last word translated above as the Egyptian expression of hope.⁴⁸³ The whole idea then is that the Osirian Traveler hoped that *he would not experience death of the mind as he makes the U-*

Turn into the Earth of Eternity. This is easily seen by the fact that the hieroglyphic word , *ta* or "land" is part of the Egyptian hieroglyphic expression for *eternity* showing that what is being experienced is not part of the *Earth of Time* but the *Earth of Eternity*. What we have said here is germane to our explication of *Utterance 27* below. We begin with R. O. Faulkner's translation of this utterance:

O you who *take away hearts* and accuse hearts, who recreate a man's heart (in respect of) what he has done, he is *forgetful of himself* through what you have done. Hail to you, *lords of eternity*, founders of everlasting! Do not take N's heart with your fingers wherever his heart may be. . . . He sends out his heart which controls his body, his heart is announced to the gods, for N's heart is his own, he has power over it, and he will not say what he has done. . . . I command you to obey me in the realm of the dead, even I, N, who am vindicated in peace and vindicated in the beautiful West in the *domain of eternity*. [Italics mine].⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸³ E. A. Wallis Budge, *Egyptian Language: Easy Lessons in Egyptian Hieroglyphics* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1983), p. 132.

⁴⁸⁴ R. O. Faulkner. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1985), p.

We can see immediately from this what the Osirian travelers concern is and where he is. He is in the *domain of the eternity* and his hope is to reach the *beautiful West*, emblematic of Whitehead's notion of the ontological and existential condition as occasions for the good and beautiful, expressed in the Egyptian Original as the place where they are perfected called the *place of the blessed dead*. In Egyptian texts this place is called **Amen-ta**, the *Hidden land* of the God of the Dead (Osiris-Ra represented by his Son, the Horus-Christ) who is Lord of both the dead and the living for as Paul declares: "In fact, if we live, we live 'to the Lord'; or if we die, we die 'to the Lord.' Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. It is for this purpose that Christ died, rose, and lived, *so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living*" (Romans 14:8-9, EOB).

In this spiritual state of being (i.e. spiritual abode of the blessed) is where (in the Lord, i.e. in Osiris, in Christ) the Osirian Traveler hopes his or her life culminates within the *Earth of Eternity* where he or she will be justified before God who sits in the Hall of Justice at the end of the traveler's dangerous journey through the psycho-spiritual valleys of the shadow of death, i.e. the emotive psychic mind. The Osirian Traveler's main hope in connection with this is that his or her own *mind* or *conscience* will not testify against them and more importantly that his/her mind will not be *taken from them* so that they are *forgetful of himself/herself*, so as not to suffer from *psycho-spiritual amnesia*. The writer John expresses a similar hope regarding the heart of the Christian testifying against them. John writes: "*And this is how we know that we are the truth and assure our heart in his presence* (i.e. before Osiris-Ra in the final judgment, my insertion); *even if our own heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness toward God*" (1 John 3:19-21, EOB).

The first concern is observed in the phrase in *Utterance 27* *"for N's heart is his own, he has power over it, and he will not say what he has done,"* meaning that the Osirian traveler hopes to stand before the judgment seat of Osiris or his or her God free from *sins of conscience* against the *Self* (as opposed to moral sins against God and man) so that the mind or their own conscience does not condemn his or her own heart in an act of self-condemnation. This view can be seen in the New Testament scriptures as well when it says in Romans 14:22-23 (NIV): "*So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.*" The second concern of the Osirian traveler is *having his heart* (emotive psychic-mind or rational heart) *taken away*. This hope is expressed in another way to avoid *becoming forgetful of himself*, that is, *who he/she is* or what *he/she has become*. The Osirian Traveler in hope wants to become a *New Being*, one who has participated in the concrescence of the good and the beautiful where instead his or her heart has given rise to occasions for evil and participation in the pleasures demonic experience within the *Earth of Time*. This concern can be seen in a grammatical analysis from a translation of Utterance 27 from the pen of E. A. Wallace Budge. I shall only explicate one or two phrases in this passage which will be sufficient to prove or make plausible that the Egyptians understood in their own way the *condition of psycho-spiritual amnesia* as the Osirian passed through the *veil of forgetfulness* between the two dimensions of the *Earth of Eternity* and the *Earth of Time*. The first sentence of Budge's interlinear translations is as follows:



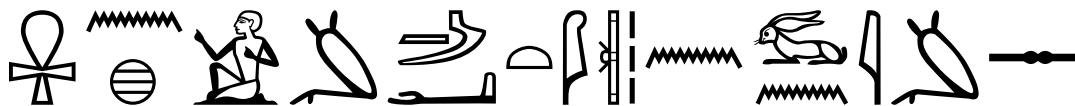
Re Chapter of not being carried off the heart of [the deceased] in the Netherworld.



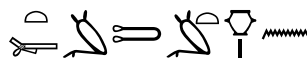
t'et-f ab-ama-a an un thetet-f
Saith he: "My heart [is] with me not shall happen its being carried off."



nuk - [a]neb abusmahatu slaying the heart.
I am the Lord of hearts



ankh - a em ma'at un - na am - s
I live in right and truth I exist in it.⁴⁸⁵

I wish to concentrate on one phase within *Utterance 27* from this BBD passage, namely , *temthet ab en* "not being carried off is the heart of the deceased." The deceased is the Osirian traveler, the blessed dead, whose concern is seen in this phrase. But what does it mean? It can be understood in part by looking at the root word for *thet*, namely  *thamit* which is "the state of knowing."⁴⁸⁶ We notice immediately that in *thamit* the hieroglyphic letter  shows an owl completely drawn but that in *thet* the owl  which is sitting in an *inert* or *subdued* posture has the *top of his head removed* in the pictograph. This suggests to the imagination, which the Egyptian hieroglyphics sought to preserve in order to explain precisely what they were trying to say, that the referent namely the deceased is *no longer in control of his/her actions* because somehow, they have suffered *loss of their mind or faculties*. If then *thamit* is "the state of knowing" then *thet* may reasonably mean "the state of not knowing."

But to fully understand what is going on in the above phrase the explication of the word  *ab*, "my heart" is needed. According to Sir E. A. Wallis Budge this term means "heart", "interior", "sense", "wisdom", "understanding", "intelligence", "attention", "intention", "disposition", "manner", "will", "wish", "desire", "mind", "courage" and "lust," that is, whatever is going on in or controls the *interiority of the active mind or will* of the person or human being. The use of the word *thet* in the above phrase in *Utterance 27* suggests that the *interiority of the active mind* of the Osirian traveler has somehow been affected and his/her mind has been made *inert*, *inactive* (i.e. empty headed) and thus puts him/her in danger of not arriving at their hoped-for destination, that is, safely to port in *Amen-ta*. We have already said that Teresa of Avila as a Western mystic theologian had already

⁴⁸⁵ Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, p. 99.

⁴⁸⁶ E. A. Wallis Budge, *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol II, (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), p. 852.

bottomed this concept of being inert out in her “Fourth Dwelling Place.” She uses the terms in this chapter “*habitual absorption*,” and “*one continual state*,” and “*one fixed state*” which gives one the impression that the interior traveler has somehow been *transfixed on the evil of the interior life in some kind of hypnotic trance state* that he/she did not feel was safe. It is worthwhile quoting part of her comment again. She states:

The soul would not gain so much; at least all the things contributing to its merit would be removed, and it would be left in a habitual absorption. For when a soul is in one continual state, I don't consider it safe, nor do I think it is possible for the spirit of the Lord to be in one fixed state during this exile.⁴⁸⁷

Avila's notion regarding the habitually absorbed within the interiority of the Self in one continual state of habitual inertness (a conformity of in harmony with death and not life) where the Lord can affect no change in the human emotive psychic-mind or rational heart of the person. The person is self-absorbed and centered in on the Self which is death. Avila's notion on this state of the interiority of the human rational heart or psychic-mind is comparable with Whitehead's warning against a cosmos or human society that is static and does change, such that where the creative and novel occasions of spontaneity cease in some cul-de-sac of conformity Evil truly reigns supreme in the human person as well as human society and human institutions. The Egyptians already understood both levels of conformity that militates against God's lure of the human person and human society towards creative spontaneity and deiform transformation. On the level of the psychic-mind or rational heart this is a deadly state of being. So, when the hieroglyphics indicating “inertness” or “one continual

state” are put together , *thet ab-a* it can only mean “*to forget my mind*” because one is transfixed either by *fear*, *sinor* temptation drawn by pleasures of demonic experience. In its full psychological sense this state of being effects the entire emotive psychic-faculty of the Osirian traveler, not only in the intelligence, that is, the ability to think which is why the *owl has his head cut off* but the core or center of the Osirian travelers *active will* in this case to continue the journey to the next *interior dwelling place of the mind* and final union with God. This is why the Egyptians pictured the *owl as being inert of subdued*. In short the person or spiritual being has lost their intelligence and their will, a state of being we have described in this project as *psycho-spiritual amnesia*, with all the attending symptoms of fear, anxiety, sense of failure, etc. which according to our schema results from passing through the *veil of forgetfulness* between the two spiritual-psychic dimensions of the *Earth of Eternity* and the *Earth of Time*. The nature of our spiritual-psychological make-up and composite being (spiritual beings clothed in flesh and subject to two births and two deaths] is what makes it possible to be affected in the way we have described above. We are beings that are both *mortal and immortal at one and the same time*. It is a contradiction to say such a thing but given the Egyptian and even the Christian understanding we are *twice born* (as a soul in the Earth of Eternity and then incarnated as a soul in a body in the Earth of Time). We also can experience *two deaths* that of the body and then that of the soul subject to an eternal “second death.” The counter-weight to this fate is that we can also experience eternal life. In either case the soul will never really die. The mystery inherent in our condition comes from our *psychic-spiritual genetic* makeup spiritual nature that was encoded or imprinted in the dimension of the *Earth of Eternity* before we got here in the first birth.

⁴⁸⁷ Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, p. 68.

The is the bulk of our *hetep offering*, , concerning time and eternity and our understanding of emotive psychic-spiritual genetics and how phenomenological concrescence of good and evil envelopes and affects the interiority of human person's *life-world* and *lived-experience* in *the Earth of Time and Eternity*.

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:11-15, NIV

THE FINAL JUDGMENT BEFORE THE GREAT WHITE THRONE & THE TWELVE CHAMBERS OF HELL

"YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF
THE SHADOW OF DEATH; I SHALL FEAR NO EVIL"



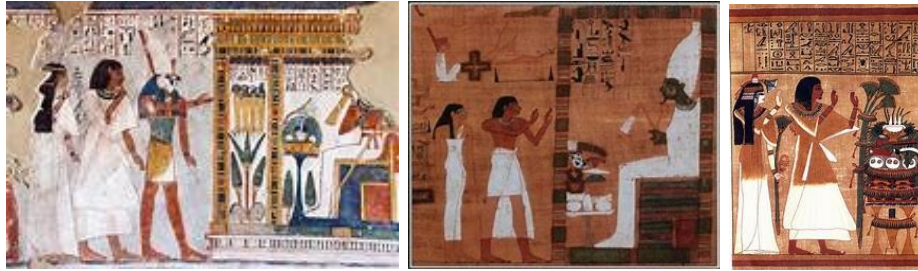
THE HEART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE



HE LEADETH ME

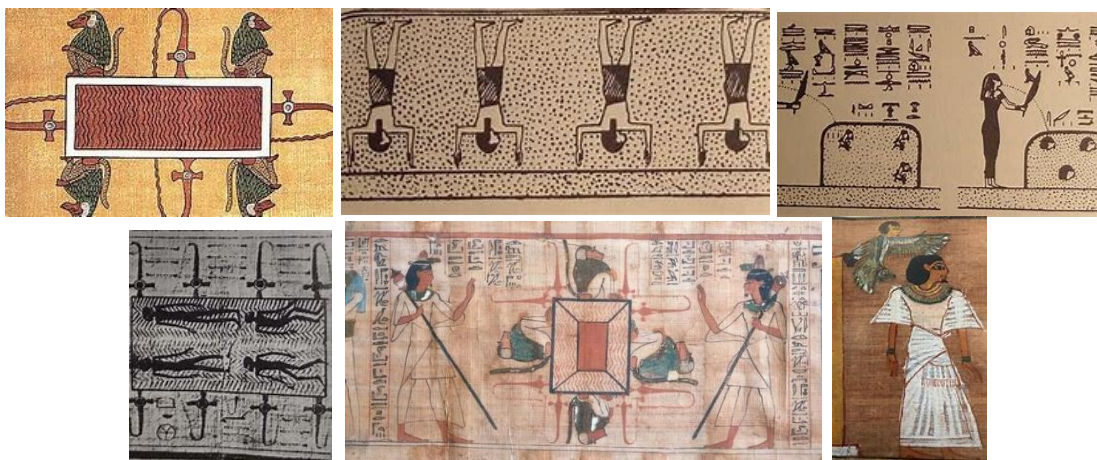


HE INTERCEDES FOR ME& HE RESTORES MY SOUL!
ADORATION BEFORE OSIRIS-RA. LIVING IN TRANQUILITY &ABUNDANCE OF AMEN-TA



HELL IS REALLY REAL!

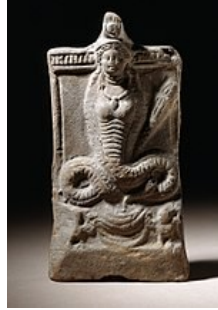
"For thou will not leave my soul in hell; Neither will thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou will shew me the path of life: In thy presence is fulness of joy; At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psalm 16:10-11, KJV



ISIS, OSIRIS & HORUS IN PTOLMAIC EGYPT: BLACK RELIGION TO WHITE RELIGION



Statue of Osiris,
Ptolemaic Period, 332-330 B.C.
A large statue of Osiris from the Late Period was placed in a niche of the crypt to create the impression of an open tomb. The eyes, made with white stone and black glass, give the god a striking expression. His body is made from wood and would originally have been wrapped with like a mummy in linen clothed with plaster. The goddess, earth's horns, and uraeus (a cobra with its hood extended), are in bronze, as are the two long-necked crocodiles. The lotus flower is dark wood. Osiris, the great national god of the dead, was adopted throughout the entire land and worshipped in many temples during the later periods of ancient Egypt.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

A Brief Rendering of the Greek Understanding of Evil in Ptolemaic Egypt

The question we have been examining in the second half of our project is how does Evil as a phenomenon affect the emotive psychic-mind or the rational heart of the human person who is on the Superhighway of God traveling between the *Earth of Eternity* and the *Earth of Time*? The Egyptians were primarily concerned with the *U-turn of Death* going from the Earth of Time to the Earth of Eternity. The Egyptian wanted to know how they could transverse the *Valley of the Shadow of Death* (a place where terrifying demons and fiends lived) to reach safe harbor in Amen-ta. E.A. Wallis Budge in his translation of *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* states that:

In the Tuat lived all manner of fearful monsters and beasts The souls of the dead made their way to their abode in the “other world” by a ladder, according to very ancient view, or through a gap in the mountains of Abydos called Peka  according to another; but by whichever way they passed from earth, their destination was a region in the Tuat which is called in the pyramid and later texts Sekhet-Aaru, which was situated in the Sekhet-Hetep, and was supposed to lie to the north of Egypt. Here dwell Horus and Set, for the fields of Aaru and Hetep are their domains, and here enters the deceased with two of the children of Hours on one side of him, and two on the other, and the “two great chiefs who preside over the throne of the great god proclaim eternal life and power for him. Here like the supreme God he is declared to be “one,” and the four children of Horus proclaim his name to Ra. . . . The Egyptian theologians, who conceived that a ladder was necessary to enable the soul to ascend to the next world, provided it also with an address which it was to utter when it reached the top. As given in the pyramid of Unas it reads as follows: --“Hail to thee, O daughter of Amenta, mistress of Peteru (?) of heaven, thou gift of Thoth, thou mistress of the two sides of the ladder, open a way to Unas, let Unas pass. . . .”⁴⁸⁸

After climbing the Ladder of Osiris (i.e. Jacob's Ladder) to the Other World Unas needed the **Fourteen Words of Power** provided for him in the sacred texts to pass by various gods, demons, and fiends who were situated in the *Twelve Gates of the Taut* that blocked the rest of his journey. In the

hieroglyphics the short expression for these words of power is  I, *kau* (where the human hands and arms are held up above the head in adoration and supplication) and the longer expression that contains the number fourteen  (10 + 4 strokes at the bottom) is   I . R. O. Faulkner in his translation of *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead* wants to style and limit these *Words of Power* by calling them “spells” using the word  Heka, which means magic, the power of working magic, sorcery, spell, incantation, charm, word of power (as in one word of the fourteen).⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁸ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Book of the Dead: (The Papyrus of Ani) Egyptian Text Transliteration and Translation*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), pp. civ-cv.

⁴⁸⁹ R. O. Faulkner. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1993), p. 11.

Nevertheless, it will become evident in this project that for the Egyptians the Fourteen Words of Power had wider meaning, implications and application and they would never on such an august and dangerous journey use , *Hekawords* of power alone which are just *a word of power* among the fourteen others that were needed by the Osirian Traveler during various parts of their journey. It is very misleading for Faulkner or any other Egyptologist or scholar to misrepresent what *Words of Power* meant to the Osirian Traveler. As the reader will see all the expressions for this concept taken together point to the level of power within the character and emotive psychic-mind or rational heart of the Osirian Traveler that gave him or her strength and fortitude for their journey as they faced the terror of fiends and gods who put them through various tests of inner strength and character before allowing them to pass on. And so Words of Power had little to do with casting a *Heka* spell on the demons, fiends and gods in order to make them do what the Osirian Traveler wanted. For example, Faulkner cites Spell 44 (i.e. Utterance or Re 44) with the rubric “Spell for not dying again in the realm of the dead”. The Osirian Traveler Ani comes before the God Re and states:

My cavern is opened, the spirits fall within the darkness. The Eye of Horus makes me holy, Wepwawet has caressed me; O Imperishable Stars, hide me among you. My neck is Re, my vision is cleared, my heart is in its proper place, my speech is known. THE GOD RE SPEAKS: “I am Re who himself protects himself; *I do not know you, I do not look after you*, your father the son of Nut lives for you. THE DECEASED REPLIES: I am your eldest son who sees your secrets, I have appeared as King of the Gods, and I will not die again in the realm of the dead.⁴⁹⁰

Ra threatens the Osirian Traveler saying *he does not know him* and that *he is not among the ones* belonging to Ra that he protects so why should he accept the extravagant claims the Osirian Traveler is making. The claims of the Osirian Traveler is reminiscent of the extravagant claims that erstwhile Christians make in calling Jesus Christ *Lord, Lord* in the final judgment and are told by him “*I never knew you; Away from me you evil doers*” (Matthew 7:23); and also “*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me!*” (John 10:27). Ra is telling this Osirian Traveler that he is not of Ra’s sheepfold and in this case that the traveler belongs to “your father the son of Nut. . .” In addition, Ra is telling Osirian Traveler that his real father is **Set** (i.e. *Satan*, the *Devil*) the god of *Evil* because Set is the son of the gods Nut and Geb in the Ennead of Heliopolis (i.e. Anu or On of the Bible). This is strikingly reminiscent of Jesus charge against the Pharisees that they belong to “their father the Devil.” (John 8:44). The Osirian Traveler is not using a spell for he cannot possibly make Ra recognize by such “words of power” which are represented in the hieroglyphics as a broken armed  *kau*, signifying weak words of power. What the Osirian Traveler is doing with Ra is claiming that even though Ra does not know him personally Ra knows his eldest son Osiris and the Osirian Traveler claims to wear his name (i.e. Osiris Ani) and completely identify with Osiris saying, “I am your eldest son.” This could be a legitimate claim based upon mercy if Osiris in fact affirms that this traveler is one of his disciples (i.e. followers). A full analysis of the so-called spells will show in many cases that they are appeals based on such identity with divine personages who can vouch for the upright character of the traveler. Now that we have sufficiently *dispelled* the *spell of ignorance* placed over

⁴⁹⁰ Faulkner, pp. 63-64.

our eyes by Western scholarship on this matter we are able to give the explicit meanings for the *Words of Power* that support the suppositions we have made above in this project. Using the appropriate expression *kau*, the **Fourteen Words of Power** (also known as the *Fourteen kau*

of Ra) are: (1), ("peh"), word of power, (2) ("weben"), light, (3) ("tet"), strength, (4) ("usr" or "weser), power, (5) ("wadj"), vigour, (6) ("geb") abundance, (7) ("sheps"), majesty, (8) ("an"), burial, (9) ("sep") preparedness, (10) ("djed") stability, (11) ("ar") sight, (12) ("sedjem" or

"iden") hearing, (13) ("saa"), feeling, perception, recognize, know, understand, and (14) ("beh" or "hu"), taste. In the *Omboslist* taken from the capitals of the Temple of Kom Ombo constructed during the reign of Ptolemy V these Words of Power are each followed by the hieroglyphic

determinative *ka* [e.g. (1) , (2) , (3) , (4) . . . (14)] signifying a **Ba-soul** that is a deiform image of Ra (i.e. Ra's double), a person of *genius, character, disposition, and vital strength*.⁴⁹¹ All of these relate to the Osirian Traveler's *moral neutral power to get things done* (i.e. Yoruba, *ashe*) using the giftedness and attributes of his or her emotive psychic-mind or rational heart (i.e. the *thinking heart* using both intellectual and emotive power). Interestingly enough six of the fourteen Words of Power were adopted by the ancient Ethiopian philosopher Zara Yaqob (ዘረ ያዕቆብ) in his treatise (ሐተታ) *Hatata* (described as human senses) namely the *Six Doors of the Heart*: (1) hearing, (2) sight, (3) smell, (4) taste, (5) touch, and (6) power of movement.⁴⁹² The Osirian Traveler must be provided with these *Fourteen Words of Power* for this final great journey in the form of *Utterances* in the Ritual or BBD that would convince various gods that he/she were worthy and to disperse the demons they would meet sent to block his or her way by attacking or terrorizing the emotive psychic-mind or rational heart of the traveler by disadvantage of their passing through the Veil of Forgetfulness. In addition to *Words of Power* (called *Spells* by Western scholars) they had the Horus-Christ to lead them through to the final judgment scene becoming their advocate before Osiris-Ra where they would be acquitted and declared true of voice to finally reach Paradise (i.e. the Garden of God). Here they would experience eternal rest and tranquility. Now we must pass on to the Greeks who were interested in establishing that the human person had an immortal soul prior to arriving in the Earth of Time and therefore logically the immortal soul must have a place of eternal rest after death. The primary means of working through this logical proof was through the development of the *Doctrine of Recollection* which we'll spend time describing and explaining below. Now that we have sufficiently explained and/or described (using the Egyptian Original) the Egyptian view of how the human person transverses the Earth of Time to the Earth of Eternity after the U-turn of Death and

⁴⁹¹ E.A. Wallis Budge. *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*. Vol II. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1978), p. 783. Possible phonetic or sound values have been for the Words of Power have been supplied from Budge's dictionary Vol. 1 and Ankh Mi Ra, *Let the Ancestors Speak: Removing the Veil of Mysticism from Medu Netcher*. Vol. 1. (Temple Hills, Maryland: JOM International Inc., 1995). However, it is to be noted that no one really knows how the Egyptians vocalized words and phrases so that any attempt to supply vocalization or sound values for these Words of Power are highly conjectural until scholarship comes upon a method of knowing what the spoken ancient Egyptian language sounded like. We only give the reader the possible sound values here because they are supplied by two excellent Egyptological sources.

⁴⁹² Ayele Berkerie. *Ethiopic :An African Writing System*. (Asmara, Eritrea: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), p. 97.

the emotive psychic impact on the mind and soul of this deceased traveler through time and eternity we can now show or demonstrate that the Greeks got their *doctrine of the recollection of the soul* from the Egyptian Original. In this connection we will consider Plato's *theory of recollection* and his *theory of the forms*. We also will briefly look at the Greek conception of the immortals' travels through the so-called Nether-world, mainly to show that the Greeks borrowed what they knew of the spiritual-psychic journey we call the U-turn of death from Egyptians. The Egyptians were the first humans to understand that we are *spiritual-time travelers* because of the nature of our *composite spiritual-psychic being* and that in this interior and exterior journey we must transverse the *Valley of the Shadow of Death*. Within the bounds of spiritual and emotive psychic journey the human person traveling through time and eternity experiences the concrescence of good and evil (i.e. a back-and-forth struggle between Christological experience and demonic experience). Plato's (428-347 BCE) *theory of recollection* is given in his dialogue the *Phaedo*.

The aim of this philosophical theory was to give support to his larger hypothesis for the immortality of the soul. Plato through the voice of Socrates was trying to show that the human person, that is, the soul could only know what it knows because it had a prior existence in some eternal realm or dimension where things and persons existed in their ideal state of being he called the realm of the *forms*. The soul had knowledge of the things it innately knew prior to taking on human flesh; being born and *recalls* them or *recollects* them. The idea current among Plato's contemporaries at the time of his writing was that the soul was not immortal and when it departs from the body it no longer has any existence *at all*. Plato is at pains to show not only does the soul have existence after physical death *it also had existence prior to physical death* or otherwise it would not be immortal now. If Plato can show that the soul is immortal before birth, then it will remain immortal after death and will experience continued existence in some other or eternal realm. Plato was in fact defending the need and rational for leading the philosophical life, the moral-ethical life, for if the soul was not immortal, that is, it had only a physical existence in the Earth of Time as body and soul and ended up as a *No-thing* in Barth's dark realm of *Nothingness*; then living a moral-ethical existence made no sense because the soul would not be accountable for what it had done good or evil. Plato had to show that the soul was indeed immortal and so logically it had preexistence and a destiny beyond death of the physical existence. Plato's argument begins with Cebes arguing against the immortality of the soul embedded in Socrates notion that the hope of the philosophic life, that is, finding truth and wisdom can only be fully attained in the after-life, underworld, Hades, when the person makes the U-turn of death as Socrates was about to do with the hemlock. Socrates says in the *Phaedo* with Cebes response following that:

Will then a true lover of wisdom, who has a similar hope and knows that he will never find it to any extent except in Hades, be resentful of dying and not gladly undertake the journey thither? One must surely think so, my friend, if he is a true philosopher, for he is firmly convinced that he will not find pure knowledge anywhere except there. And if this is so, then, as I said just now, would it not be highly unreasonable for such a man to fear death? . . . When Socrates finished, Cebes intervened: Socrates, he said, everything else you said is excellent, I think, but men find it very hard to believe what you said about the soul. They think that after it has left the body it no longer exists anywhere, but that it is destroyed and dissolved on the day the man dies, as soon as it leaves the body; and that, on leaving it, it is dispersed like breath or smoke, has flown away and gone and is no longer anything anywhere. If indeed it gathered itself together and existed by itself and escaped those evils you were recently enumerating, there would then be much good hope, Socrates, that what you say is

true; but to believe this requires a good deal of faith and persuasive argument, to believe that the soul still exists after a man died and that it still possesses some capability and intelligence.

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Socrates is then challenged by Cebes to not only to show that the soul has a destiny beyond physical death but that the soul itself is of such a nature that it does not depend upon its body for its existence. What better way to demonstrate this than to first prove that the soul existed prior to taking on human flesh, a body, σάρξ, sarx which in its full technical meaning is not merely flesh but a *psychological condition of the lower nature of the person* generally opposed to *the higher spiritual nature of the person* called πνεῦμα, pneuma, that is, “a psychological faculty which is potentially sensitive and responsive to God,” or inner spiritual being.⁴⁹⁴ How will Plato through the voice of Socrates be able to prove that the soul is immortal by nature? He decides to show this by proving that the knowledge that the human person has as a *composite being*, made up of *soul* plus *body* was *received prior to the person taking on this composite nature* in the *ideal realm of the Forms*; for if the ontological composition of the person and the imprinting of the person as a composite psychic-spiritual being did not take place in the ideal realm of the forms, then it would be impossible to say the person was so conditioned in their human nature in this present existential temporal realm.

This knowledge about the self and being which is *forgotten* until needed is somehow recovered through the process Plato has Socrates say is *recollection*, which occurs at the intellectual and emotive psychic-spiritual level of mind. The realm of the *Forms* admittedly cannot be proved to exist and Plato through the voice of Socrates nowhere attempts to prove it but must accept it as presupposition of his overall theory of the immortality of the soul. In fact Plato has Socrates say pointedly that for his position to work or be plausible, that is, for our souls to exist before we were born, the reality of things in the realm of the forms must also be a reality. Socrates says then “If the former does not exist, neither do the latter?”⁴⁹⁵ We have already quoted Cebes above as saying such a supposition about the immortality of the soul and its existence after death must in the end be accepted through a “good deal of faith. “A cautionary note for the reader is that while Plato in the dialogue of the *Phaedo* is talking about the body plus soul, the soul or psychological state he is referring to is not that of *pneuma* “spirit” which has connotations for another intermittent state of psychic state of being called *psuche*, that is, “psyche” or “soul”, meaning that *whatever it is within the interiority of the soul makes something alive instead of dead*, i.e. has *breath* and *vitality*. It also technically means *heart, breath of life, the vital force which animates the body and shows itself breathing*. It is the seat of the desires, feelings and affectations, and essence which is different from the body and is not dissolved by death and may be said to be immortal being and a living soul because it does not die. We have already suggested above that the Egyptians understood the *composite nature of the person* and that the person was a emotive *psychic-spiritual rational being* whose central attribute is the ability to *know* his

or her own heart, as in , *thamit*, a psychic condition or *state of knowing*. The Egyptian word is  *ab* for heart, mind, desire, etc. and thus both refer to the emotive psycho-spiritual state or condition of the composite spiritual being clothed in flesh. So the meaning of  *thet*

⁴⁹³ John M. Cooper, ed. *Plato, Complete Works* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), pp. 60-61.

⁴⁹⁴ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988, 1989), pp. 322-323.

⁴⁹⁵ Cooper, “Phaedo”, *Plato*, p.67.

ab-a, “to forget my mind”(i.e. heart or soul) becomes clear as a emotive psychic-spiritual condition or experience the Osirian traveler wishes to avoid. The Greek philosophers called this state of psychic being the *soul* and therefore sought to live the philosophic life as a *lover of wisdom* so as to attain to this *pure knowledge* of the Self or ideal being from the ontological realm of existence to that of the existential level of existence which fully comes only after death. Obtaining this pure knowledge was a paradox in and of itself since the ideal state could never be realized here on this side of Eternity until the U-Turn of death is made. Nevertheless, the human person as a composite being in nature (both *sarq* (flesh) and *pnuema* (spirit) in their existential existence) at the higher level of spirit nature or psyche, i.e. the soul were all psychological faculties domiciled at their core and imprinted is at its highest an *immortal soul*. So, if souls in psychic states of being “existed apart from the body before they took on human form, and they had intelligence,” then how did they temporarily forget what they knew before they were incarnated as human beings made up of both body and spirit? ⁴⁹⁶Plato gives no real answer but merely asserts that we in fact did experience some form of *psycho-spiritual amnesia* at birth which is recovered by a process or capacity we have in our composite nature for *recollection*. Plato has Socrates say: “But, I think, if we acquired this knowledge *before birth*, then *lost it at birth*, and then later by use of our senses in connection with those objects we mentioned, we *recovered the knowledge* we had before, would not what we call learning be the *recovery of our own knowledge*, and we are right to call this *recollection*? When did our souls acquire knowledge of them? Certainly not since we were born as men.”⁴⁹⁷ (Italics mine). Joseph F. Kelly, Professor of Religious Studies at John Carroll University, points out that the African belief in the existence of the soul in heaven before being born in the *Earth of Time* can be found in the theological reflections of one of the greatest of the African Christian Church Fathers, Origen. Kelly says this African theologian held that:

Origen insisted the Garden of Eden narrative was not a historical account. He knew that many Jews and Christians had moved Eden into the center of the discussion of evil, and he too, believed it belonged there but only if properly understood. When God created intelligent beings, he created them as spiritual beings, and the material world did not yet exist. These intelligences, as Origen called them, had free will, and they chose to sin. God could not ignore such behavior, but he did not punish them in a retributive way, as a literal reading of Genesis would imply. Instead God wisely chose to educate the intelligences. Since the intelligence’s had committed sins of differing gravity, God treated them differently. Those who sinned less God permitted to stay in the ethereal realms, while the worst sinners fell into a demonic state; this explained the existence of angels and demons. God created the material world as a kind of school for the intelligences who became human. They had to take on physical bodies and live their lives here, in the middle of all the temptations the material world could provide. The biblical story of the fall became the explanation for ontological differences among angels, humans, and demons. One intelligence did not sin, and the Son of God would assume that intelligence (soul) when he became incarnate to redeem humanity. Like Clement, Origen had produced a theodicy which did not require the devil. ⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁶ Cooper, *Phaedo*, p.67.

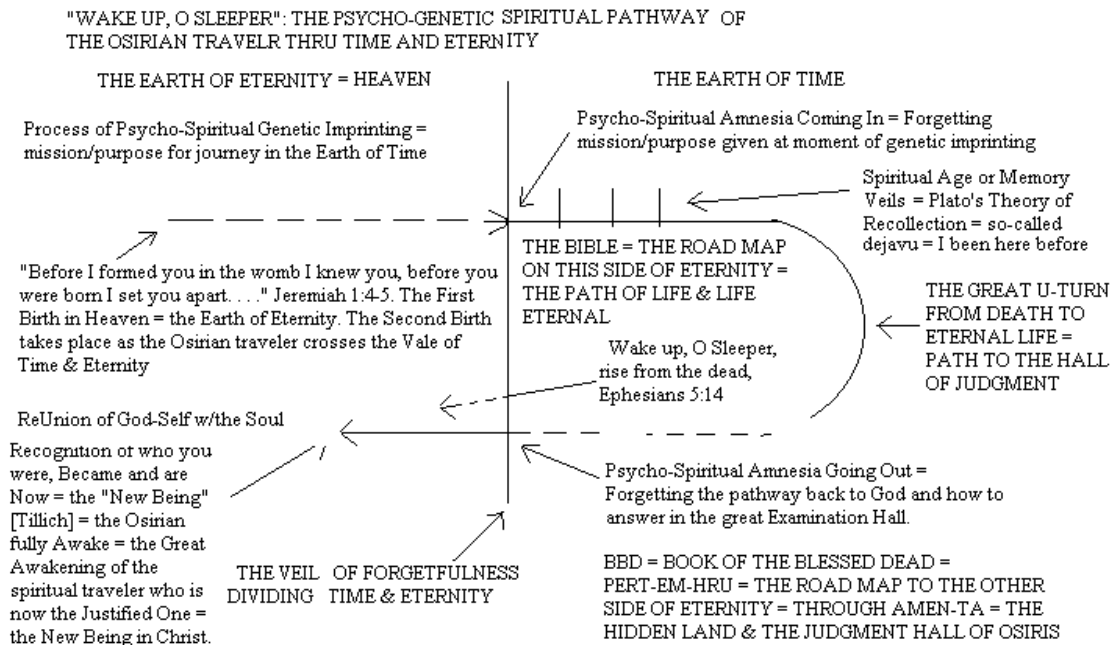
⁴⁹⁷ Cooper, *Phaedo*, pp. 66-67.

⁴⁹⁸ Kelly, 43.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

A MODERN THEORY OF PSYCHIC-SPIRITUAL GENETICS

Now it is time to connect the dots so to speak in a summary using graphic devices to describe the Egyptian and Greek conceptions from the horizon of my own understanding of *emotive psycho-spiritual genetics* of the Osirian traveler as they descend and ascend Jacob's Ladder to and from the Earth of Eternity to the Earth of Time and back again as an immortal soul each with a unique God given destiny. We can now present the *Theory of Psychic-Spiritual Genetics* in the picto-graph that follows, which will explicate and hopefully bring some clarity to the notions we have been presenting, especially the notion of *emotive psycho-genetic spiritual amnesia*, that is, *the veiling of our mind* from the truth of our God-given purpose and New Being in Christ. The whole of evil and the concrescence of demonic experience are geared to prevent the concrescence of this Christological good of the New Being in Christ for "even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." For it was God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness" (2 Corinthians 4:3-5, NIV):



We have already discussed Plato's *theory of recollection* in the *Phaedo*. However here we wish to connect that conception with that of the Egyptian notion of , *Thamit*, "the state of knowing" and my notion of *spiritual age vales* experienced as *memory veils* normally misunderstood as experiencing *Deja'Vu*, that is, *a feeling of having been there before or having repeated a particular experience before*. In fact, there is no such thing as *Deja'Vu*. What the *composite human beings* are experiencing in Platonic terms is the *recollection* in the *Earth of Time*, which is only what they already knew through *spiritual genetic imprinting* that is occasioned by a process the Egyptians would call ,



thamit, “the state of knowing” that occurs in the *Earth of Eternity* that is, Heaven. The reason why this experience is not *Deja’Vu* is because the composite being never experiences what they are *recalling* or *recollecting* in the *Earth of Time*. They are only *recollecting* their own spiritual genetic imprinting or encoding by God that tells them first that they have now *past through onespiritual age veil* experienced as *memory* (Platonic recall of knowledge misconstrued as *learning*). This feeling of “Deja’Vu” is what has led to the New Age notion that someone has experienced “another life” in the *Earth of Time* and perhaps even to the idea current in Hinduism of *samsara* that is, *the endless cycle of rebirth* until we get it right and achieve *moksha* or *liberation, the final and unconditioned release from the karma and samsara cycle*, which is a state of death or incompleteness, that is, the Wheel of Death. According to the Egyptian understanding *physical rebirth* occurs in the *Earth of Time only once* and after you experience the *U-turn of Death* and thereafter are *born again* as a *spiritual being* in the *Earth of Eternity* as a *new being*. However, this new spiritual being is never completely disconnected

from their , *khat*, or physical body mummified in the *Earth of Time*. This Egyptian concept of not being completely separated from the body is Christian as well seen in the fact that Christ’s spirit after death reunited with his now glorified but nevertheless real body that he asked doubting Thomas to touch the nail holes in his resurrected flesh and even eating fish with his disciples after the resurrection so declaring the hypostatic and unbreakable union of the human and spiritual body (i.e. soul) after death.

Remembering that we have already said that while alive in the *Earth of Time* the Osirian traveler was never really separated from their eternal home in the heavens, that is, the *Earth of Eternity* where they received their *spiritual genetic encoding* for life in the *Earth of Time*. We supposed that

this was accomplished by means of preserving their , *ren* or “name” in an eternal book which was believed to exist in heaven or the *Earth of Eternity*. A composite being then according to this schema would experience two ages of *elapsed time*, one age, the *spiritual age* of the composite spiritual being born first in the *Earth of Eternity* and the *physical age* of the composite spiritual being given a second birth in the *Earth of Time*. The elapsed time for the physical age can be counted by date-points within any calendrical system; but the spiritual age of the composite being cannot be counted this way for obvious reasons because a time bound calendrical system cannot count elapsed “time” within eternity, because time as such *is no more*. Within that dimension time does not exist where we have said the composite spiritual beings *ren* or *person* is seated. The composite human person has as it were one foot in Time and one foot in Eternity, so that when a person experiences these feelings of “*I have been here before!*” they are in fact experiencing the elapsed “time” they have in terms of *distance from the self* or their *ren* left as an anchor in the *Earth of Eternity*. This gives them some sense of what their spiritual age is or how much time they have left to accomplish the mission they have been given but also these *recollections* serve as *warning* that *time is moving in swift transition* as the old Nu African hymn goes and they need to discover quickly what it is that God has told them to do in the *Earth of Eternity* and then get on with it before (as my ancestors have said) “your number is up,” and they have to experience the *U-turn of Death*. Death is one of the three great evils, besides the devil and hell that will be cast into the *lake of fire* which is the *second death* [Revelation 20:14-15] and the last triune aspect of *Nothingness* [Barth] making *Evil* and *Sin* an ontological and existential reality within the *life-world* and *lived-experience* of each human being. *Death, hell* and the *devil* as leading exponents of demonic experience with the life of each human person shall be done away with. The psychic-spiritual traveler dare not come to this *Kairos moment* [Tillich], this *third moment* [Hegel]

or this *occasion* led by God [Whitehead] unprepared and having failed to carry out God's will and purpose for the Self. As the Psalmist prayerfully ask God, "*Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom*" (Psalm 90:12) and to "*Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing whether it is good or evil*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, NIV). I have little doubt that the Egyptians understood this better than the modern human person as evident in the *Egyptian Original* we have explored to help describe the emotive psychic-mind and composite nature of the soul of the Osirian Traveler as they moved toward their God given destiny in the struggle with *Evil* on the *Superhighway of God* between Time and Eternity.



EPILOGUE

“WHAT IS THIS EVIL?”

An Examination of LaPierre’s *Theory about the Nature of Evil*

“This great evil---where did it come from? How did it steal into the world?”

Voice of a Soldier in the film *A Thin Red Line*

The voice of a soldier in the film *A Thin Red Line* (1998, war drama) asks the precise question that this book has been examining from its beginning to end about the origins and nature of Evil. And more importantly how did “it steal into the world.” Trying to answer this last question has led us to imagine that God has created a spiritual and emotive pathway that both Good and Evil must travel (each bounded by His immutable moral laws of righteousness and holiness) in a perennial struggle of ascendancy and power within God’s *Good Creation*. In trying to understand the nature of Evil we have therefore sought to understand this struggle of Good and Evil and how each must operate beginning at Frontier of God’s *Good Creation*. We have called this spiritual pathway *God’s Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. We have tried to demonstrate that Evil is allowed by God to operate on and travel the same pathway in God’s ordered cosmos even though by ITs very nature the IT must create chaos and devastation as its moves in a homicidal attempt to disrupt, upend, misdirect, destroy, cause havoc and suffering to all of God’s Setient living beings (i.e. men and angels alike). The reason why God (for the moment) allows this devastation, and suffering has been the perennial question of the *problem of evil* that theologians have wrestled with for centuries, perhaps beginning with St. Augustine, i.e. with a All-knowing, All-powerful, and All-loving God *why does bad things happen to good people?* How can Evil live and thrive if indeed such an Eternal God lives and sit on a throne of justice? The general response of the African-American or Nu African People has been formulated in song: *“We will understand it better by and by”* which at first seems to be a fatalistic emotive response to the tragic circumstances that the Nu African People have had to endure.

The terms *Holocaust* and *Ghetto* that are often used to describe the Jews suffering and genocide under the rule of Nazi Germany should never be used to describe the African-American or Nu African experience of suffering under the grand domestication system of European and Euro-America rule. Rather, **Maafa** in Swahili, meaning “*disaster*” or **Afa**, meaning “*calamity*,” “*ill-omen*,” are the appropriate terms and expressions that should be used. These terms describe a period of time encompassing the **Slave Trade**, **Southern Slavery** called the **Red Time** (1517 to 1965) followed by a period of **White Terrorism** (Public Lynching + secret dispatchment of black men + gang rapes of black women + raping, hanging, and “straw burning” of black women’s vaginas, then publicly displayed + sodomy of young black boys, etc. and other attempts at genocide (1976 to 1954). The second half of this period may be termed **Jim Crow** and **Zip Coon** [i.e. legal segregation and peonage] to the final period of racial discrimination, receiving *life sentences for stealing an ice cream cone, etc.*, and too frequent public murders of black men (in the present day) by white police, whose perennial legal defense is always *ad nauseum* “*I feared for my life*” and other *unexplained* hanging of black men from trees; determined by the coroners to be “suicide” (a familiar and unmistakable lynching MO) even though black men are widely known to be deathly scared of being choked less along purposely hang themselves from a tree (1954 to the Present).⁴⁹⁹ I don’t think the song we have

⁴⁹⁹ I know as a Nu African Orthodox Christian in the EOTC faith tradition, am not supposed to pray for such things but I cannot help myself as the rage and outcry of pain of my black Fathers and Ancestors arises in my soul; as I think about the terror they suffered for so many centuries. May therefore the God of my Black Ancestors judge these White Setian Devils (and the black ones who helped them) who did these murderous things to us; and for those who did not confess and ask forgiveness may their Evil souls burn in hell forever (according to God’s determined and promised Word) along with their Father, the Devil, who our Lord said was a murderer from the Beginning! Would that I had the courage of Tertullian, one of our African Church Fathers, who prayed not to go to Heaven but to be sent to Hell to witness the eternal suffering and burning in Hell of all of God’s enemies!

mentioned above and spiritual attitude we have means the Nu African People (i.e. African-American, which some ignorant blacks denounce in favor of being called “Black American” in order to distance and disconnect themselves from their African Continental heritage and origins), nevertheless do not and cannot try to understand the *why of things* that tragically brought us to these shores from our African Motherland, as well as struggling and hoping for **Afu**, meaning “*deliverance from calamity*.” Our emotive response is only to say that after we have mused over the question (if some Nu African’s like me choose to do so) we know that our God and Savior knows that *the why of things* mercifully will help us understand the *why* if not now then in our post-mortem existence with Him in our Paradise, where He will wipe all of our tears away (i.e. we will no longer experience the pain of our psychic-emotive memory of suffering) and where death **IT-Self** will no longer threaten our existence in the Presence of our God. God certainly understands that even in our post-mortem existence we still experience pain and, in our sorrow, and rage at suffering wrongs will still ask our God “Why?” Revelation makes it clear that we will experience this and that God will comfort us with His response of grace and love as we await vindication under His immutable and holy throne of justice when the **Fifth Seal** is opened by our Savior, the Lamb of God:

When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed for the sake of the word of God and for the testimony of the Lamb they had kept. They cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, holy and true Master, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” A long white robe was given to them. They were told to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow bondservants and brethren (who would also be killed as they were) should be fulfilled. (Revelation 6:9-11, EOB)

In the meantime while we await God’s *End Game* and *Final Solution* against the **Dark Trinitarian Powers Of Nothingness** (i.e. *Death, Evil, and Sin*), I for one have sought to seek some answers (with God’s help) and share with all who want some understanding; knowing full well that *only God knows!* I therefore do not subscribe to a **theory of everything** where there is an “ultimate, all-encompassing explanation or description of the nature of reality” with one of those realities being that Evil is *really real* and not some adoration of our psychic-emotive-mind. There is just too much “DNA” evidence to deny that Evil exists likely as some kind of dark power or entity and is not just the “absence of the good” within the human person. In other words, this **dark spiritual power** that we have called the **IT** existed *before in the beginning* when the human race was given birth and so cosmologically we cannot say that the human person is the source of Evil, nor as we have shown biblically throughout this work that Satan or Lucifer himself is the source of Evil either. All the human person can claim is that we have allowed this Evil, this **IT** to influence us to act in ways that violate God’s holiness because we desire the things that are provided through *demonic experiences* of MONEY, POWER, & SEX. Lucifer himself fell the same way by desiring POWER, that is “to raise his throne above that of God, Almighty, so that he could be like God, the Creator.”

LaPierre’s (2008) essay offering a *Theory about the Nature of Evil* understands the weariness and weightiness of this perennial question presented by the undoubted presence of Evil in every form where “Still, we must ask about the nature of Evil” no matter how tiring our perennial quest.⁵⁰⁰ What we have said in this work and what LaPierre says in his essay *is not* (by any means) the last and final word on this question and problem but for this work we let what he says and the examination of what he says be the last word *for now* as an *epilogue* (Greek ἐπίλογος, i.e. *epilogos*; where *epi* = “in addition to” + *logue* = *the discourse* = *the word already given*) of what we have been saying all along. LaPierre from his experience as a military chaplain for over twelve years believes that there is ample and justifiable reasons to continue the study on the question of the nature of Evil even though “the most important question about Evil are either unanswerable or unlikely to have answers that all would agree upon.” But nevertheless, he states:

Yet it is important to ask those questions because Evil can attain such monstrous proportions that it continues a threat to the survival of humanity and even of the earth. Just in the twentieth

⁵⁰⁰ Lawrence L. LaPierre. *A Theory about the Nature of Evil*. In *The Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling*. (Spring-Summer 2008, Vol. 62. Nos. 1-2), p. 100.

century of the Common Era humanity has had to deal with wars of historic magnitude, the near destruction of the Jewish people in Europe, the extermination of millions of Russian and other peoples in the Soviet Gulag system, the development, testing and use of nuclear weapons, the use of poison gas on combatants and non-combatants, racially and religiously-inspired violence in many parts of the world, the assassination of several world leaders, the widening of the gap between the well-to-do and the poor, and the widespread pollution of our ecosphere. These are just some of the examples of the consequences of Evil at work.⁵⁰¹

And LaPierre could have added the consequences of relegating the study on these questions about Evil and the Problem of Evil itself as a non-theological philosophical discipline (with exception of the work of Charles Hawthorne) unrelated to the Doctrine of God and the Doctrine of Man, thus forfeiting the advancement of this study to the level of a theological discipline with its own Doctrine of Evil that seeks to uncover and theologically examine the *“seducing spirits, and doctrine of devils”* (1 Timothy 4:1, KJV) that advance Evil in the world and so failing to recognize therefore that Evil is an organized set of teachings that need to be exposed and uncovered. This needs to be understood so that the IT can no longer operate in the darkness or IT(s) acolytes and devotees disguise themselves as Children of Light and Satan their leader as an Angel of Light (2 Corinthians 11:14), who teaches men the so-called *“the deep things of Satan”* (Revelation 2:24, EOB) seducing them by the false promises and lure of the *demonic* pleasures of MONEY, POWER, & SEX. The urgency of such a developed discipline alongside the Doctrine of God and the Doctrine of Man will not allow slavery and its aftermath of human death, outrage (e.g. rape, public lynching of many thousands of black men and women, over 5,000 and counting) and the intentional international crime of genocide against the African and African-American People (i.e. secret murder of as many black people as possible, disappearing to be heard of no more admitted to by former confederate generals in congressional hearings) to deserve a serious hearing; but becomes historical study or a footnote of history; which nevertheless, needs to be added to LaPierre’s important reasons for studying the questions of Evil that threaten the survival of mankind. The Evil that spawned these horrors along with the genocide of the Native American People (for some) are no longer as important to examine under this question because it is not supposedly within human memory (even though the last public lynching of African-Americans was around 1956) or under the direct gaze of the international community; say comparable to LaPierre’s mention of the Russian Gulag (forced labor) beginning in the 1920s to the year of Stalin’s death in 1953.

The Devil must no longer be laughed at as the “Man in the Red suit with a pitchfork and pointed tail” but viewed as a *really real* homicidal enemy of mankind whom Jesus himself said was a “murder from the *beginning*” (John 8:44); and who while not Evil incarnate (as this work shows) is yet the Chief acolyte and devotee of the IT, *the dark Trinity of Death, Evil, and Sin*, leading the dark powers and principalities in a continued warfare against God’s *Good Creation* operating on *God’s Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. Evil as an Entity (i.e. IT) has aim an purpose as a *rational collective of Evil* opposed to God on His cosmic *Superhighway* where both Good and Evil struggles under a set of spiritual laws that govern the rules of spiritual warfare. These laws are divinely determined by God who puts limits on all forces Good *and* Evil that operate on it. In the study of this struggle between Good and Evil operating within the superstructure of God’s *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* the *nature of good and evil* may be better understood in respect to aim and purpose of each. A Jewish scholar by name Jamie L. Perez, M.Ed. (2004) gives his view for the aims of both Good and Evil in his essay *The Nature of Good and Evil*. Perez states:

Recently, while pondering over what I knew about good and evil, outside the parameters of traditional doctrines, I began to see correlation between the two – and it was unnerving. Both good and evil seek to spread their influence; both seek to overcome or defeat the other. But it was the divergences between these two concepts that were especially troublesome to me. Evil, by its very definition, is aggressive and will use any and every tactic to win converts or destroy those who oppose it. If we take the Biblical concept of the Edenic serpent as the personification of evil, what do we see? The serpent uses half-truth to convince the humans that God does not have their

⁵⁰¹ LaPierre, p. 100.

best interests at heart. The serpent uses half-truths to convince them to openly defy God. **In this case, the serpent served as an “evangelist” for evil: a preacher seeking converts and proselytes.** [bold type my emphasis]

If we proceed a bit further in the Bible we see the incident with Cain and Abel. Both are offering “minchah’s” to God. Minchah’s are a type of offering designed to determine one’s status before God. If accepted, it means that God favors you. If rejected, it means that God has rejected you. As most are aware, God rejected Cain’s sacrifice but accepted Abel’s. There could be many reason’s for this rejection, but Scripture hints that it had to do with Cain’s heart: he was in a losing battle with evil. Though not overtly stated, this story rings with sibling rivalry (similar to that of Joseph and his brothers). The rejection of Cain’s sacrifice was the “final straw.” He slew his righteous brother in a fit of jealous/anger/resentment. **In this case, evil did not seek to convert its enemy, but destroy it/him.**

By the fifth chapter of Genesis we find that only one righteous man remains out of the millions (perhaps billions) of people on the earth. How could mankind have wiped out all the good and righteous people on the earth? **Evil, by its very definition, is aggressive and will use any and every tactic to win converts or destroy those who oppose it.** “YHWH saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,” (Genesis 6:5). And what did this evil look like? “The earth was filled with violence” (Genesis 6:11). Many would like to claim that God condemned mankind for idolatry or paganism, but the bible does not mention it. It only pairs evil with violence. Those who opposed evil were being destroyed by [IT]; either through forceful conversions or dearth. In either case, the innocent were helpless victims against the onslaught of the increasingly rampant and powerful evil. By the time of the flood, Noah was the last of the “good.”

As seen by the above three examples . . . evil either converts its opponents or destroys them. It never offers peace. It is never content. It is never satisfied. It seeks wholesale control and power. If this is the nature of evil, how does [IT] differ from the nature of goodness?

The “good” also seeks converts . . . but with the tools of love. The “good” are not aggressive to their opponents, or forceful. The “good” does not use the tactics of evil: deceit, manipulation half-truths, violence, persecution, aggression, etc. The “good” only uses violence in self-defense or in defense of the innocent. It first offers peace, seeks a non-violent solution, goes the ‘extra-mile’ in seeking for the path to reconciliation. It does not condemn or judge those who walk other paths. It does not force its own agenda and beliefs upon others. It is not motivated by jealousy, greed, fear, pride, or arrogance. It only seeks to live in peace with others. . . . In other words, love is the definition of goodness, and goodness is the nemesis of evil.

Good and evil – both have similar goals, but the difference lies in both their motives and practices. Evil will use deceit, violence, and aggression to win converts. Therefore, any religious or non-religious entity that uses deceit, violence, or aggression can be fairly characterized as “evil.” Though it may (ironically) call itself, “good.” . . . Good uses love, honesty, peace, patience, and charity to be a “light” to others. Rather than actively proselytizing, it serves as a place of refuge and comfort to those seeking shelter from the ravages of evil. It is the “light in the darkness.” Light does not have bloody crusades and inquisitions to forcibly bring others into the light. It draws people by its love, patience, understanding, and contentment. Light doesn’t use subversive or deceitful tactics. Light simply “is” . . . and that is enough.⁵⁰²

Perez hits the nature of Good and Evil right on the head in very clear easy to understand language; but his description of Evil does not give the IT spiritual embodiment as a *rational/irrational dark power* nor how **Evil** as with Good are enabled to operate within the temporal sphere of human experience with God’s *Good Creation*, less alone the perennial question of *whence comes Evil* and as LaPierre has asked in

⁵⁰² Jamie L. Perez. *The Nature of Good and Evil*. In *The Midrashic Guide & Perspective*. (<http://www.tmgp.net>. Copy right 2004-2005. TMGP.NET.

his essay “*This great evil—where did it come from? How did it steal into the world?*” Perez’s biblical insight though brilliant still begs the question that if Evil has the aims that Perez suggest how can one avoid the conclusion that Evil is *really real* and is an Entity. The most important thing we learn from Perez is that Evil is by nature *homicidal and rational/irrational* and therefore is willing to destroy all life (that which IT depends on for its own existence) within God’s *Good Creation* in order to maintain *grand-domesticationschema* overall living human persons and all human institutions with the aim of causing them to openly defy God and assault His holiness; and/or bow to IT in worship as *acolytes and devotees*, rewarded of course with temporary *demonic pleasures* like “friends with benefits” derived from the dark desires and lusts of our hearts (i.e. *non-obligatory fornicating* merely for convenience to satisfy physical lust). In contrast to this view of Evil, Shakespear sees Evil as at the least manipulative (of course with the same aims as outlined in Perez); but not as especially aggressive but rather subtle appeals to the lusts and greed of the human heart to carry out ITs homicidal need to destroy ITs human hosts. Evil in Shakespear is more like our present-day social media influencers appealing to the psychic-emotive heart of the human person to get them to buy the product or services of others so they can reap a monetary harvest and more than that acquire status through its manipulation. Elaine Pilkington in her view based on an analysis of Shakespear’s *Macbeth* sees Evil rather as a benign passive dark power (present and always available to influence and assist the human person in their mad drive toward self-destruction). This view holds that Evil is the agent of the human person rather than the person being ITs agents, acolytes and/or devotees, or so they think! Yet somehow the same homicidal result ending with the destruction and death of the human person occurs just the same so that Evil can claim *innocence* and put the entire blame on the human person who IT only assisted in their dark and lust filled aims. In this case they deserve the outcome that they brought on themselves and by their own choices being *carried away by the lusts of their own heart*. The Shakespearean view is more in line with St. Augustine’s notion that *Evil is the absence of the good* in the heart of the human person. In her essay *Macbeth and the Nature of Evil* (2004) Pilkington states:

Macbeth examines the nature of evil and the corruption of the human soul. In *Macbeth* evil is the opposite of humanity, the deviation from that which is natural for humankind, yet evil originates in the human heart. Supernatural and unnatural forces are the agents of human beings, not their instigators. The witches’ words do not seduce Macbeth. He is compelled by his own ambition and his wife’s ruthlessness. Similarly, spirits do not solicit Lady Macbeth, rather she invokes their aid for her purposes. . . . The evil of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is so great that ultimately [IT] destroys both of them. The human soul cannot endure such evil. One way or another evil destroys the soul. Knowing he is doomed to lose, Macbeth still battles against Macduff, the representative of virtue [goodness] and the redresser of the play. Lady Macbeth is defeated by madness and death. Evil is incompatible with humanity.⁵⁰³

LaPierre takes a novel approach to the question of Evil that appears to be more in line with our analysis and approach in this work, than either Perez or Pilkington (although both have valid insights worthy of this study) that is, “if we ask about Evil as a singular entity rather than the experience of multiple forms of chaos destruction, and death, we are asking a different and perhaps more difficult question. We are asking about the inherent nature of Evil as a phenomenological reality” that as a phenomenon seems to fall outside our immediate experience of it. We experience it as “chaos, destruction and death” and we try to explain the nature of Evil from these acts and accidents of human tragedy which leads to forming circular questions like “why does bad things happen to good people.” Since Evil as a “singular entity” seems to fall outside of our direct human experience how can we approach its study or understanding as a phenomenon, for a phenomenon must be experienced in order to determine the aim and purpose of its nature. The other problem that comes to mind here is that Evil seems to have no rational aim or purpose but the destruction and humiliation of sentient being within God’s *Good Creation* and even the ecosphere of the His creation itself. And if we add to this the seeming random nature of the

⁵⁰³ Elaine Pilkington. *Macbeth and the Nature of Evil*. In *Insights* (2004).

human and ecological destruction and the idea carried in this work that the irrationality in the nature of the ITs is that *IT seeks to destroy and cannibalize the very living sentient being and creatures IT needs to live in and on to preserve its negative being and existence*. LaPierre recognizes one central aspect of examining Evil as a “singular entity” using a phenomenological approach in that it is not subject to the methods of scientific positivism that seeks to understand the nature of a thing or phenomenon by observation, measurement, and the all-important need to test and retest the results. That is not possible if one seeks to study Evil as “phenomenological reality” and as a “singular entity.”

Of course, the question may never be answerable to the satisfaction of those of use with scientific training. The problem, in part, is that science, by its very nature, is confined to observing and measuring what can be detected either by our five senses or by devices constructed by minds and bodies that live within our *three-dimensional* universe (plus Time). The problem for scientists and others is that Evil, like God, may not be confined to those limits. Evil may not be subject to even one objective analysis, much less statistically reliable testing that allows us to reproducibly measure its continuant elements or verify its overall nature. Nevertheless, we must clarify, to the best of our ability, what we believe Evil to be. If Evil is a spiritual reality and if it in any way evolves or undergoes a metamorphosis, then humanity needs to make the question about the nature of Evil one of its ongoing questions—*i.e.* instead of a question which is settled once-for-all.⁵⁰⁴

Nevertheless, the impotence of scientific positivism and scientific method in dealing with the question “What is This Evil? And more pointedly “This great evil—where did it come from? How did it steal into this world?” The question needs to be answered, and a genuinely acceptable method is needed to begin asking and answering these questions. “Where did it come from?” LaPierre says we only have two choices which are “straightforward. Evil can emanate from within human beings or from somewhere outside of us. Some of us may believe that Evil originates in humanity itself as an individual collective reality. . . . Plato sees a human being as torn between the opposites of good and bad. In other words, the Evil is within the person and is very hard to control.”⁵⁰⁵ In this work, however, we have posited the notion that Evil is stationed somewhere on the outer frontier of God’s *Good Creation* and enters into it by means of *God’s Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*, to influence negatively either the human person and other spiritual beings operating within the same temporal/spiritual plane and/or exercising ITs power to negatively affect the human material environment in just a way as to cause great ecological devastation (e.g. flood, hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanic activity, earthquakes, fires, etc.) See Job Chapter 1 and 2 to envision how these things might come about that this biblical text called the “Fire of God come out of Heaven” (Job 1:16) and today what we call “Acts of God” to differentiate massive natural disasters from those caused by men (e.g. war, murder, genocide, greed leading to starvation of large sections of earth’s population, the ever present threat of nuclear annihilation, ecological environmental short sighted policies threatening to deplete earth’s natural resources, and poison the air we breathe, etc.). LaPierre mentions other possibilities:

Others of us may believe that it [Evil] originates with a supernatural (spiritual but not necessarily divine) intervention of some sort. This might include magic, witchcraft or the existence of spiritual beings who are free to work their mischief on human beings. Or we may be left with what seems like no choice but to credit the Divine with being the source of Evil as well as the source of Good. The bottom line is that Evil functions in ways that leave little doubt about its existence. It must be faced and, to the greatest extent possible, understood so that we can minimize its impact on our individual and collective lives. Accommodation with evil is a dangerous option. As Gerald May noted in his book *Addition and Grace*, “Evil is irrevocably at cross-purposes with love, life, freedom, and creation”⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰⁴ LaPierre, pp. 100-101.

⁵⁰⁵ LaPierre, p. 101.

⁵⁰⁶ LaPierre, p. 101.

LaPierre next presents a number of alternative views on Evil both Christian and popular views current within American society, two of which are biblical views that supposedly explain how Evil was able to “steal into the world” and another which is the saga of the struggle between Good and Evil that began as “War in Heaven” with Satan and his angels being cast out of Heaven down to Earth by the Arch-Angel Michael and the Angels of God under his command. This story in the Book of Revelation continues as narrated by the Apostle John with Satan and his angels continuing this war on Earth with mankind:

A war took place in heaven; Michael and his angels made war on the dragon, and the dragon and his angels made war. But they did not prevail, and there was no longer any place found for him in heaven. The dragon was hurled down, the great old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now has come the salvation, the power, and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ! For the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the words of their testimony. They did not love their life, even to death. Therefore, rejoice, heavens, and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he only has a short time. When the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he began to persecute the woman who had given birth to the male child. Two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly from the face of the serpent [and escape] into the wilderness, to the place where she might be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. Then from his mouth, the serpent spewed water like a river after the woman, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing up the river which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. The dragon became enraged with the woman and departed to make war with the rest of her seed, those who keep God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. **Revelation 12:7-17, EOB**

LaPierre suggests that this biblical account is satisfactory to this extent that it gives an explanation of how Evil might have stolen itself “into the world.” Yet he states that this is a bipolar approach to understanding Evil which is the product of a singular being, the Devil and his angels (i.e. now demons) with no collusion between the Devil and humanity that would explain how humanity sinned therefore needing redemption and salvation. This view is rectified in the Book of Genesis with the story suggesting the Fall of Man in the Garden of God influenced by the deception engaged in by the cunning Serpent. But here we want to emphasize this story in Revelation showing that Satan (as we propose an acolyte and devotee of Evil is on **ITs** behalf) is not without power to create havoc and devastation on Earth because Revelation 12:4 says that “*Behold, a great dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven crowns. His tail drew one third of the stars of heaven and threw them down to earth*” suggesting as some have interpreted this verse to mean that Satan acquired by force *one third of the power of heaven* to carry out his continued war that began in heaven with mankind. This affirms the notion that can hardly be denied that Evil is *really-real* and has supernatural power through its Chief acolyte and devotee, the Devil, Satan, the Old Serpent to carry on the devastation, death and corruption of Evil we see on the Earth. Yet, as we have tried to show in this work making Satan Evil incarnate is problematic and still does not explain where Evil originated although it may provide some insight as to **ITs** homicidal purpose to destroy mankind and the rest of God’s *Good Creation*.

You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. **You were in Eden, the garden of God;** every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created the were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and expelled you, O guardian cherub from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of you beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your

splendor. *So, I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.* By your many sins and dishonest trade, you have desecrated your sanctuaries. So, I made a fire come out from you and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching. All the nations who knew you are appalled at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more. **Ezekiel 28:12b-19, NIV**

How have you fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! **You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations?** You said in our heart, “I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: “Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?” **Isaiah 14:12-17, NIV**

These passages give the reasons for the War that began in Heaven and now continues on Earth but they say nothing about the origin of *Evil/Itself*. As we have shown with these two passages here and elsewhere in this work that Satan cannot be Evil incarnate because before he became the Devil, Satan, that Old Serpent, he was Lucifer, the “Morning Star,” the “Son of the Dawn!” whose role was “guardian cherub” in **Eden, the Garden of God**. He was counted as one of God’s Angels of Light with great beauty and power so that it begs the question that if Lucifer was originally an Angel of Light *whence came Evil?* Here we pass over for the most part LaPierre’s Genesis account of Man’s Fall in the Garden of God where the Serpent (i.e. Lucifer, the Old Dragon, Satan, the Devil, etc.) based on Ezekiel’s account above was “anointed as a guardian cherub” . . . “in Eden, the garden of God” apparently task with protecting the newly created humans; but who instead sought to deceive them and cause them to sin and thus violate a direct command of God. This scenario called on God to provide both punishment for sin and redemption from sin thus beginning the saga of the redemption story calling for a Savior. Here mankind chose to sin against God, but God chose to save him, nevertheless. What are LaPierre’s answers to the primordial question “What is this Evil?” “Whence this Evil?” and/or “How did it steal into our world?” LaPierre begins by describing a theory of spirituality that promises to offer an alternative view of Evil. LaPierre infers that both Evil and Good needs *specific spiritual paths or human dimensions* to operate effectively within God’s *Good Creation* that feels cognitively like what we have proposed in this work *God’s Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*, where he wants to *objectively measure* six dimensions of spirituality. He states:

In an earlier paper I described a theory of spirituality that offers the basis for an alternative view of Evil. According to this theory, human beings are spiritual beings who may be involved in any one or more of six substantially different dimensions of spirituality: *transcendence, journey, transformation, religion, community* and “*the mystery of Creation.*”⁵⁰⁷

LaPierre adds to this thought a quantitative method or way of measuring the direction of the human spiritual response to the phenomenological experiences of Good and Evil found in the creation, something like measuring the flow and direction of the Nile to determine the balance between the spiritual cosmological forces (unseen) and what is seen (the Nile). His diagrams (while not presented within such a cosmological scheme) at least promises to measure the direction (positive or negative) of the six dimensions of spirituality allowing his theory on spirituality and our cosmological theory of emotive movement within the creation (i.e. *God’s Superhighway*) to use quantitative as well as qualitative methods to determine the levels and movement of Good and Evil within society among humans. One could ask at this point can quantitative methods be applied to emotive or cognitive concepts like spirituality like one would in measuring a number and weight of a bushel of apples, etc.? In today’s research methods it is not odd to see the use of quantitative methods and measurements applied to human social categories of thought and feeling that once was reserved exclusively for application by qualitative research methods.

⁵⁰⁷ LaPierre, p. 104.

This development has been helped by the acceptance of using mixed methods in human science research. However, this notion of measuring categories that were once thought to be the subject of non-scientific positive research did not begin with the modern age of scientific positivism. The ancient Egyptians were famous for combining cosmological and religious notions and ideas with the use of mathematics, measurement, and sciences like astronomy, algebra, trigonometry, geometry, and calendrical calculation much of which had to do with their survival based on the understanding what happens in each season of the year, especially the inundation of the Nile River, measuring it and controlling its flow. Cosmology and practical science for them was not a fancy or a casual but a matter of life and death. At the cosmological level the Egyptian were the first to measure the levels of Good and Evil within their society and the world

with the concept of  **Ma'at**, meaning among others “a goddess, the personification of law, order, rule, truth, right, righteousness, canon, justice, straightness, integrity, uprightness, and of the highest conception of physical and moral law known to the Egyptians.” E.A. Wallis Budge (1911) in his *Osiris & The Egyptian Resurrection*, Vol. 1 gives the etymological origins of the Egyptian hieroglyphic **Ma'at** and its importance in relationship to the *eternal post-mortem destiny* of men and mankind, in respect to weighing their “words,” and “heart” all playing a part in the final judgment of their “souls.” Budge states:

Putting these statements together we see that Osiris was the “great god, the lord of heaven, the judge, and the lord of *Maat*.” By “lord of *Maat*” is meant “possessor of *Maat*.” The primary meaning of *Maat* is “straight,” and as far as we can see the same ideas which were attached to the Greek word ΚΑΥΩΝ (i.e., a straight rod, a mason’s rule, and finally a rule, a law, a canon, which governs men and their actions) belongs to the Egyptian word *Maat*. The Egyptians used the word in a physical and moral sense, and thus it came to mean “right, true, real, genuine, upright, righteous, just,” etc. . . . The just and upright man is *Maat*, and “God judgeth right.” When the Egyptian said that Osiris was the “lord of *Maat*” he means, clearly, that he was the “lord of justice,” and a judge who “weighed words,” or actions, with righteous impartiality: in fact, a just judge. Osiris was able to be the just judge when he sat in **judgment on the souls of men**, because he kept an account of all their deeds and words, which were duly written in books by “two scribe-“gods” (Thoth and Sesheta) who made the entries in the “registers, and reckoned up the accounts on the tablets, “and kept the books carefully.” [Revelation 20:12, “And I say the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.”]. Every man’s actions were known to him, nothing was hidden from him, and his verdict in each man’s case was according to the evidence written in the Registers of Doom by Thoth and Sesheta. (Budge. *Osiris*, Vol. 1, p. 309).

How then did (like Jesus centuries later) Osiris become this impartial divine judge empowered and having the right to judge men’s moral actions by “weighing their words?” and “weighing their hearts?”,

that is “the measurer”, that is,  **merukh-t** in the form of the Horus-Christ, his divine Son, “the left eye of Horus (Budge, Vol. 1, p. 315). As Budge ask the question “Now, how had Osiris acquired this great reputation as strictly impartial judge, and as righteous god?” (p. 309) The short answer is that

he used the *standard*, that is,  **maha**, (Budge, Vol. 1, p. 285) or moral measurement of  **Ma'at** determined at the “weighing of the heart” in the Great Hall of Judgment wherein souls were weighed on the *Great Scales*,  **MKhaa-t**, (Budge, Vol. 1, p. 285) within the Great Hall, adjacent to the Throne of Osiris:



The Egyptian Original (primarily the  **pert-em-hru**, Budge (1967), *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani*, p. xxx) show that he himself became that **standard** of moral justice because of his triumph over Evil and Death itself as the resurrected one a  **maa-kheru** “true of voice” and thus can say like Jesus “*I am the way, truth, and the life*”(John 14:6, Jesus said. . .) of every Osirian traveler who would follow or attempt to follow in his pathway to Life Eternal. Osiris is or becomes by his own suffering, trials, and crucifixion *the way, the truth, and the life* as noted below in the hieroglyphic text from the *Pert-em-Hru* :

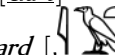
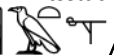
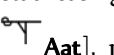

The Way [**Ua-t**;  l, “way,” “road,” “path,” “journey,” “dual”] :

“O openers of the way [and openers of the roads to souls perfected in the house of Osiris, open therefore ye to him *the way* [i.e.  l, **Ua-t**], open therefore ye the roads to the soul of Osiris . . . The *scales*[i.e.  , **M’khai**, “to weigh,” “to measure,” “to ponder,” “to judge”] have been emptied of [his] trial” [i.e. because Osiris has been himself found innocent/not guilty of sin, because he has been found “*true of voice*” **maa-kheru** and enabled to lead men to the truth and show them “the Way” to become “true of voice.” See Budge, Vol. 1, p. 271].⁵⁰⁸

Note: John 8:45-46 “But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell you the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. For this reason, you do not hear: because you are not of God.” (EOB); and also note 2 Corinthians 5:21 “For God made him who knew no sin to become sin for our sake; so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God.” (EOB).

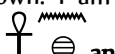
⁵⁰⁸ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Egyptian Book of Dead: The Papyrus of Ani*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), p. 23-24.

The Standard (of Truth) [, Aat] –

“I have opened the way [] in Restau easing the pain of Osiris, making to enter that which hath weighed *the standard* [] *Aat*, making *his way* [] in the valley, great one [making] *the way. Shineth Osiris.*”⁵⁰⁹ “I am exalted upon *my standard* [] Nu, upon the place adjudged to me. I am **Nu**, not shall overthrow m those who do evil.” (p. 174), where **Nu** [] i.e. I am the divine primeval water of life from whence everything came”, Budge, Vol., p. 349], where Jesus said: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! From within whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said will flow rivers of *living water!*” (John 7:37-38, EOB)

Note: In the semantic domain of , **At** = “a standard, perch, or resting place of a god” (See Budge, Vol. 1, p. 13) say like Osiris”; perhaps resting on the truth or standing or perched on the truth of *Maat* might be tenable or acceptable moral ethical interpretation] for elsewhere in the *Papyrus of Ani* Osiris says: “Abomination to me is sin, not do I look upon it, not do I cry against right and truth [], i.e. **Maat**], I live in it. I am **Hu** [i.e. ], “divine food” like as Jesus said of himself “I am the bread of life! The one who comes to me will not be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty” John 6:35, EOB]. Budge, *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, p. 173.

The Life [, Utchat] –

I am the lord of eternity, I feel, I perceive. I am the lord of the crown. I am in the *utchat* [] [and in] my egg, twice. It is granted to me *to live* [i.e.  **ankh**] [with] them. I am in the *utchat* [] in [its] closing. I exist by its strength. I come forth [and] I shine; I go in [and] *come to life*, [] I am in the *utchat* []. My seat is on my throne. I sit in the pupil of the eye by it. I am Horus traversing millions of years . . . I have commanded my seat, I rule it by [my] mouth; speaking and silent I maintain *an exact balance*. Verily my forms are inverted. I am the god Unen, season from season, what is his is in him, [I am] One [coming] from One He revolveth. I am in the *utchat* []. Not are my things evil [or] hostile, not are they against me. [I] open the door in heaven. I rule [upon] the throne, opening births on day this. [I am] not the child walking upon the road of yesterday, I am day this for peoples upon peoples. I it is who make strong you for millions of years. . . . I am the pure one in his eye, not shall I die a second time. (Budge, *Papyrus of Ani*, pp. 217-219).

Notes: Normally when one is talking about the Egyptian concept of life the hieroglyphic that comes to mind is the **ankh** . The  is a very popular symbol in the Western world, becoming more of a cultural symbol for those who want to give expression to spirituality without being associated with religion, a very safe and none controversial and self-satisfying way to give expression to religious feeling without being classed a secularist or atheist. In fact, the full hieroglyphic word for the **ankh** appears twice in the passage we have given above but curiously enough the hieroglyphic word **utchat**  appears four times and even more curious seems to have the predominate focus and relationship to that of **ankh**, something that would be unexpected in the West. **Utchat** in fact is what grants Osiris and his followers the strength

⁵⁰⁹ Budge, *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. 57-58

and or power of life. Without **utchat** “strength” Osiris and his followers in their post-mortem state of being would not have access to life or **ankhat all**. In fact, *the Osiris* says that he *rules by utchat* and it is by its strength to maintain an *exact balance* of over the **Words of Power** (i.e. the **exact and appropriate balance** between speaking these words and keeping silent, or refraining from speaking). Finally, it is **utchat**



and not the **ankh**  that Egyptians wore as a symbol of spirituality that makes the Osirian Traveler in the Egyptian conception strong for a million years and have the power *not to die a second time*. So, what is the source of **utchat**? From the basic meaning “the eye of Horus [right eye of Horus, the Sun], the eye of Ra, the amulet of the solar eye, gives the wearer strength” (Budge, Vol. 1, p. 194) to achieve all of what we have said above. So, if the ancient Egyptian lived in today's popular culture of the West they would not necessarily wear the **ankh** but the **utchat** amulet because it to them would be the source of what grants life itself and the power to maintain that life into (for them) millions of years.

In fact we find that **uchatis** directly related to the **Ka Soul**  of a person and makes the person whose they are “image, genius, double, character, emotive disposition” reside in the person's body, i.e. **Ba Soul**  “the heart-soul,” “might,” “power,” “strength,” “courage,” all of it giving the person **Ka**  “image, genius, personhood, double, character, disposition” and “vital strength belonging to the **Ba-Soul**” (Budge, Vol. II, p. 782) so that when Jesus says “I have come to give life, and life more abundantly” (John 10:10) it makes more sense and has tremendous import when related to these ancient Egyptian cosmological and religious concepts that has been shorn of their meaning for seekers of spirituality without religion in the West. Egyptians would not have understood modern spirituality outside of a specific religious and cosmological context. The concept of spirituality outside of religious context or institutions is strictly a modern Western phenomenon and has nothing to do with the Old Time Religion of the Ancient Blackman.

From what we have done so far is see that the ancient Egyptians were concerned about man's eternal destiny right on into his post-mortem state of existence and that the state of his soul depended on obtaining or being able to claim a set of moral ethical norms where these ethical norms were judged by a standard called **Maat** used to *measure* the level of Good and Evil not only in the society the Egyptians were in while they lived but also the balance of Good and Evil in a person's own heart and soul. To gauge or measure this the Egyptian needed and *Exemplar* or *Savior* that would show them the *Way*, the *Truth* and the *Life* that following this divine exemplar or savior Osiris would lead to eternal salvation because he himself had already followed this pathway, that is, *The Way*, that allows the human person to become an *Overcomer* (as in “He who overcome . . . in Revelation, Chapter 3). Fortunately, for the Egyptians this same divine personage would be their judge and so they were guaranteed to have an empathic ear to hear their pleas for mercy before his throne on judgment day. For this their heart had to be weighed in the balance by a set of scales in which the heart was placed on one side and the *Maat Feather* was placed on the other, so that Osiris could see that the good in their heart outweighed the evil remaining or left in their heart. This was an exacting measurement that seemed impossible to obtain given that *the Osiris* being judged also had to listen to a list of his good and evil deeds that were kept exactly by the Divinity Thoth. Surely *the Osirian* was doomed. Budge explains all of this in the following scenario found in his *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection* Vol. 1:

The conception of the judgment of Osiris is very, very old, but no representation of it older than the XVIIIth dynasty is extant. The Hall in which the judgment took place was, according to the Papyrus of Nebseni (Sheet 30), a long chamber which was called the “Hall of the Two Maat Goddesses, . . . of the Two Daughters Mertu of the Lord of the city of Maati,” or the “Two daughters Mertu, Eyes of Maat (Truth).” The door of the Hall was called “Khersek-Shu; and the upper leaf of the door “Neb-Maat-heri-retui-f,” and the lower leaf “Neb-pehti-thes-menmenet.” The Hall is, in fact, in the form of an elongated funerary coffer. Above the palm-leaf cornice is a frieze, and in the centre of this is the figure of a seated god with his hands extended over two pools (?), each of which contains an eye of Horus. These pools may have some connection with the two pools called “Millions of Years” and “Great Green Lake,” which are mentioned in the XVIIth Chapter the Book of the Dead . . . On each side of this figure are: -- 1. An ape seated before a pair of scales 2 Thirteen

feathers of Maat , and thirteen uraei , arranged alternately. 3. An ape seated before a pair of scales.



The form of the scales is unusual. A forked upright supports a beam. At one end are attached two cords which hold the pan of the scales wherein is a square weight, and from the other hang two cords, which seem to be connected by cords of bars. What these signify or how these were used is not known. The ape represents Thoth, the inventor of numbers, and computer of time, and secretary of Osiris. By the side of one of the folding doors are seated the two Maat Goddesses, each holding the scepter of "serenity" in her right hand, and "life" in her left. On the

head and scepter of each is the feather , symbolic of "truth." Across the Hall is a row of mummied human forms, each wearing the feather of "truth" on his head. These represent a series of two-and-forty gods or spirits whom the man to be judged is supposed to address individually by name, and to declare that he has not committed such and such a sin. . . . We have already seen that the cult of Osiris took the place, little by little, of the cult of ancestors, and it is very probable that, the deceased made his statements to him and also to the two-and-forty gods. . . . According to the information given to us by the latter form, the "two-and-forty gods were beings "who made prisoners of the wicked and devoured their blood on the day when the characters of men were investigated in the presence of Unen-nefer" (i.e. Osiris). The wicked were, of course who were condemned in the judgment of Osiris, and who were, in consequence, the enemies of these gods of punishment. . . . In this as in many other things, the inherent conservatism of the Egyptians caused them to retain the names of the two-and-forty gods in their religious works, long after all belief in their existence had disappeared from their minds. . . . At one end of the Hall, seated within a shrine, is the god Osiris, whose body is held up, or embraced, by the goddesses Isis and Nephthys. Thus, these goddesses are shown twice in the Judgment, once among the gods who sin in judgment, and once here. The shrine is in the form of a funeral chest, the front side of which is removed so that the god, who is drawn in profile, may be seen. . . . Osiris wears the White Crown,

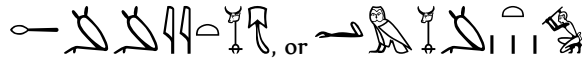
to which are attached two feathers , one on each side. The White Crown was originally the crown of the god Khenti Amenti and when it was adopted as the head-covering of Osiris the two feathers were added to it to indicate Truth, which was his chief characteristic. . . . Another crown

often worn by Osiris in the Judgment scene is the "Atef," , which is the ordinary crown of the god with the addition of a pair of horns. This calls to mind the head-gear of the Alunda men, with their excrecent tufts and horns. . . . The feathers on the crown of Osiris are from the ostrich, presumably those of a male bird, but of which of the three great types, East African, South African, or North African, is not clear. Formerly the last-named type was found right across the Sahara from the Sudan and Nigeria to Tunis and Algeria, and from Senegal eastwards to Syria and Arabia. One or more feathers were worn by many African peoples of the South and with whom the Egyptians came in contact, and among the Egyptians "bearer of the feather" was a title of honour. Head-dresses made of feathers are frequently worn by peoples of the forest region between the west coast of Tanganyika and the Lualaba Congo at the present day. . . . Round his neck Osiris wears a deep collar of necklace composed of many rows of beads and other ornament, and from that portion of it which lies on the nape of the neck hangs the *menat*

 an amulet which signifies material happiness, physical well-being, bodily pleasure, and sexual delights. . . . The objects strung with the beads were amulets which were intended to protect the god from injury of every kind, and they have their counterpart in the kauris, teeth, etc., which are found on the necklaces worn by men and women at the present day. The three objects, the whip

, or flail, and two scepters  were as much amulets as symbols of authority. . . . At the other end of the Hall of Judgment is the Balance in which the heart of the deceased is to be weighed. It consists of a stout upright pillar, set in a stand, from one side of which, near the top, projects a peg, made in the form of the ostrich feather typifying "truth." From this peg, suspended by a cord, hangs the beam of the Balance, with the two pans, each of which is suspended by two

or more cords. The right pan usually holds the feather of Maat , or the goddess Maat , and on the left the heart which is to be weighed. On the top of the pillar of the Balance is sometimes places the head of the goddess Maat, or the head of Anubis, or the head of the ibis, which was sacred to Thoth, or a figure of the dog-headed ape, which also was sacred to Thoth and was even called by this god's name. The actual weighing of the heart was usually performed by the jackal-headed god Anubis, the son of Set and Nephthys, who in dynastic time held in respect of the judgment of the dead a place which his father Set held in the great trial of Osiris before the gods who were assembled in the Hall of the Great Prince in Heliopolis. Set on that occasion was the accuser and calumniator of Osiris, and he brought charge after charge against the god with malicious pertinacity, until at length Thoth silenced him and made clear the innocence of Osiris. There is no proof that Anubis followed his father's example when he was present at the weighing of the heart of a deceased person, but the care which he displayed in scrutinizing the position of the pointed of the Balance, and his obvious anxiety lest the heart should gain any advantage to which it was not legally entitled, make it quite clear that the deceased could expect no favour from him. Close by the Balance, however, stood the ibis-headed god Thoth, holding his reed and palette, and he watched the weighing of the heart of the servant of Osiris as carefully as he watched the trials of Osiris himself. Near the Balance also sat or crouched the monster Am-mit,



the awful "Eater of the Dead," a beast which had the head of a crocodile, the body of a lion, and the hind-quarters of a hippopotamus. This creature was believed to eat the hearts which were light in the Balance and were condemned in the judgment, or damned. In the Papyrus of Thoma it is Horus, and not Anubis, who conducts the weighing of the heart, and Anubis presents the heart of the deceased to the two apes of Thoth which sit before Osiris. . . . The speech which is put into the mouth of the deceased when in the Hall of Osiris during the weighing of his heart is the same in all the large illustrated copies of the Theban Recension of the Book of the Dead, and forms the section of that work which is commonly known as Chapter XXXb. It is an address by the deceased to his heart, which he calls his "mother" and the seat of him in judgment, and that there may be no opposition to him when he is in the presence of the Tchatcha, and that his heart may not be parted from him. The Tchatcha were the divine beings who assisted Thoth in keeping the registers of Osiris; they were, according to the Book of Gates, eight in number, and they kept a record of all men's lives, and worked in connection with the celestial timekeepers in the kingdom of Osiris. The deceased next addresses his heart, calling it his Ka, *i.e.* his double; he likens it to Khnemu, the Potter-god who fashioned man on his wheel. Thus, the heart was regarded as the mother and the father of a man. The deceased then prays for his heart's happiness, that the Shenit, *i.e.*, the officials of the Court of Osiris, may not make his name to stink, that the weighing of his heart may result in a verdict of not guilty, and that no falsehood may be uttered against him. . . . This prayer having been said by Ani, the god Anubis examined the pointer of the Balance, and finding that the beam was horizontal, and that the heart of Ani exactly counterbalanced the feather of Maat, he was unable to show reason why Ani should not be proclaimed innocent. Thereupon the god Thoth, the just judge, declared to the gods in the Hall of Osiris that the heart of Ani had been well and truly weighed, that his soul also had borne testimony concerning it, and that the Balance had proved that it was *Maat*, or right and true. The weighing had discovered no wickedness in Ani. Thoth went on to say that Ani had not abused his position as treasurer of the sacred property of the gods, either by careless administration or robbery, and that he had neither done evil nor uttered evil while he lived upon earth. Thus Thoth was satisfied that in all his dealing with men, both as an official and as a private citizen, Ani was blameless. The gods then replied to Thoth, saying that they accepted his report concerning Ani and ratified it and they declared that, so far as they were concerned, he had neither sinned against them, nor treated them lightly. Therefore they decree that the monster Am-mit shall not have the mastery over him, that offerings of meat and drink shall be provided for him before Osiris, that he shall have an estate allotted to him in the Field of Peace (or, the Field of Offerings) for ever, and that he shall rank there with the gods of olden days who were called the "Followers of Horus." Thus Thoth and the Company of the Gods are satisfied as to the innocence of Ani, so that the great god may receive him and admit him into his kingdom. The presentation is performed by Horus the son of Isis, who takes Ani by the hand, and leads him into the presence,

saying, at the same time: "I come to thee, Un-Nefer, I bring thee the Osiris Ani. His heart is righteous, it has come forth from the Balance, It has not sinned against any god or any goddess. Thoth weighed it in accordance with the decree spoken to him by the Company of the Gods. The Great Truth has testified [for him]. Let cakes and beer be given to him [of] what appears before Osiris. Let him be like the Followers of Horus or ever." In this speech Horus calls Ani Osiris, meaning that Ani is as innocent as Osiris was; therefore he calls him Osiris. He then goes on to say that Ani has been through the ordeal which the gods decreed for every person who wished to enter into the kingdom of Osiris, and that he come forth from it triumphant. Finally, he asks Osiris to let Ani live on the offerings which are made to him and let him take his place among the Followers of Horus. Thus Ani is innocent before the gods and goddesses; without this qualification of innocence he could not dwell with Osiris. Ani then passed before Horus to the shrine of Osiris, and, kneeling by his table of offerings, which is the spirit-form of the offerings made by him to Osiris upon earth, and said : "Behold me, O Lord of Amentet, I am in thy presence. There is no sin in my body. I have not uttered a lie wittingly I have not done aught with a false heart, *i.e.*, I have never practiced fraud or deceit. Grant thou that I may be like those unto whom thou has shown favour who are in thy following. Let me be an Osiris who is greatly favoured by the Beautiful God for I am beloved of the Lord of the Two Lands (*i.e.*, the king), the real royal scribe who loveth him, Ani, innocent before Osiris. What answer Osiris made to his faithful servant is unknown, but it is assumed throughout the papyrus that he ratified the judgment of Thoth and the gods, and admitted Ani to his kingdom.⁵¹⁰ Pp. 315-335.

This postmortem ordeal (especially if it were believed by people in this post-post-modern age of PC and Identity is enough to make ones hair stand up on edge. Presumably, before one dies in this post-mortem scheme, one should examine one's own heart; but in this age no one would know what the heart consisted of or what it meant even though it is casually spoken in many connections as if everybody knew or understood was meant by the heart. The ancient Egyptians did not leave that understanding to chance. One had to understand what is the human heart to examine it, because it was presumed to be threatened with eternal damnation if it were not found to be in balance with the *Maat Feather* on the Scales in the Judgment Hall of Osiris. Spiritually, the Egyptian, if he were a Follower of Horus would have prepared while he yet lived and already begun to examine his own heart to test it against the standards of Maat that were available to him in the texts of the *Pert-em-Hru* and other moturary and wisdom texts. This attitude of spiritual and emotive self-examination is lauded in Christian scriptures as well: "*Let us examine and probe our ways. And let us return to the Lord.*" **Lamentations 3:40**; "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all un-righteousness.*" **1 John 1:9**; "*Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith, examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?*" **1 Corinthians 13:5**; "*I considered my ways, And turned my feet to Your testimonies.*" **Psalms 119:59**; "*Tremble, and do not sin. Meditate in your heart upon your bed and be still*" **Psalms 4:4**; "*How many are my iniquities and sins? Make known to me my rebellion and my sin.*" **Job 13:23**.

What is the Heart?

(According to the Ancient Egyptians and Ethiopians)

Six Portals of the Rational Human Heart: Zara Yacob, Ethiopian Philosopher

To understand how Evil influences the human heart of man we must first understand what the human heart is according to the Ancient Egyptians and Ancient Ethiopians. God battle's evil at the frontiers of God's *Good Creation* and at *the six portals of the human heart*, where evil can gain entrance. Ayele Bekerie, an Ethiopian visiting professor in the Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University states in his book *Ethiopic: An African Writing System* (1997): "According to the Ethiopian philosophers,

⁵¹⁰ E. A. Wallis Budge. *Osiris & the Egyptian Resurrection*. Vol. I. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), pp. 315-335.

the six doors of the heart are *the senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste, touch and the power of movement*.”⁵¹¹ These six physical senses allow Evil (generally bound at the frontiers of God’s *Good Creation*) to enter onto the *Superhighway of God* through the *emotive* and *psychic-mind* of the human person that seeks to satisfy these six lower physical senses. Evil provides *demonic experiences* as rewards to satisfy these six physical senses through the emotive and psychic-mind of the human person. The greatest of these Ethiopian philosophers who advance this horizon of thought is **Zara Yacob** (ደብተራ ዘረ ያዕቆብ) born in Aksum in 1592 C.E. became a däbtära(ደብተራ) scholar and teacher after sixteen years of intense university studies in theology, grammar and poetry. At the end of these studies, he wrote a philosophical treatise called Hätäta(ሐተታ) which has earned him acclaim as the *philosopher of the heart*, that is, the philosopher of the rational (thinking) and feeling heart. Explaining Zara Yacob’s philosophy in modern terms Teodros Kiros states:

In the West, the heart is a symbol of emotions. In the East, the heart gathers into one word a kaleidoscope of forms and colors: the penetration intelligence (“one understands with one’s heart”), moral conscience (“one knows in one’s heart what is good and what is evil”), authenticity (“Words reveal the thoughts of one’s heart”), the interior axis which polarizes the fragments of the person (“To penetrate a being to its very heart.”) The heart as part of the body is a muscular pump, and as the house of the mind, is an organ of thought. In the body and mind dichotomy that raged in the seventeenth century, with Descartes claim that the body and the mind cannot interact [the Egyptians would disagree, my insertion], one possible way by which this dichotomy can be overcome, is the Copernican revolution that Zara Yacob staged, by giving a hint of a resolution. That resolution is his view that the human heart is both part of the body and mind. As a part of the body it is muscular pump and as the seat of the soul it is the center of thinking, since the creator endowed the heart with a penetrating intelligence. On his view the mind and the body are already interacting in the heart.⁵¹²

Teodros Kiros goes on to apply the implications of Zara Yacob’s ideas on the rational heart to the modern problems of Evil in human social relations and polity:

I shall presuppose this conception of rationality, when I argue that the human heart is rational in this particular sense. In the moral-rational sphere, speaking and acting subjects consult the heart before they intervene to take action,, motivated by an injustice or simply acting on the calls of a moral and practical vision. The penetrating human intelligence inscribed in the heart as Zara Yacob taught us propels humans to change the world, to transform it by effective moral-rational action. The moral-practical thought aiming at changing the sphere of morality is located in the human heart. *Lib*, (heart) in Geez is the home of wisdom, It is the fountain of truth. All the feelings percolating there are themselves rational thoughts that can be validated either as true or false. It is the heart that authenticates them. . . . When we say that something is from the heart, what we mean is, (1) The feeling which ground thought are authenticated; (2) That the thought is honest; (3) That the thought is carefully felt out; (4) That the agent has distinguished inauthentic thought from authentic one; (5) That the agent says only what she means; (6) Finally, the thought provokes moral action; it compels the actor to make decisions.⁵¹³

Ancient Egyptian *Maat Examination* of the *Ab* Heart

Ethiopian scholar Teodros Kiros, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Berklee College and DuBois Fellow at Harvard University, November 5, 2018) states: “Before Yaqob, ancient Egyptians also embraced the heart as a cradle of thought. They mummified the human heart and sucked out the brain. The heart

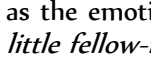
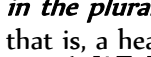
⁵¹¹ Ayele Bekerie. *Ethiopic: An African Writing System, Its History and Principles*. (Asmara, Eritrea: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 1997), p. 97.

⁵¹² Teodros Kiros. *Zara Yacob: Rationality of the Human Heart*. (Asmara, Eritrea: The Red Sea Press, Inc. 2005), pp. 118-119.

⁵¹³ Teodros Kiros, p. 119-121.

captured their imagination and stimulated their reasoning power and wisdom. It is said that hearts were lifted and soaked in wines and herbs, preserved for worship by saints. The Egyptians were cardiocentrists. They considered the brain worthless and [so] worshipped the heart instead.” So how did the Egyptians describe the human heart, its emotive character for feeling and passions; sorrow, etc. ; and what did it consist of since weighing it against the standard of *Maat* = *Truth, Justice, & Righteousness* was so critically important in term of their eternal salvation and avoiding the rigors and terrors of Hell and the Lake of Fire? Budge (1978) in his *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. 1:

Ab  “heart, middle, interior, sense, wisdom, understanding, intelligence, attention, intention, disposition, manner, will, wish, desire, mind, courage, lust, self”; noting the following grammatical variants explaining the emotive conditions and moods of the heart:

-  “joy,” “gladness” ;
-  “to eat the heart” meaning “to be sorry”
-  “dense of heart”, perhaps the idea that little can get through to such a heart; such as the emotive pain or suffering of others, or the critical situation of others, *i.e. hard-hearted, little fellow-feeling*
-  “everybody”, perhaps the idea of “everybody’s heart” because this hieroglyphic for **Ab** *is in the plural and so* “other-regarding” as a meaning is possible, although it is a modern ideal; that is, a heart being willing to include consideration of the others pain, and suffering.
-  “thoughts,” “intentions”
-  “heart of my heart”, perhaps that which the heart hold most dear. The determinative of the god Horus suggest a spiritual level of caring, adoration of something on the highest spiritual level of love, like the love of God, *i.e. Agape Love* (?), as if the God is somehow the determining factor in what is held most dear to the person, the closest thing, person, belief, etc. to the persons heart, as in “my child is closest to my heart”, “my dear friends situation is on my heart” ⁵¹⁴

Before this postmortem ordeal explained by their spiritual cosmogony⁵¹⁵ and how to balance (or measure) the level of good and evil within the human heart following the moral ethical standards of *Maat*; the Egyptians had yet to worry about the level of Good and Evil in society itself and how to determine or measure that within their cosmological scheme, which required or sought to have more good than evil in society but at the least that good and evil were in balance. This must be the case of the Egyptians portended disaster, which seem to turn on the flow of the Nile upon which their economic survival depended. This desire and critical societal need brought about a number of novel ways to measure its flow and also a plethora of practical sciences in mathematics and astronomy and others to help the Egyptian forecast this before anything disastrous happened. For this they depended on their Pharaoh, his priests, and a plethora of highly skilled scribes within his divine government. Under *Maat*  cosmological standard and rubric for justice and righteous, “right thinking, right doing” the Pharaoh’s job was to bring Good and

⁵¹⁴ Budge. *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. 1 , p. 37.

⁵¹⁵ (*i.e.* an human persons eternal destination and a system of belief that explains it, based on the origins and evolution of their *life-world* and *lived-experience* that world; in other words an explanation of the origin, evolution and eventual fate of the universe, from a religious perspective. This may include beliefs on origin in the form of a creation myth, subsequent evolution, current organizational form and nature, and eventual fare or destiny).

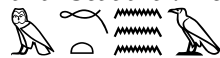
Evil into balance with one the other in order secure the wellbeing and tranquility of Egyptian society and with the divine authority of Osiris-Ra it was to be said of him in the *pert-em-hru* (𓂏𓂣𓂰𓂱) “Coming Forth by Day”, see Budge, *Book of the Dead*, p. 19) that “Fear followeth after thee, thy terror [is] upon his two arms. Embraced art thou for millions of years by their arms, go round thee mortals, thou smites down the advocates of *thine enemies, foes, opponents*, (i.e. 𓂏𓂣𓂰𓂱 *khefti*, Budge. *Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. 1, p. 545), thou seizes the *powers of darkness* (i.e. 𓂏𓂣𓂰𓂱 *Sami*, Budge, *Book of the Dead*, p. 54) by their arms. . . . Those who rise up against thee *evil* (i.e. 𓂏𓂣𓂰𓂱 *lant*, Budge, *Book of the Dead*, p. 55) [cometh] among them”⁵¹⁶ The Egyptians never thought that Evil could be destroyed outright but the best that the collective society could do was bring both cosmological forces into balance with one the other. They could measure how well the Pharaoh achieved this by how well he appeared to control the Nile River flow to bring agricultural prosperity to the people living along this great river and prevent its destructive power. Actual measurable calculations were used (e.g. the Royal Cubit) by the Egyptians to determine this flow and during certain parts of the year (i.e. the 1st Season of the Egyptian Year 𓂏𓂣𓂰𓂱, *aakh-t*, which according to Ankh Mi Ra (1995) in his *Let the Ancestors Speak: Removing the Veil of Mysticism from Medu Netcher* is “the season of spouting or bursting forth, of crops (winter) the idea of harvest”, p. 130, during the Gregorian Calendar months July 20 to November 15) so that spiritual balance was declared achieved by the measurable outcomes within God’s material universe, grounded in *cosmos*, i.e. *good order*. Bringing *cosmos* out of *chaos*, where *cosmos* is the greatest Good and *chaos* is the greatest Evil. This balance was of paramount concern for the Egyptian, who believed that this struggle to bring cosmos out of chaos had primordial origins beginning in the Heavens. The Egyptians needed to understand this primordial struggle that transmuted itself within the temporal plane of Earth or in their way of saying it *As Above, So Below*. What happened in the Heavens surely affected their earthly existence, which could portend disaster; and so they needed to be able to control it by bringing about cosmological balance between *Good* and *Evil*, *Cosmos*[order] and *Chaos* [disorder]. For them this was the rational where *need is the mother of invention* for development of the practical sciences, e.g. mathematics and astrology, etc., for example that which would give them the upper hand in this struggle especially if the Pharaoh, the Man-god on Earth charged with bring about this order failed in his task or was (so to speak) sleep at the wheel, or incompetent. According to the late Cheikh Anta Diop (1981) in his *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*.

Divine Providence, the cause of the World, is good and can only conceive of that which is good and beautiful, like Ra, Amon, Ptah, all the great divinities of Egypt who created the world at different stages. This creator, according to Plato, “had wanted all things to be born in his likeness, whenever possible. . . .” “He expelled, as much as it was in his power, all imperfections, and also he took the whole visible mass, deprived of any rest, changing without order and measure, and he brought it from disorder to order, for he had deemed order to be worth infinitely more than disorder. And, never was it permitted, never is it permitted to the best to make anything but that which is the most beautiful” (*Timaeus*: 30a, b, c.). These divine preoccupation that consist of loving the Good and hating Evil have passed on to the popular level as a moral ideal, in Egypt and all over Black Africa. Thus, the Platonic universe, as much later than that of Leibniz, is optimistic, therein identical to that of Egypt and the rest of Africa. The above-cited passage of Plato could be taken for an excerpt (without reference) from the Heliopolitan cosmogony: as a matter of fact, in this cosmology the *Nun*, the chaotic primordial matter, was first the site of an indescribable disorder and it is the action of the god Khepera, though time, that will actualize the essence of Ra, who brought order by completing creation, in beauty and goodness. This is the reason why order (*Hu*), justice or truth (*Maat*) are of divine essence for the ancient Egyptians as they are for Plato.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, pp. 54-55

⁵¹⁷ Cheikh Anta Diop. *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*. (Lawrence Hill Books, 1991), p. 339.

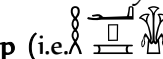
The Egyptians therefore were obsessed with understanding *the FLOOD* in the primordial **Nun**, the **black mass celestial water** that was above the Earth out of which chaos, Ra created all that was orderly and beautiful. Yet cosmologically and on the temporal plane the Nun was threatening to them as

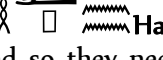


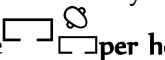
mehit Agba, the *Great Flood*. Thousands of years before the time of Moses the Egyptians believed that such a great flood actually happened on Earth, which they called



mehuiu, the *“flood that destroyed mankind”* which Moses apparently retold as the story

of *Noah and the Ark*. The **Nile** = **Hap** (i.e.  the Nile of Lower Egypt;  the Nile of Upper

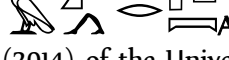
Egypt) the temporal expression of  **Hapi River** (i.e. the Nile of the Other World) represented such an earthly threat for them and so they needed a scientific way to measure its flow, control it if possible, and at the least have a means to forecast if disaster by the flood waters were imminent. This job was given to the Pharaoh and the Egyptian priests and mathematical science of measurement was used, namely the **royal cubit** linked to a structure for measuring the Nile River level widely referred to as the

Nilometer. Such a structure was likely associated with or actually was the  **per hesb-t**, *“the house*

of counting” for the semantic domain for the name of this office or bureau was the same as for  **hesb-t**, which means an *“account, a reckoning, a calculation, estimate, the total, scheme, plan, design, a measuring stick or cord, a result of thinking, the right, or true correct measure.”*⁵¹⁸ This is likely because

some of the Nilometer's were outfitted with **“measuring sticks”** which was the art, trade, and skill belonging to those who worked in the **per hesb-t**. Since most Nilometer structures used steps that led down to the water of the Nile and were used as part of the way the level of this River was measured it could have been

also called or referred to as an  **Aqa** “steps,” “height,” “a high place” (Budge, *Egyptian*

Hieroglyphic Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 10-11) in the same semantic domain as  **Aq-t-er-pet** the “Celestial Ladder”, Budge, p. 10, Heb. “Jacob's Ladder.” Zaraza Friedman (2014) of the University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel wrote a scholarly essay for the *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures* entitled the **Nilometer**. In this work Friedman states the following:

The Nile played an important role in the historical and the economic life of Egypt. Throughout history, Egypt was an agricultural nation that became the granary of the Mediterranean Basin. The river Nile is one of the most predictable rivers in the world. The rise and fall of the Nile is regular and quite precise with floods that are rarely destructive. After the beginning of the rainy season in Ethiopia, the Nile starts to rise in early June and gradually swells to its maximum by the end of September, when the lands in Egypt are flooded with the appearance of islands. Diodorus Siculus gives a detailed description of this phenomenon:

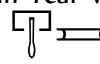
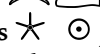
The rise of the Nile is a phenomenon which appears wonderful enough to those who have witnessed it, but to those who have only heard of it, is quite incredible. While all other rivers begin to fall at the summer solstice (around June 21) and grow steadily lower, this one (Nile) begins to rise at that time and increases so greatly in volume day by day that it finally overflows practically all Egypt. . . And since the land is level plain, while the cities and villages, as well as the farm-houses, lie on artificial mounds, the scene comes to resemble the Cycladic Islands. (Diodorus, 1.36.7-9)

This period of the inundation is also dedicated to festivals and ceremonies such as the account given by Diodorus:

⁵¹⁸ Budge, Vol. 1, p. 510.

The masses of people being relieved from their labours during the entire time of the inundation turn to recreation, feasting all the while and enjoying without hinderance every device of pleasure (Diodorus, 1.36.10)

The flood remained quite static for about one month and then subsided more and more until December or January, when the Nile returned to its original bed. In early June, the river was reduced to its half of the flood breath (Said, 1993, p. 96)⁵¹⁹

At this point it would be helpful to take a closer look at the Egyptian seasons of the year before going on to the technical description and metric measurements used for various Nilometers and the mathematical basis for measurements they took to forecast and warn the Egyptian about what the Season of the Inundation was about to do, whether it was just going to be the normal annual flooding  **agab**, that is, “the Nile, water-flood, deluge”; or  **agap**, “the flood that destroys.”⁵²⁰ It is to be noted here that some scholars begin the season of inundation with the  **Aakh-t**, and others think it is  **Shemu**. Budge confusedly marks **Aakh-t** (Vol. 1, p.22) as the first month of the Egyptian year (noting it begins July 20 and end November 15th) and then marks out **Shemu** as the Summer Season of Inundation (Vol. 2, p. 740) with essentially the same period (July 19 to November 15th). This should make **Shemu** the First Season of the year and not the Third, as can be inferred elsewhere when he makes  **Per-t** as the *Second Season* (Vol. 1, p. 242). Below we will follow the description of the three Egyptian Seasons (that have four months each) given by Ankh Mi Ra (who believes he is following Budge) in his grammar *Let the Ancestors Speak* (1995), where he begins the Egyptian Year with **Shemu** as the *First Season* of the Egyptian Year, and the **Period of Inundation**, that is,  **Per-kheru**. According to Ankh Mi Ra:“Each season was divided into four months  **3bd**, which yielded a twelve-month year. Conventionally the months were referred to by their numbers only and the season in which they fell . . . But later, in religious text, each month was given a name”:



COPTIC CALENDAR BASED ON THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SOLAR CALENDAR & ITS SEASONS

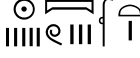
SEASON 1  **šmw** (Budge **Shemu**):“the hot, watery period of inundation”

Month	Meaning	Copt. Translit.	Sahidic	Julian Calendar
	“Personification of	Thoth	Θοοϥ	29 August – 27 Sep

⁵¹⁹Zaraza Friedman. *Nilometer*. In *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*. (Springer Science + Business Media Dordrecht 2014).
⁵²⁰ Budge, Vol. 1, p. 12.

lpip

 "The birth [of] Ra" Mesore Μεσωρη 25 July – 23 August
Mesut-Ra

 "Five Epagomenal Days" Pi-Kogi-Enavot ΕΠΑΓΟΜΕΝΑ 24 Aug. – 28 Aug.⁵²²
Hru-tiu-heru-renpit

The annual inundations are important to Zaraza Friedman's discussion on the *Nilometer* in respect to metrological measurements (i.e. using the scientific study of measurement) involving the Egyptian *Royal Cubit*, as we are continuing our look at how Egyptian science of mathematics and measurement was interested in measuring almost everything, from what they saw occurring in the heavens, too phenomenon they saw on Earth like the flow of the Nile so vital to their life and survival; to the weighing almost every emotive aspect of the human heart (i.e. *psychic mind*, etc.). Friedman states:

The Nilometer was invented for recording the annual inundation in Egypt and to control the floodwater. As the name suggests, the device originates from the area of the Nile in Egypt. The Nilometer's function was based on the physics principle called "communication vessels."⁵²³ At three different levels in the Nilometer shaft, three channels were connected to the Nile River (Fig. 1)



Hieroglyphic Dictionary, Vol. 1, p. 40. Also see p. 22, where the semantic domain of **Aakhet** means "inundate." It is unclear what source Ankh Mi Ra used for his findings from Budge. Ankh Mi Ra also ignores the fact that the Egyptians had a *Thirteen Month Calendar* and not a twelve-month calendar based on the five *epagomenal* days, i.e. the five days over the 12-month year with 30 days in each month $\{12 \times 30\} + 5 = 360$ days + 5 days = 365 in the year. The Egyptians did not give the 5 days date-points, but since they had to include them to make up the 365-day Solar calendar they made each day represent one of the

birthdays of the five most important Egyptian god, namely 1. **Osiris** []; 2. **Horus** [];

3. **Set** []; 4. **Isis** []; and 5. **Nephthys** []. See Budge. *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*. Vol. 1, p. 451.

⁵²² The five *epagomenal* days, i.e. the five days over the 12-month year with 30 days in each month $\{12 \times 30\} + 5 = 360$ days + 5 days = 365 in the year. The Egyptians did not give the 5 days date-points, but since they had to include them to make up the 365-day Solar calendar they made each day represent one of the birthdays of the five most important Egyptian god, namely 1.

Osiris []; 2. **Horus** []; 3. **Set** []; 4. **Isis** []; 5. **Nephthys** [].
See Budge. *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*. Vol. 1, p. 451.

⁵²³ "Communicating vessels is a system of containers filled with a homogeneous fluid, connected at the base and subjected to the same atmosphere pressure. . . . If additional liquid is added to one vessel, a new equal level will be established in all the connected vessels."

Fig. 1 Kom Ombo temple Nilometer. . . This device is a well-type Nilometer. Two channels at different levels are set within the wall of the well. A third channel was set close to the *bottom* of the well.

During the flood, the water would enter through the channels and fill in the shafts, bottom. If the water rose up to 16 cubits marked on the pit, that would indicate goodprosperity for the year. If the level was less [than] 16 cubits (e.g., 12 or 14 cubits), that meant, famine, whereas a higher level of 19 cubits would indicate a catastrophe, and the soil with the sown seeds would be washed away. **The inundation levels control became the responsibility of the priests. Thus, Nilometers were mainly enclosed in temples where only the priests and the ruling pharaoh could have access to these devices.**⁵²⁴

TYPES OF NILOMETERS ⁵²⁵

According to Friedman there are “three main types” of Nilometers and “some combined types, that is, (1) a wall or corridor with steps; (2) a well; and (3) a column. He provides three illustrations of what he is talking about:

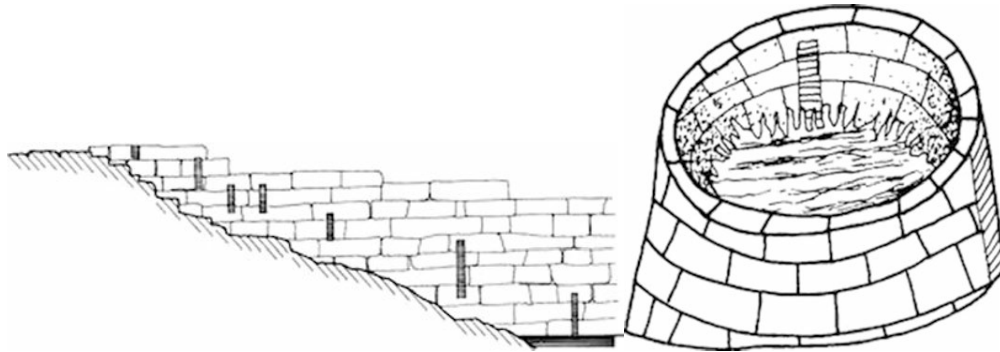


Fig. 1. Wall or Corridor Nilometer

Fig. 2. Well Nilometer

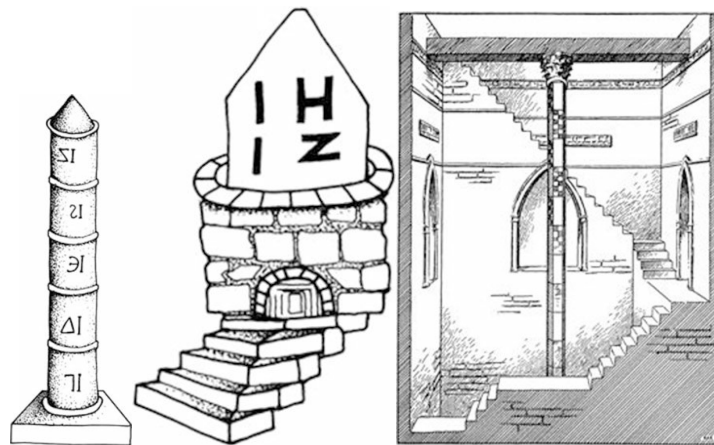


Fig. 3. Column Nilometer **Fig. 4.** Well with Column **Fig. 5** Roda Nilometer

Friedman also states:

⁵²⁴ Friedman, p. 1 of 22

⁵²⁵ Friedman, pp. 5-7 of 22.

The significance of the Nile's flood is associated with Memphis, which is located at the root of the Delta. Diodorus (1st century BCE), wrote that the kings of Egypt constructed a *Niloscope* (Nilometer) at Memphis where administrators were appointed to make accurate measures of how many cubits or fingers the river (Nile) had risen or when it commenced to fall (Diodorus, 1.36.11). These inundation levels could predict the grain and corn harvest, since the Egyptians kept accurate records of their observations over a long period of time (Diodorus, 1.36.12). The surveying records of the Nile's levels are difficult to interpret since various measuring devices throughout historical periods did not use the same zero point and most probably not the same scale. The oldest records come from a stone stela, dated to Dynasty V (2480 BCE), known as the "Palermo Stone," named after the Museum of Palermo, where it is found (Fig. 2). (p. 2 of 22)



Fig. 2Palermo Stone (From Said, 1993, p. 135, Fig. 2.13). 1 cubit = 7 hands/palms = 28 finers = 2 spans = 0.524 m (Said)

Additional parts of this stone are found in the Cairo Museum. The Palermo Stone is assumed to come from the Memphic area. W. Helck completed a study of the stone in 1966 and converted these records to the metric system: The gauges to record the Nile flood levels were marked in cubits, a metrological unit comprising 6 or 7 palms, thus indicating two kinds of measures: the small cubit = 6 palms and the royal cubit = 7 palms. The hieroglyph used on cubit rods to indicate

metrological fingers appears as 4 (a palm with four stretched fingers [i.e. ]), 5 (a palm with

five stretched fingers), and 6 (a clenched fist, [i.e. ]). The small cubit was considered the length of the forearm from the elbow to the thumb, equaling 45 cm, while the royal cubit was the length of the forearm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, equal to 52.5 cm (Robins,

1982). Since the cubit was the length of a forearm [] and Egyptian men were of varied height and arm length, there were different cubit units. The royal cubit was divided into 7 palms or 28 fingers (524 ± 5 mm), while the small cubit into 6 palms or 24 fingers (449 mm). The double remen (740.7 mm) was the length of the diagonal of a square with each side of one royal cubit (Singer, Holmyard & Hall, 1965, p. 777). This metrological unit was the base of the Egyptian land measure. The double remen was divided into 40 digits (each digit = 18.5 mm).⁵²⁶



THE SCRIBES: "MEN OF BOOKS" ( , METCHA=T)



& THE "MEASURERS" (  , MERUKH-T) + ROYAL SCRIBE (  , SUTEN AN)

⁵²⁶Zaraza Friedman. *Nilometer*. In *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Culture*. (Springer Science + Business Media Dordrecht 2014), p. 3 of 22.



Subject of Scribal Tradition: Royal Family, e.g. Rahotep and his wife Nofret, son of Snofru



The Egyptian scribal tradition in regard to mathematics, weights and measures, which includes a discussion of the cubit, and the Egyptian royal cubit is provided in a detailed monograph by Richard J. Gillings (1972) in his *Mathematics in the Time of the Pharaohs*. Gillings has this say in respect to Egyptian scientific knowledge base (developed over long centuries) that was available to the Egyptian scribes, who practice in various areas writing, mathematics, architecture, construction, record keeping, etc.:

Well may we express our admiration of the wonderful architecture of the Egyptian temples of Karnak and Luxor, at the grandeur and the immensity of the Pyramids and at the construction of their magnificent monuments. Well may we wonder at the government and the economics of a country extending nearly a thousand miles from north to south though which ran the longest river of the then-known world. And well may we marvel at the Egyptians' design of extensive irrigation canals, at their erection of great storage granaries, at the organization of their armies, the building of seagoing ships, the levying and collection of taxes, and at all of the thought and effort concomitant with the proper organization of a civilization that existed successfully, virtually unchanged, for centuries longer than that of any other nation in recorded history. What we today call science, and mathematics must have played an important role in the achievement of all this. I am reminded of a piece of wisdom attributed to Arnold Buffum Chase, the principle author of *The Rhind Mathematical Papyrus*:

I venture to suggest that if one were to ask for that single attribute of the human intellect which would most clearly indicate the degree of civilization of a race, the answer would be, the power of close reasoning, and that this power could best be determined in a general way by the mathematical skill which members of the race displayed. Judged by this standard the Egyptians of the nineteenth century before Christ had a high degree of civilization.

If we accept this though as one containing a solid measure of truth, then it will surely come as a great surprise to the readers of this history to find that whatever great heights the ancient Egyptians may have achieved scientifically, their mathematics was based on two very elementary concepts. The first was their complete knowledge of the *twice-times table*, and the second, their ability to find *two-thirds of any number*, with integral or fractional. Upon these two very simple foundations the whole structure of Egyptian mathematics was erected No Egyptian scribe

could ever have claimed to be the first man to pick up a mallet and chisel, and to have said to himself, "Now I am going to invent hieroglyphics." He could never have set about carving on a block of stone various figures that would have a special meaning or would convey a message to those who might see it. Neither could it have happened that some intelligent scribe could have been that very first to think of slicing up some Nile River papyrus reeds and, by placing some strips crosswise over others and pressing them flat, invented "paper" ; then, bruising the end of a smaller reed and having dipped into a pot of "ink," made the dramatic announcement, "Now I am going to write in hieratic characters!" Neither of these things could have happened like that. The invention of hieroglyphics, which must have come first, took many, many years, perhaps centuries. And hieratic writing, the first cursive form of hieroglyphics, developed much later, as a quicker and more convenient way of recording an agreement, conveying a message, or making a calculation with numbers than by the detailed drawing of pictographic hieroglyphs. No one is able to say exactly when writing as we understand it actually began. But with the Egyptians, as with other ancient civilizations, the method used to represent numbers must have been at least easier than writing their phonetically equivalent words.⁵²⁷

Gillings later in his work gives a rather full description of the Egyptian understanding of the cubit, and states:

CUBIT: A *cubit* was originally the length of a forearm, from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. Of course, individuals' limbs varied in length; and two standard cubits came into common use early, the *Royal Cubit* and the *Short Cubit*. The former was the cubit usually meant in measuring everyday life and was 20.6 inches (more accurately 20.59), while the short cubit is reckoned to be 17.72 inches, hence the "cubit and an hand breath" In later times the term "cubit" was still used, the Greek cubit being 18.22 inches and the Roman 17.47 inches

PALM: The *palm*, or handbreadth, was one-seventh of a cubit and thus 2.94 inches if taken from a royal cubit and 2.53 inches from a short cubit. To the nearest tenth of an inch, the royal cubit was 2.9 inches longer than the short cubit. Some authorities state that for the short cubit six instead of seven palms was the equality use. This is plausible, for then the short-cubit palm would be 2.95 inches, very close to the royal cubit palm of 2.94 inches.

FINGER: A *finger*, sometimes called a *fingerbreadth* or a *digit*, was one-quarter of a palm or handbreadth. Thus 28 fingers equaled a cubit. It was nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, or 0.735 inch from the royal cubit and slightly less from the short cubit.

HAYT: The chief multiple of the cubit was the *hayt* (*rod* or *cord*) of 100 cubits.

REMEN: A *double-remen* was the length of the diagonal of a square whose side was one cubit. Using the royal cubit, which was most commonly the case, a double-remen was therefore 29.1325 inches ($\sqrt{2} \times 20.6$), and consequently the *remen* was 14.566 inches. It is thought that the double-remen was used in measuring land, because it enabled areas to be halved or doubled without altering their shapes.⁵²⁸

Gillings goes on to describe a number of other Egyptian *weights and measures*, some related directly to the cubit, but specialized in terms of what is being measured, including **KHET**, **SETAT** the common unit for measures of land, where a *setat* was a square *khet* or 10,000 square cubits. "What was called a *cubit-strip* was a long rectangle of 100 cubits by 1 cubit, or one khet by one cubit, 100 of which cubit-strip would make one setat. He describes an **ARURA**, equal to the area of a square whose side was 100 royal cubits, and thus 10,000 square cubits; A **HEKAT** was a half-peck of dry measure for grains like barley, wheat, corn, and was thus $\frac{1}{8}$ bushel of 4 quarts or 8 pints dry measure, where some give it as 292.24 cubit inches, and a half peck in British measure was 277.36 cubit inches, so that a hekat was

⁵²⁷ Richard J. Gillings. *Mathematics in the Time of the Pharaohs*. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972), pp. 2-4.

⁵²⁸ Gillings, pp. 207-208.

slightly more than a half a peck. He mentions a **HINU** which was a smaller unit for grain, being one-tenth of hetat, and also a **KHAR** was “two-thirds of a cubit, or 20 hekats of grain.” The most interesting measure related even if indirectly is the **RO**, which we give here because it is the “smallest name unit for grain, and so was 1/320 of a hekat. Gillings treated it special because of its novel name called *Horus-eye* fractions. This *Eye of Horus* was part of the truth-myth of the Osiris and Isis story, where in this case “Horus was the son of Osiris, who was treacherously slain by his brother Seth. In revenge, Horus sought out his uncle and slew him, but in the fight lost an eye, the broken parts of which were later restored by the god Thoth. Isis was the mother of Horus, and the wife and sister of Osiris.” From Gillings description the *Horus-eye Fraction* appeared using the following hieroglyphics with their corresponding mathematical values:



HORUS-EYE FRACTIONS

Fraction of Eye of Horus	Fractional Notation	Hieratic Number
	$\frac{1}{2}$ = right side of the eye	
	$\frac{1}{4}$ = Pupil of the eye	
	$\frac{1}{8}$ = Eyebrow	
	$\frac{1}{16}$ = Left side of the eye	

Fraction of Eye of Horus	Fractional Notation	Hieratic Number
	$\frac{1}{32}$ = Curved tail	
	$\frac{1}{64}$ = Teardrop	
	$\frac{1}{64}$	



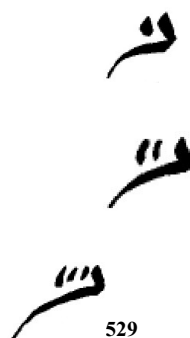
2YO



3YO



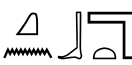
4YO



Egyptian Discovery of the Square Root and Irrational Numbers The basis for the so-called Pythagorean Theorem

The late Dr. Cheikh Anta Diopin the translation of his work from the French *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology* from Chapter 16 "*Africa's Contribution: Sciences*" shows that the royal cubit and the *remen*, and *double remen* are critical in showing that it was the Egyptians and not Pythagoras who discovered irrational numbers by being able (using the cubit and remen) to calculate the *square root* of any number. Dr. Anta-Diop states:

We know that the Egyptians knew how to rigorously extract the square root, even of the most complicated whole or fractional numbers. The term that served to designate the square root in the Pharaonic language is significant in that respect: the right angle of a square, *knbt*; "to make

the angle" = to extract the square root.[i.e.  **qenbet** "angle," "corner of a building, See Budge, Vol. 2, p. 774] Now, the Egyptians defined a fundamental unit of length called "double remen," which is equal to the diagonal of a square, little side a = one cubit (royal); in other words, if d that diagonal, then one necessarily has, by definition of this length itself, "double remen,"

$$d = a\sqrt{2} = (\sqrt{2} \times 20.6) = 29.1325 \text{ inches}$$

$$\text{The royal cubit} = 20.6 \text{ inches} \dots \text{The remen} = \frac{d}{2} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} a = 14.6 \text{ inches}$$

The Egyptians, who thus determined the diagonal of the square from the value of the side and who mastered the calculation of the extraction of the square root, knew, as the definition above proves:

The irrational number par excellence, which is 2, as they also knew the transcendent number (also rational). The theorem of the square of the diagonal (falsely attributed to Pythagoras) at least in the case of the isosceles right-angled triangle, to stick just to the undeniable facts. The Egyptians who knew how to calculate the surface of a triangle, certainly wrote the following equation, followed by an extraction of the square root:

$$S = \frac{1}{2}a^2 = \frac{1}{4}d^2 \rightarrow a^2 = \frac{1}{2}d^2 \rightarrow 2a^2 = d^2$$

Whence: $a\sqrt{2} = d = a \text{ double remen}$.

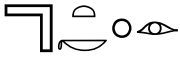
It is certain that by bringing these facts of the properties of the sacred triangle (right-angled triangle) together, always dealing with the square of the hypotenuse, one finds that the Egyptians knew the theorem attributed to Pythagoras perfectly well, as others have affirmed. This

⁵²⁹ Modified Horus-eye fractions based on Gillings' *Mathematic in the Time of the Pharaohs*, p. 211

definition of the “double remen” by itself, and its mathematical implications, clearly show that Pythagoras was neither the inventor of irrational numbers (incommensurability of the diagonal and of the side of the square) nor of the theorem that bears his name: he took all these elements from Egypt where he had been, as reported by his biographers (cf. Jamblichus), a pupil of the priests for twenty-two years. Plato thought that the world-soul consisted of isosceles right-angled triangles: an unwarranted and ludicrous idea if one does not take into account the Egyptian origin of his doctrine . . . The legend attached to the Pythagorean school days that the discovery of the incommensurability of the diagonal and the side of the square was kept secret for a long time, and that Hippasus of Metapontum, who divulged it, was chased out of the sect and died in a shipwreck as a sign of punishment by the gods. This is a beautiful legend, which vanishes before the clarity of the Egyptian mathematical facts cited above. It is certain that the evidence of these facts did not escape the sagacity of the mathematicians who dealt with this question, but they preferred to keep silent, as if they did not notice anything.⁵³⁰

Sorry to say, but Gillings may be one of those mathematicians who “preferred to keep silent” on these issues by stating that “There would have been no need for the Egyptians to devise a means of finding the square roots of perfect squares” and presupposes (without evidence) that these “could have been read off from a table of the squares of integers. Such a table would have been very easy to construct, and indeed very probably was drawn up by the scribes. Similar tables involving the simpler fractions could equally well have been made by them, using ordinary Egyptian multiplication; and *although no such tables have been preserved, if the were in fact made, they would have looked like Table 21.1*”⁵³¹; which Gillings is only too happy to provide on the presumptions that since the Egyptians could have made them *they in fact probably did!* Gillings of course is denying the evidence right before his eyes and which Anta-Diop affirms that “The term that served to designated in that respect: the right angle of a square, *knbt* ; “to make the angle” = to extract the square root” (p. 258). Gillings in fact (fortunately for us) expands upon this clue using the hieroglyphics words and phrases that support Dr. Anta-Diop’s claims that it was the Egyptian and not Pythagoras that developed the theorem that bears his name, and it was they who discovered the formula of “finding the square root of perfect squares” that is, irrational numbers. Gillings showed that it was daily practice for the Egyptian scribes to challenge each other by saying things like “make thou a corner,” or “Calculate thou its angle,” or “Take the square root of . . .” as a praxis and way of keeping up their mathematical skills for a procedure that may not have been used in a practical way on a daily basis. Nevertheless, Gillings states the following:

In KP LV, 4, lines 39, 40 Griffith translates, “*make thou a corner (square root of 16)* as 4, “where

the pertinent hieroglyphs are:  “A corner thou make” [reading from right to left]. In the Berlin Papyrus 6619, Schack-Schackenburg translates as, “Nimm die Quadratwurzeldaraus(1216), das giebt 1 4” (“Take the square root of 1 216, it is 1 4”), the line he displays as: [read left to right]

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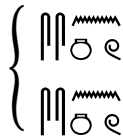
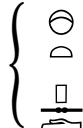
In each Egyptian hieroglyphic sentence the phrase  read left to right or  read right to left, where both are read **er qenb-t** where **er** means “to make,” “to do,” “to create,” “to form,” “to fashion,” and **qenb-t** means “angle,” “corner” [of a building], so that the whole phrase in the second person (i.e. you, thou) means “make thou [you] a corner” or “make you an angle.” It goes without saying that Gillings’ work on Egyptian mathematics and Cheikh Anta Diop’s essay in Chapter 16

⁵³⁰ Cheikh Anta Diop. *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*. (Lawrence Hill Books, 1981), pp. 258-260.

⁵³¹ Gillings, P. 214.

⁵³² Gillings, p.216.

“Africa’s Contribution: Sciences” are both unique because these scholars make a impossibly technical subject readable enough for a ordinary person so they can come away with some sense of understanding Egyptian mathematics and weight and measures without knowing anything about Egyptian hieroglyphics, and Diop for his part makes it clear that Egyptians are the original discoverers of *irrational numbers* as well, (i.e. their ability to find the square root of any number, so the so-called *Pythagoreum* Theorem) is something that has been denied by European scholars for many years until of late. To Diop’s credit he does provide Egyptian mathematical problems’ from the *Rhind Papyrus* as facsimile form so that the reader can see the problems using hieroglyphs. The use of Arabic numerals throughout to convey this knowledge base is both an advantage and a disadvantage for both scholars, but especially for Gillings, even though he does present some of the Egyptian ideas about mathematics and related subjects using the hieroglyphics, for example like the Horus-eye fractions but this is a rare occasion in his work. It goes without saying the Egyptians did not used Arabic numerals (i.e. integers 1, 2, 3 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, etc.) throughout much of their 5,000 year history and civilization but did so using hieroglyphics (i.e. Medu Neter) and later hieratics; and so it might be well to get a sense of what numbers and its operations look like to them. For this purpose, we turn to E. A. Wallis Budge (1983) and his *Egyptian Language: Easy Lessons in Egyptian Hieroglyphics*. We begin with his description of the numerals:

NUMERALS				
I	=====		<i>ua</i>	===== 1
II	=====		<i>sen</i>	===== 2
III	=====		<i>khemet</i>	===== 3
IIII	=====		<i>ftu or aftu</i>	===== 4
{	→			
	* ≈		<i>tuau</i>	===== 5
	→			
III	=====		<i>sds</i>	===== 6
IIII	=====		<i>sefekh</i>	===== 7
IIII	=====		<i>khemennu</i>	===== 8
IIII	=====		<i>pest</i>	===== 9
U	=====		<i>met</i>	===== 10

		<i>taut</i>	=====	20
		<i>mab</i>	=====	30
		<i>hement</i>	=====	40
		<i>taiu</i>	=====	50
		<i>sau</i>	=====	60
		<i>sefekh</i>	=====	70
		<i>khemennui</i>	=====	80
		<i>pestch[i]</i>	=====	90
		<i>śaā</i>	=====	100
		<i>kha</i>	=====	1000
		<i>tchab</i>	=====	10000
		<i>ḥefennu</i>	=====	100,000
		<i>ḥeḥ</i>	=====	1,000,000
		<i>śennu</i>	=====	10,000,000

E A. Wallis Budge gives a examples of how the ancient Egyptians used numbers or numerals in everyday life to record transactions and/or events. We give just one of his examples below because it is remarkable in respect to the Egyptians scientific knowledge when supposedly no such scientific knowledge based existed for the conception the Egyptians displayed here *relative* to the concept of the **speed of light**(i.e. measuring how fast an object moves through temporal time and spa

10.
anet ḥrd-k Khu er neteru

“Homage to thee [O thou one] glorious more than the gods.”

11. ⁵³³ ⁵³⁴
betenu er thesemu khakhet er suit
 Fleet more than greyhounds, *swift more than light.*

Egyptian knowledge of the “speed of light” even in its most elementary form brings up the question how Egyptian’s used their knowledge of mathematics and numbers to measure temporal time and space, or rather another way of trying to understand is to ask the question “How did they used mathematics and numbering to *split time* within their own temporal and cosmological space? How a nation of people “measure” or “split” time says a lot about them. The Egyptians thought in terms of millions of years and in terms of eternity, so that *temporal* time measurement was carved out of *cosmic time* and split into smaller and smaller segments down to the second for practical uses from record keeping to determining when to prepare for the next harvest of food for the nation. To say that time for the Egyptians was important is an understatement. Time for them was so important that they needed the god Thoth to help them regulate it and to provide a group of priests that maintained and developed its knowledge base of uranographic signs in the heavens. The Egyptian principal divisions of time according to Budge in his *Egyptian Language: Easy Lessons in Egyptian Hieroglyphics* are:

SPLITTING TIME

Sek Aha “Thoth, the Time Divider”

	<i>hat</i> second		<i>at</i> minute
	<i>unnut</i> hour		<i>hru</i> day
	<i>abet</i> month		<i>renpit</i> year
	<i>set</i> 30 years		<i>hen</i> 60 years
	<i>henti</i> 120 years		<i>heh</i> 100,000 years
	<i>heh</i> 1,000,000 years		<i>sen</i> 10,000,000 years
	<i>tetta</i> Eternity		

As we have seen throughout much of this discussion and presentation the Egyptians measured almost everything turning mathematical knowledge and other sciences to practical uses in building

⁵³³ (hieroglyphic in the same semantic domain as the number **Kha = 1000 x**)

⁵³⁴ (i.e. faster than the [speed of] light.)

projects and achieving great engineering feats that are still among the great wonders of the world. Although we left off our discussion of one of practical applications of their knowledge in measuring and forecasting the flow and level of the Nile there is still more things that could be said but here we need to conclude with the work of LaPeirre where we began. LaPeirre is attempting to measure the level and direction of human spirituality in terms of Good and Evil; something the Egyptians were also interested in as to *weighing of the heart*, that is, in the spiritual/moral conditions of the human heart in terms of Good and Evil. For them the heart can be weighed to determine the balance of Good and Evil, whether the heart is balanced or weighed down by Evil. The heart is then weighed against the Ma'at feather to make this determination. Later we will show that this weighing of the heart was not devoid of divine grace and mercy for the Egyptians quite understood the best of human character would likely fail the weighing of the heart no matter the level of the Osirian travelers righteousness and moral aptitude for goodness.

We have showed that the Egyptians had a wide understanding of what emotive aspects constituted the heart and how weighing the heart against the *Ma'at* feather was critical in passing through the Final Judgement before Osiris to enter into his eternal paradise. Here we were trying to show quantitative methods (or measuring the inner space of human heart to determine if the soul of the person in their postmortem state of existence was *true of voice* (i.e. that is, a *truth teller* who had overcome Evil in their heart by doing good and demonstrating this by being able to *utter truefully* the *42 Negative Confessions*, "I have not . . . "). This practice of weighing the heart was an ancient practice of the Egyptians and demonstrates that quantitative measures can be used successfully in measuring human science categories of the *rational heart* as Ethiopian clerics and philosophers claim to draw conclusions and establish patterns that reveal information about human spirituality as well as emotive aspects of the human mind and heart. Being able to do so is important in understanding how both good and evil phenomenon impact and affect the well being of the human person and how the psychic-mind of the human person balances good and evil within their *life-world* and *lived-experience*. Egyptian cosmology and the Egyptian existential temporal situation depending for survival on the Nile, for example among other critical needs issued in developing practical sciences like mathematics, and systems of weights and measures. The ancient Egyptian penchant from *measuring everything from the flow of the Nile with their Nilometers to the using the Scales of Judgement in weighing the heart to determine entry into the Kingdom of Osiris* makes LaPierre's pursuit of understanding the direction of spirituality into *six dimensional categories* seem less odd and more acceptable as a quantitative way of understanding human spirituality grounded in *unified human experience* and the pathway chosen that determines the degree of a human persons participation in either Good or Evil for each of the six spiritual dimensions (1) *transcendence*, (2) *journey*, (3) *transformation*, (4) *religion*, (5) *community*, and (6) *the mystery of Creation*, as shown in the diagrams I have designed for this purpose below. LaPierre gives a brief description of his mixed quantitative and qualitative approach to the question he asks through the mouth of a soldier: "*This great evil---where did it come from? How did it steal into this world?*" He gives a summary of his argument and "alternative view of Evil" as follows:

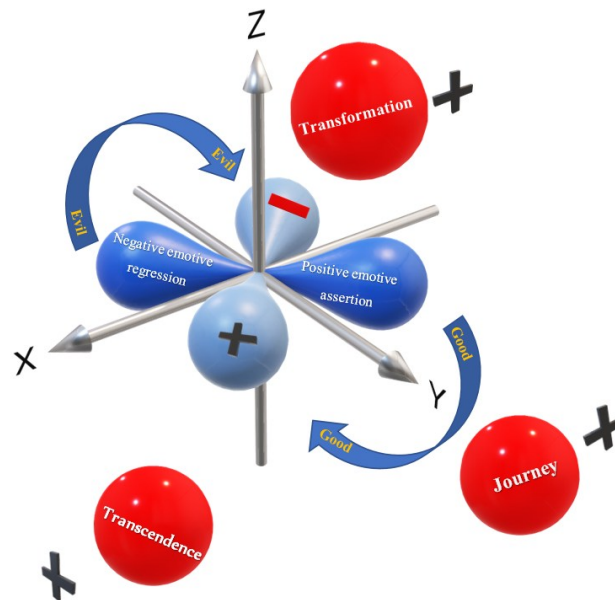
According to this theory [his alternative view of Evil], human beings are spiritual beings [an order of spiritual being clothed in flesh, brackets my insertions] who may be involved in any one or more of six substantially different dimensions of spirituality: transcendence, journey, transformation, religion, community, and "the mystery of Creation." I hypothesize that any competent human being can proceed in a positive (i.e. Good) direction along any one or more of these six dimensions or axes of spirituality. However, any competent human being is also free to proceed in a negative (i.e. Evil) direction along any one or more of these six dimensions or axes of spirituality [something like my Superhighway of God] if choice is to be significant in human spirituality. I have found it helpful . . . to diagram these six axes of spirituality using two sets of Cartesian Coordinate axes . . . [I have modified LaPierre's Cartesian Coordinate axes using modern 3D graphic tools to bring out the three dynamic idea that he is trying to describe using his one dimensional axes.]. The implication, at least qualitatively, is that human spirituality is a dynamic process that may show progress (movement in the positive direction of the x, y, or z-axes) or regression (movement in the negative directions on the x, y, or z-axes). . . . Also it has proven helpful to divide the six dimensions of spirituality into two subsets of there dimensions each. One group, labeled "Inwardly-Focused" . . . [See **Diagram 1** this work below], is a cluster of spiritual

factors that are, in many ways, focused on the less public, more personal aspects of our spiritual experience or journey [where in this diagram axes **X** = *Transcendence*; **Y** = *Journey*; and **Z** = *Transformation*]. The other group, labeled “Outwardly-Focused” [See **Diagram 2** this work below], is a collection of spiritual experiences that are often more visible because they draw us into involvement with other people or with the environment [where in this diagram axes **X** = *Community*; **Y** = *Religion*; and **Z** = *Mystery of Creation*].⁵³⁵

DYNAMIC PROCESS OF HUMAN SPIRITUALITY – DIAGRAM 1 [“Inwardly-Focused”]

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION OF THE “RATIONAL EMOTIVE HEART”

OR PSYCHIC-EMOTIVE MIND IN A CYCLE OF GOOD & EVIL



LaPierre states in an introduction to his specific explanation of his theory using **Diagrams 1 & 2** that:

Spiritual experience is both complex (*i.e.*, six unique dimensions or axes) and can proceed in either of two directions along each axis. That is, our personal spirituality can be either positive or negative. Furthermore, growth in a positive direction along one axis need not be accompanied by positive growth in all or even any of the other directions. We may remain static in all other areas of our spirituality wholly growing primarily in one direction. While that may seem obvious to many people it was often a surprise to the participants in the spirituality groups that I led at the VA Medical Center where I was a chaplain. For this theory to be credible it needs to at least point to ways in which Evil may be manifested along each of these axes. In other words, spiritual growth has been the focus of many religions and other forms of spirituality . . . for periods as brief as several decades to literally thousands of years. Regression along each spiritual axis should also be the subject of study so that it can be detected in its earliest stages.⁵³⁶

⁵³⁵ LaPierre, p. 104

⁵³⁶ LaPierre, p. 105.

In regard to **Diagram 1** LaPierre describes **Evil Applied to Inwardly-Focused Dimensions of Spirituality** and begins with an explanation of what *Transcendence* means along the **x-axis**. Remarkably, LaPierre suggest that human beings *knowingly makes a choice* of which direction on any one axis to travel down, either positively or negatively; and that in respect to *transcendence* this need not be in the direction of (as some of us, especially Christian would assume) a *Loving, Caring Transcendence Good God*, but human beings can go in any transcendent direction as long as the being we are “worshipping” or “serving” is far greater than we are and promises some benefit we desire or believe we need, that is, some transcendent power, even if that power(s) are *dark principalities and powers*. The point being that human beings have a need for seeking as the Psalmist says “a mountain higher than I.” Unfortunately, the high mountain could lead to making (so to speak) a *bargain with the Devil* in return for receiving some perceived (even if false benefit) that we have called in this work the *demonic pleasures* in the form of **MONEY, POWER, or SEX**. These three are seemingly the most powerful forces and influencers in our lives that cater to our human *psychic emotive* need for *immediate* satisfaction and satiation of our desires that often lead to destructive behavior’s that could lead to the ruining or even the end of the *life and life more abundantly* that God desires each human person to have. In this respect LaPierre states the following:

The search for Transcendence, while hopefully leading to an encounter with a loving or at least a benign Transcendent Being, may also lead to the discovery of a not-so-loving spiritual reality of great if not ultimately transcendent power. History and literature are replete with examples. Both in Goethe’s “Faust” and in “The Devil and Daniel Webster” a human being engages in a bargain with a being of great spiritual power but at the risk of his soul. There appears to be at least some evidence that various cultures have attempted to placate a not-so-benevolent power by sacrificing animals or even human beings to that power (*i.e.* Aztecs). Even movies have implied or directly portrayed the possibility of “making a deal with the devil.” One of these, starring George Burns as both the Devil and as God, was “Oh God, You Devil” in which a young musician makes a deal with the Devil to attain stardom only to regret the deal and seek release from it. One well-known Christian writer, Malachi Martin, even wrote a dramatic book containing six case studies detailing the exorcism or driving out of evil beings that controlled specific individuals. Clearly, there is a significant element in human experience that affirms the possibility of *turning away* from a positive spiritual force or being and *seeking and finding or being found by* a negative and ever powerful spiritual being or force.⁵³⁷

Here I would like to make *three observations* about what LaPierre is either saying, suggesting or implying. **First observation:** LaPierre strongly suggests that the human person desires to engage with some transcendental being, or power, or life altering circumstances that is larger than themselves, that is, as we would suggest in this work the emotive psychic-mind human beings needs and craves Transcendent being in order to give meaning to their own existence. Their desires must therefore be *risk worthy*. It is what makes them get up in the morning to seek and achieve their *plan of life* [Locke] grounded in a *purpose driving life* dictated within each person’s *life-world* through various *lived-experiences of good and evil*. They may seek to pursue *transcendence* like LaPierre says whether that pursuit is in the direction of the negative axis [Evil path] or positive axis [Good path]. In any case they choose the direction, which I will somewhat challenge momentarily based on my five years working on clinical floors first as a chaplain volunteer, then as a doctoral research intern within an HCO (Hospital Clinical Organization), writing my Ed.D. doctoral thesis on *phenomenology of suffering in HCOs*, as a student who completed four CPE units and clinical praxis with suffering patients in acute care hospital settings, and three years as a professional chaplain at a trauma one hospital (UC Medical Center), including twenty-three years counseling, marrying and burying people as an ordained minister. Nevertheless, what LaPierre says about the human needs and overwhelming desire to have *transcendence* govern the most important aspects of their lives; we still have to ask is this true since some human persons will deny that neither their needs nor desires are influenced or governed from an *Transcendent* being (good or bad), power, or even purpose in order for them to be satisfied with their life, especially if one insists that they subscribe to a *Transcendent Being*, like the Creator God,

⁵³⁷ LaPierre, p. 105

who the human race owes worship, homage, and obedience. However, we think here that LaPierre is on good ground for even if a person says they do not need nor subscribe to *transcendent being* (they are just *spiritual not religious*) they may in fact be doing that anyway because this may be part of the human spiritual DNA since we said at the outset of this discussion that *the human person is a special order of spiritual being, clothed in flesh*. If this supposition is not acceptable, we still can make the case that there is such a thing as the *Transcendent-Self* where the human person has allowed their *own Ego* to become larger than they are and is the controlling factor in all they do in living and seeking to carry out their purpose. There are plenty examples of persons who have survived this negative experience of the *serving the self* finally coming to the terms with the fact that they were no longer in control of their own lives but the life or the IT they created (and is *really real* for them) now actually controlling them and they hate every minute of it; but have to keep going because this IT that has processed their Ego has not only to be fed but *worshipped*. Many such people have turned to drugs, alcohol, sex, or even death to try and *escape*. Those who understand they are serving their Ego and make that conscience choice can no longer claim that they are not subscribing to the *transcendent* or desire IT. They in fact seek and even demand that other persons worship and pay homage to their Ego as they do or did each and every day (e.g. Hitler, Stalin, etc.).

Second observation: We have nevertheless to challenge LaPierre's suggestion; that it is the human person that is responsible for the direction they travel along any one particular axis, either negative or positive. He suggests this in the following statement: "Clearly, there is a significant element in human experience that affirms the possibility of *turning away* from a positive spiritual force or being and *seeking and finding* or *being found* by a negative and ever powerful spiritual being or force." For LaPierre a human person by their own choice can *turn away* from positive spiritual forces or being (true), or *consciously seek and find* negative and ever powerful spiritual being or forces that promises to provide what they desire, and/or be *found by* negative spiritual being or forces that take over their being (yet their own choice). I have to agree that LaPierre has strong empirical support and good historical examples where these have happened on many multiple occasions in the *lived-experience* of human persons. However, LaPierre was is a United Methodist minister and chaplain under this faith who undoubtedly is influenced by St. Augustine's powerful doctrine of the *absence of the good* is why there is Evil in the human person. This is *always* true because the human person has *chosen to do evil rather than good* (i.e. the fallenness of humanity and human depravity) tempered by the Pelagian notion of the *imago deo* which suggests that while people make choices to do Evil they in fact do not have too because within them is the image of God and in their person and relationships with others they can produce the fruit of the Spirit and so there is no such thing as *total depravity* where the human person of necessity is inclined to do Evil. Nevertheless, this view that emphasizes universals and uniting in thinking for good the human person is totally responsible for the Evil they choose in the world and there you have your answer *whence is Evil* if the human person chooses it against the influence of the *image of God* that is *within each of them*. But yet my own pastoral clinical experience shows that people do not always consciously choose the Evil that either has wreck or seeks to wreck their life, i.e. life choices that might be responsible for them being in the hospital as a patient in the first place. Here we proposed based on experience some people *drift into Evil* or *drift along the Axis of Evil* and find that once on that path they cannot seem to turn around to prevent further consequences of the sequences of choices that led them there. This *drifting into Evil* is something in CPE and chaplaincy that needs to be explored. *Drifting into Evil* carries this idea that a person could hardly believe that one minor misstep or even an aggravated wrong to another person could lead to Evil, such as your so-called "little white lie" to even one "home invasion" where no one was supposed to be home and get hurt, which then leads to the misconception that the 100th home invasion was supposed to be like the last 99, where nothing occurred but stealing other people's goods, *but this time* the home owner is home and either you end up taking his life or his takes yours. One *harmless* little home invasion (where nobody is supposed to get hurt) that was done on whim (just for fun) has little by little turned into a *criminal career* with temporary rewards that fools the person into believing the *first time will be just like the last time, and so on and so on*. This *drifting into Evil* **cannot** be used as an excuse for doing wrong but the chaplain has to consider it as a medicating factor in respect to compassion for the person

(especially if they are contrite) and for the purposes of formulating an appropriate spiritual intervention. It also **cannot** be described as lacking free choice by the person; but it is not the one wrong choice but a series of thoughtless choices that finally ends badly and leads to doing Evil rather than Good. This *drifting* may also account for LaPierre's notion that people have *been found by Evil*, which includes the notion of possession once a person has made choices that led them there and they are no longer able to change their destructive and negative behavior that is destroying them and others.

This notion of *drifting into Evil* takes me to my *Third Observation*, where the patient finds themselves suffering from a long series of bad choices that led them (in their minds) to a place of *no return*. Once a chaplain has engaged with a suffering patient they are likely to ask within themselves how this particular suffering or malady came upon this person as well as its nature and more importantly how this patient is coping with it physically, emotively, and spiritually. The chaplain may be more or less empathetic toward the unfortunate consequences that landed the patient in the hospital if they discover in their pastoral clinical encounter that the patient *drifted into Evil*. However, in doing so the chaplain may begin to engage in what I called in my Ed.D. doctoral dissertation *empathic inversion*. This is where the chaplain seeks to *transcend* the patients suffering for various reasons the most important of which is the chaplain's own *emotive self-preservation*, shutting out the patient's concerns that are uncomfortably too close to their own *lived-experience* of the same or similar phenomenon or is abhorrent where the whole pastoral clinical encounter is dismissed with a "quick prayer" and a "God bless you." All of this is done without sincerely seeking to help provide the suffering patient with an appropriate spiritual intervention that could help them cope with their physical, emotive, and/or spiritual malady's). One might use other names for the concept of *empathic inversion* like "distance" or even "aversion" or perhaps some could justify describing this concept as "dissonance" although this term is "a tension or clash resulting from the combination of two disharmonious or unsuitable elements" or anything that is "annoying, disruptive" or puts a person on edge. In my doctoral dissertation *Clinical Pastoral Education and the Phenomenology of Suffering* I had this to say about the concept:

However, this researcher discovered a more disturbing problem related to this CPE model that lay hidden until he conducted . . . verbatim interviews with chaplains at The Christ Hospital (TCH). This was the *feeling of avoidance* that this researcher began to describe as empathetic inversion that was introduced in Chapter 4. What then is empathetic inversion and how does it impede the CPE model of *Action/Reflection/New Action*? This feeling by chaplains is the tension between extending sympathy and care toward the patient *and at the same time* extending sympathy to the Self or *empathic imperfect care giver* (i.e. the would be healer of the soul). It also describes in some cases the tension that comes from trying to participate in [the] *narrative life-world of the patient* while at the same needing to *reject that narrative life-world* in order to protect one's own *narrative life-world* by refusing to blend the two worlds. To truly accomplish this requires a new horizon of understanding to [merge] related . . . related spiritual needs of the patient and the risk of being an *empathic care giver*. Philip J. Deloria (2004) brought out this idea of *empathic inversion* in an essay on historiography in an edited work on the Native American People and how during the Jacksonian Presidency Americans wanted to *at one and the same time* "participate in an Indian world" (i.e. safely contain and preserve it) and paradoxically destroy this Native American narrative world (which necessarily included the Native American People in this empathetic destruction if need be) because their narrative world posed a threat to the narrative world Americans had written for themselves.⁵³⁸ (pp. 313-314).

According to LaPierre what does **Journey** mean (that one travels back and forth) along the **y-axis** an "inwardly-focused dimension of spirituality" that can be turned toward Evil? LaPierre says that most

⁵³⁸ Dia Sekou Mari-jata. *Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and the Phenomenology of Suffering in the Lived-Experience and Life-World of Clinical Pastoral Care Educators and Practitioners in Hospital Clinical Organizations (HCOs)*. Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education with a Specialization in Higher Education. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Graduate College Union Institute & University, 2012), pp. 313-314.

people if not all people are “Seekers” at some level or degree, meaning that “while not believing in any particular approach to religion or other forms of spirituality” are in fact as “seeker” of something “imply that they are on a journey for something spiritual.” But he says that “anything good can be perverted either by planning to control that which is good or by destroying the good when it is found. The search for spirituality can also be corrupted by the desire to form an alliance with a spiritual entity that has access to power that will serve our ends.”⁵³⁹ LaPierre implies that whether the “seeker” on his/her journey intends good or evil that the desire to connect with a Transcendent Power for ones on end is Evil in and of itself. The fact that one is on a quest for good does not mean that quest is itself good when it is perverted to selfish ends that have been ennobled, such as implied in the formerly off used phrase “The war to end all wars” that has a Good end using an Evil means. The Bible suggest that *means and ends matter* and that men should *overcome evil by doing good* which is certainly different from the justification of *doevil that good may come*. Apostle Paul was certainly aware of this human problem in respect to receiving God’s grace (free gift of forgiveness that seemed to him to increase as men continued to sin). Paul said: “*What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? May it never be! We who did to sin, how could we live in it any longer?*” (Romans 6:1-2, EOB). So this is nothing very new. Human persons are often trapped in such contradictions and dichotomies along the **y-axis** of their *Journey*. Along the **z-axis** LaPierre deals with and explains **Transformation**, its meaning and how Evil impacts or influences human persons seeking to change themselves in a positive direction. According to LaPierre “the very process of searching for power, whether Transcendent or just superior to what other parts of humanity have access to, is fraught with the risk of change for the worse.” (p. 106). Why is this so? It is so because as a seeker of the Transcendent human persons are tempted to try and turn that spiritual access into power to serve their own ends, instead of genuinely having the purpose of fulfillment to serve the Transcendent power we have come to recognize as being worthy of our obedience and praise. LaPierre states:

The British historian Lord Acton said that “Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. If we assume that this does not apply to God, then the rest of sentient creation must be at some risk of changing for the worst when we experience reality of whatever power that is under our control. For example, a person who has learned how to use language either to persuade groups of the merit of some point or to humiliate one’s opposition has a great deal of power indeed. The misuse of such power can lead to a change in character of the very least and perhaps, as C.S. Lewis suggested, a change that slowly turns [e.g. drifting into Evil along this or any other axis] the central part of who we are “into a hellish creature.” Misuse of power [i.e. temporal or spiritual in nature] during the twentieth century by heads of state and their armed forces has left many people at least implicitly convinced that the abuse of power can change the character and perhaps the very soul of a person. Few would argue that Adolph Hitler, chancellor and then “*Fuhrer*” of Germany from the early 1930s to 1945, was not “Evil” at least in terms of what he did or cause to happen. In other words, his abuse of power was so widespread and destructive that he himself was more than likely changed for the worse by what he did or caused to be done. Similar judgment has or is likely to be made about Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union, Idi Amin in Uganda, Pol Pot in Cambodia, and Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Perhaps it is even clear that people who participated in evil on a smaller scale were similarly changed by their search for an acquisition of power.⁵⁴⁰

Here LaPierre includes AL Capone, the corrupt crime boss of 1930s Chicago; but could also include religious leaders like Jim Jones, American preacher and cult leader, who is said to have “conspired with his inner circle to direct a mass murder-suicide of himself and his followers [more than 900 dead] in his jungle commune at Jonestown, Guyana on November 18, 1978; David Koresh, an American religious cult leader who it is said “played a central role in the Waco siege of 1993. As the head of the Branch Davidians sect, an offshoot of the Davidian Seventh-Day Adventist Church, [who] claimed to be its final prophet,” of whom one could say like LaPierre “would almost certainly have undergone profound changes in the depths of their souls as well.” As a young man I attended a mass religious gathering in Cincinnati, Ohio

⁵³⁹ LaPierre, pp. 105-106.

⁵⁴⁰ LaPierre, p.106.

with other African-Americans sometime in the early 1970s to listen to a broadcast of Jim Johns, who was an ordained Methodist minister, speaking from San Francisco, California as the messiah of his *People's Temple*, an evangelist cult group. At the time I too was a "seeker" of the Transcendent and listened to anyone who might point me in the *true and right direction* along this axis of spirituality. I had no idea at the time what Jim Jones was about or about what was stirring in his soul but one thing I know he was captivating and could move and stir the souls of large groups of people. Fortunately for me I never met Jim Jones in person and in my own long spiritual journey I learned the dangers of trying to use, abuse, or fuse my own needs for *transcendence* with that of the *Transcendent Power*, and later when I heard of what Jim Jones had led his loyal followers to do to themselves it terrified me and caused me (in real time) to understand how the acquisition of power and the need for it can do to any human soul. Here the Greek saying is apropos and a grave warning to the human person in their seeking *spiritual transcendence* : "*Whom the gods would destroy they first made mad.*" I learned in my own journey as a convert to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that God, the Creator *is not* my bellhop and that true spiritual fulfillment (speaking more for myself than others) is genuinely serving and worshiping God, the Father, God, the Son, God the Holy Spirit, God One. This has to be [for me] sufficient spiritual fulfillment for "*no man can see God and live*" where it is possible for one's own life to be absorbed by and live within the *Transcendent* but where it is not possible to contain it, constrain it, or absorb it into one's self, otherwise the human person would live under the illusion they are *the god*, leading to Evil, expressing and manifesting itself in self worship, and calling and even demanding others to worship you. Like a moth that is attracted to a light bulb and dies when it gets too close, so mere men have to recognize the transcendent nature of a holy God and understand who they are in relationship to that Being; otherwise destruction of the soul is sure to follow when that word of wisdom and spiritual understanding fails. Men must understand that "Heaven is God's throne and Earth is His footstool" and "*No man can stand before God guiltless.*" Yet, my adopted faith is no groveling one, for God clearly gives men rights before Him which God reluctantly overrules from time to time; so that men while having these rights they are not absolute when abused (i.e. responsibly invoked without regard to the rights of others) and so operates out of the will of God to accomplish Evil within His *Good Creation*:

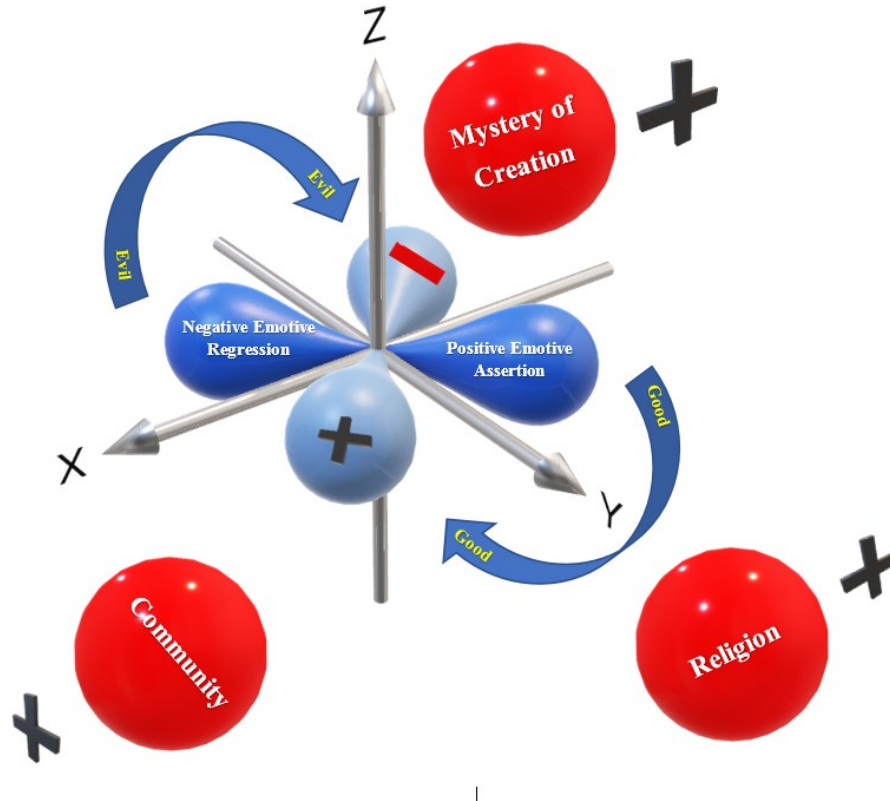
"For the Lord will not cast off for ever; But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, To turn aside the right of man before the face of the most High, to subvert a man in his cause, he lord approveth not" (Lamentation 3:31-36, KJV).

Men in their seeking and encounter with God must come to know God; His infinite love, mercy, and grace; but also that God is holy, and although He is *immanent* God is also *Transcendent* and "beyond our fining out." Men simply have to understand who they are first ("Man, Know Thyself") then one will be able to know God and take warning like Moses did when he saw the bush on fire that did not burn to "*Take off thy shoes for the place you are standing is holy ground.*" To be sure then any other posture is a negative spiritual and idolatrous direction in seeking *Transcendence* along LaPierre's *y-axis*; or what I propose in this work as *God's Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* leading to either Good or Evil.

DYNAMIC PROCESS OF HUMAN SPIRITUALITY – DIAGRAM 2 [“Outwardly-Focused”]

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION OF THE “RELATIONALEMOTIVE HEART”

OR PSYCHIC-EMOTIVE MIND IN A CYCLE OF GOOD & EVIL



Here with **Diagram 2** in mind LaPierre is interested in exploring Evil as applied to *outwardly-focused dimensions of spirituality* that include (1) *religion*, (2) *community*, and (3) *mystery of creation*. In respect to **Religion** on *y-axis* LaPierre believes that this is the best known category of the outwardly-focused approaches to spirituality and he states “it has undoubtedly brought an enormous amount of good into the world through the ways that religious people exercise their faith.” (p. 106). However, he says based on his experience as a chaplain at the VA Hospital that religion;

Has also been involved in a lot of suffering in this world. Religious beliefs have been used to justify wars, slavery, subordination of women, genocide, and other forms of hurtful behavior. Even basic spiritual disciplines can be used for negative purposes. One can pray for bad things to happen to one’s enemies. One can meditate upon ways that one would like one’s enemies to suffer and/or die. One can refuse to be generous to those who are somewhat different from us. Preaching can be used to denounce individuals and groups that are perceived to be the enemies of our religious groups. Love can be restricted to those whom one accepts as part of one’s own religious group and we can choose to help only those who are already “believers.” Even journaling can be utilized to unnecessarily document the wrongs of other people. (pp. 106-107).

The Psalmist was not the best example of God’s will for men for the Psalmist often asked God directly to curse and even destroy his enemies. LaPierre is focused on the New Testament to “*bless and curse not*,” “*pray for your enemies*,” “*do good to those who have done you wrong*,” and in some other

words of Jesus “turn the other cheek,” “if you your enemy take your cloak, give your coat as well,” “if you enemy forces you to go with him one mile, go with him two,” “as much as it lies within you, live at peace with all men,” and in his parable of the “Good Samaritan” our neighbor turns out to be “**anyone who is in desperate need**” not just members of our family, our race, our ethnic group, our set of friends, etc. The New Testament points us to the best that God wants us to be in relationship with others. God, the only wise God who knows the hearts and motivations of men (i.e. why they do things) wants us to leave retribution to Him for the Word of God states in Romans 12:19-21 “Do not seek revenge, beloved, but let God’s wrath follow its course. As it is written, ‘Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore: **If your enemy is hungry feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink; In doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head** [i.e. set fire to his consciousness of doing wrong]. **Do not be overcome of evil** [whether you know the nature of IT or not]; **instead, overcome evil with good.**” (EOB). Hardly any of this is new teaching even though made explicit in the New Testament where it is summarized very clearly; but the moral wisdom teachings about *prudence, right thinking, right doing* (i.e. *righteousness*) are as ancient as the teachings coming out of Egyptian and other parts of the ancient world on right human relations. Romans 12 above counsels; “if your enemy is hungry feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink.” Jesus counseled the same thing in his parable of the “Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats” in his concern how we treat the “least of these” saying to the Sheep:

Then the King will tell those on his right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of my Father! Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world! For I was hungry and you gave me food to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me.’ (Matthew 25:34-36, EOB).

But to the Goats Jesus says:

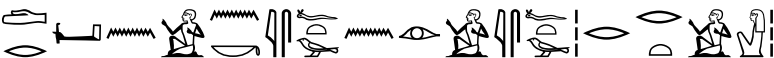
Then he will also say to those on his left hand, ‘Depart from me, you accursed into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels! For I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not receive me; naked, and you did not clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me.’ (Matthew 25:41-43, EOB).

None of these teachings are “new” merely because they are in the New Testament. They are ancient and have been observed by African man for thousands of years well before the biblical period of the Old Testament and New Testament, not as just moral teachings coming from ethical philosophy but as coming directly from God as part of His will for human relations. For example as we have already noted some of these teachings come from the *Pert-em-Hru* the so-called “Book of the Dead” three to four thousand years before Jesus and Paul gave out these teachings and which we think are “new” where adhered to by this ancient African society who understood what God demanded of men in their relationships with one another and they also understood how we treated each other had *everything to do with our eternal salvation* when we would face God for our actions (sins of commission) and our inactions (sins of omission). In famous Chapter 25 of the *Pert-em-Hru* the Osirian Traveler (in his/her postmortem state of existence who are now part of the “Blessed Dead” hoping to become a permanent member of the “People of Heaven”) would declare their innocence before both gods and demons that stood in his/her way to the Judgment Hall of Osiris for the final determination on his/her life before the Great Judge of the human heart where it would be weighed in the balance by the moral ethical standard of the *Ma’at Feather of Truth and Righteousness*. It has been said by some scholars that in the *Pert-em-Hru* (“Coming into the Light by Day” that there are *Forty-two Negative Confessions* (42), where the *Osirian Traveler* in their post-mortem state and existence makes a long recitation or declaration of their innocence and why him/her should be declared as such before both gods and demons, that is, before gods that want to examine his/her heart against *Ma’at = Truth* and demons that seek to devour his/her soul should he/her claims of innocence be unconvincing. Within these *Negative Confessions* are to be found the **Ten Commandments** in the Hebrew Bible. Yet in this great **Chapter 25** which is at least 2,000 years older than any Hebrew scripture, not even to mention scripture texts from the New Testament are to be found have found *Eighty-One (81) Negative Confessions* (the same number of books that characterizes the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahedocan* of

scripture), that is, “**I have not . . .**” and at least *Nine Positive Declarations or Confessions*, that is, “**I have . . .**” which includes the scripture statements from Romans 12 and from Jesus in Matthew **Chapter 25**.⁵⁴¹ The Osirian Traveler begins his long set of *utterances* and/or *declarations of innocence* with the following statement followed by some others in the Negative Confessions/Declarations [“*I have not*” or “*not have I*. . .”] until we get to the text we are primarily interested in that begin the Positive Declarations/Confessions [**I have**. . .]:

‘Some Utterances from the 81 Negative Confessions/Declarations of Innocence

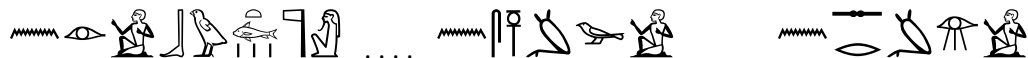

makuai - kuakher - k an - na - net maat
 Verily I have come to thee, I have brought to thee Maat.⁵⁴²


Ter - na - nek asfet enari - a asfet er ret
 I have driven away from thee wickedness. I have not done iniquity to mankind.


ensmaar - a untuitenari - a autemausemaat
 Not have I done harm unto animals. Not have I done wickedness in place of Maat.


enrekha - a netet
 Not have I known evil.


ensaat - a neterennem - a ennemh - a
 Not have I despised God. Not have I caused misery. Not have I caused affliction.


enari - a but neter ensmer - a enserem - a
 Not have I done what is abominable to God. Not have I caused pain. Not have I made to weep.


ensmam - a enari - a menthra - nebu
 Not have I killed. Not have I done harm to mankind.⁵⁴³

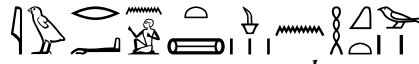
⁵⁴¹ *Go figure!* Amazing that the scripture texts in the New Testament we have under examination comes from Matthew Chapter 25 and Chapter 25 in the *Pert-em-Hru*. Further, if you subtract 9 Positive Confessions/Declarations/Utterances from 81 Negative Declarations/Confessions/Utterances you will get 72, a number especially important in the N.T., where Jesus sent out 72 disciples to preach; and the 70 + 2 biblical scholars that translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek called the *Septuagint*; of which the counting of these utterance admits of the same kind of confusion that underlay the counting of the 81 books in the *Ethiopian Orthodox Canon*; yet in this respect the confusion is in the counting of the number of *utterances* or *declarations of innocence* by the Osirian Traveler. 72 is also an important *Osirian* number.

⁵⁴² This reference “To Thee” is **Un-neferu** [] is a title of Osiris.

⁵⁴³ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead (The Papyrus of Ani)*, pp. 194-195.

Some *Utterances* from the *9 Positive Confessions/Declarations of Innocence*

 *Se-hetep-na Neter em mert -f*
I have appeased God by [doing] his will.

 *au erta-na tau enheqet*
I have given bread to the hungry,

 *mu enabi*
water to the thirsty

 *hebsenhaiu*
clothes

 to the naked, [and a]

 *Makhenau*
boat to the shipwrecked. . . .⁵⁴⁴

 *nehem - ten ua ar ten khu ua*
Deliver ye me then ye, protect me

 *ar ten enen sma - ten er - a embah neter aa*
then ye, not make accusation ye against me before the god great (i.e., Osiris).⁵⁴⁵

The *Osirian Traveler* in post-mortem state (which he would have had to have lived out in life the best he or she could before death) is expressing the best of religious sentiments in respect to carrying out God's will in relationship to his/her duty to God and mankind, so we can declare measured by LaPierre's *y-axis* this person went in the positive direction as measured by his *declarations of innocence*. We notice too that his ethical behavior is not just guided by moral principles or philosophy but by his desire (as he said) *I have appeased God by [doing] his will*. His actions are guided by religion and not some ethical code made up by man. Yet even so, LaPierre warns that even here religious pride or zeal in carrying out ones duties to God can lead a religious person down the negative path of the *y-axis*. Certainly then, as LaPierre says, religion that does much good in the world can also go down the wrong path on the *y-axis* of spirituality and lend itself to great Evil if it's practitioners go down the wrong path on his *y-axis*. As we have seen above in the hieroglyphics with the utterances or the voluminous *declarations of innocence* by the Osirian Traveler that the ancient Africans referred to as Egyptians were very concerned about going down the wrong path leading toward Evil and not Good expressed as Truth and Righteousness, and further understood that their utterances or declarations had to be genuine because it was about the *heart* and *weighing* it against (not some human ethical moral standard or philosophy but against a divine standard represented by the *Ma'at Feather of Truth!* Bottom line the standard was spiritual in nature and of the highest order of spirituality that had to do with weighing the *rational heart of men*, not just what they declared about themselves but in fact against what was really in their *hearts* and what men actually did as Jesus finally pointed out in his parable in the *judgment of the sheep and the goats*. In Matthew 15:15-30 in the matter of eating with unwashed hands Jesus applied the same principle about the human heart in response to Peter who asked him to "Explain this parable to us." And so, Jesus answered,

⁵⁴⁴Comparable biblical O.T. and N.T. passages: See Matthew 25:31-46; Psalm 146-5-10; James 1:27 & Isaiah 61:1-2.

⁵⁴⁵Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani*, p. 205.

Do you still fail to understand? Do you not yet understand that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things which come out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile the person. Indeed, it from the heart that evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies come forth. These are the things which defile a person; but to eat with unwashed hands does not make anyone impure. (Matthew 15:15-30, EOB).

And on another occasion Jesus addressed the Pharisees who accused him of being able to cast out demons by the or under the authority of the dark power of Beelzebub, that is, Satan, the “prince of demons!” In one response he said to them in like vain as he did Peter and his other disciples:

Make the tree good and its fruit [will be] good, or make the tree corrupt and its fruit [will be] corrupt, for the tree is known by its fruit. You offspring of vipers [i.e. the Pharisees], how can you, being evil, speak good things? Indeed, words flow out of what fills the heart. The good man brings out good things from his good treasure, and the evil man brings out evil things from his evil treasure. I tell you that for every idle word that people speak, they will give an account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words [i.e. truth] you will be justified, and by your words [i.e. falseness, lies] you will be condemned. (Matthew 12:33-37, EOB).

But even generally good religious persons (as we have already pointed out) who uphold the truth religion can do harm in the name of some truth a person holds like that of Pharisees, a very zealous Jewish religious group that Jesus once warned his disciples about: “*I have told you these things, so that you would not be made to stumble. They will expel you from the synagogues! Yes, the time is coming when whoever kills you will think that he is offering [divine] service to God! They will do these things because they have not known the Father or me.*” (John 6:1-3, EOB). The Psalmist, as an early example of religious zealotry, obviously was a deeply religion person actually sang things like the following:

Give ear to my prayer, O God, And do not despise my supplication; I am vexed in my prayer, and troubled by the enemy’s voice and by the sinner’s affliction; for they turned their lawlessness upon me, And in wrath they were indignant with me. My heart was troubled within me, And the terror of death fell on me. Fear and trembling came upon me, And darkness covered me. I said, “Who will give me wings like a dove, And I will fly away, and be at rest? . . . I wait for the One who saves me from faintheartedness and storm, *Drown them in the sea, O Lord, and divide their tongues; . . . For there is no change in them, And they have not feared God . . . But you, O God, will bring them down into the pit of decay; Men of blood and deceit shall not live even have their days.* But I will hope in You, O Lord. [Psalm 54 (55): 1-24, *The Orthodox Study Bible*].

The Psalmist here had he lived in New Testament times under the religious and spiritual principles that governed the Early Church would have a hard time following proscriptions that those in Romans 12 “Bless and curse not.”

If you should slay sinners, O God, You would turn aside from me, O men of blood. For You will say regarding their reasoning. “They shall receive your cities in vain.” *Have I not hated those who hate You, O Lord? And was I not wasting away because of Your enemies? I hated them with a perfect hatred; They became my enemies. Test me, O God, and know my heart; And see if there is in a lawless way in me, And lead me in the way of everlasting.* (Psalms 138 (139): 19-24, *The Orthodox Study Bible*).

At the end of this passage the Psalmist identified as David, the “apple of God’s eye,” [because by biblical tradition David’s Psalms ends with Chapter 139/140] and who like the *Osirian Traveler* (albeit before his post-mortem existence) is asking God to “weigh his heart” apparently because he is unsure whether *hating his enemies* is the right thing or not even if he *hates them perfectly* because they themselves are blood thirsty and so *hate God* whom he loves. God never answers him until New Testament times where followers of Jesus are admonished by Jesus himself:

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I tell you: love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you! Pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust. And so, if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you only greet your friends, what more do you than others? Do not even the tax collector's do the same? Therefore, be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:41-48, EOB).

In the great Letter of Romans, Chapter 12 has some of the same or similar sentiments and admonishments for followers of Jesus that the Psalmist above would have difficulty following in those days, *even as we do today* when it says things like:

Let your love be without hypocrisy. Reject with horror what is evil. Cling to what is good. In love for the brethren, be tenderly affectionate with one another; place the honor of others above your own. Do not fall back in zeal; be fervent in the spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in troubles, persevere in prayer; contribute to the needs of the saints; look for opportunities to be hospitable. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse! Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep! Be of the same mind . . . toward another. Do not set your mind on exalted things, but associate with the humble. Do not think that you are wiser than you really are. Repay no one evil for evil. Show respect for what is honorable in the sight of all. If it is possible, as much as it is in your power, be at peace with all people. Do not seek revenge, beloved, but let God's wrath follow its course. As it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord." If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink; In doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head [on his conscientiousness of what is right and wrong] Do not be overcome by Evil, instead, overcome Evil with Good. [Romans 12:9-21, EOB my emphasis]

We would not be hard pressed to believe that for David the Psalmist, and the other Psalmist who wrote after him that these admonishments and religious principles of spirituality *would be too much for them to swallow* even though for these times we certainly can consider them as being religious men of the highest level of genuineness and spirituality; yet they would in fact be going in the negative direction on the y-axis of **religion** according to LaPierre's view of this spiritual standard for outward relations with other human persons, that is, in the direction of Evil. However, Evil is just what the Psalmist writers thought they were fighting against and they did not mind asking God to unleash his full wrath on evil doers. And if we are honest, we often feel the same way in these post-modern times with its daily horrors of humans doing incredible injustice and mayhem on others with impunity and little if no immediate consequences. What does immediately happen if the perpetrators "rights" become the shield that allows them to forestall immediate retribution. This scenario played out time and time again is frustrating as we see people who do wrong hide as long as possible behind the JUST-US system and if they are policemen are given the benefit of the doubt after they have killed, maimed, and brutalized other humans under the *color of law*. Oh, yes! We do feel like the Psalmist! This is a cautionary tale for modern and post-modern religious people as well, whether associated with a traditional faith or not. These admonishments are hard even for us to follow; yet we try to provide cover for the Psalmist as well as ourselves in denying that we sometimes feel the same way he did about his enemies. This is the case so that when people quote the Psalms they tend to leave out in sentiments that reflect asking God to punish or destroy our enemies; even to the point of wishing that they had never been born or cursing the mother that gave them birth. Here is one good example of how we are in denial of our negative religious feelings when quoting the Psalms in petitioning blessings for ourselves and curses for our enemies. A modern Christian writer will likely quote from Chapter 20(21):1-12 bracketing verses 9 through 12 (*Orthodox Study Bible*) that curse God's enemies (and is descendants) who are by definition the enemies of the Psalmist, because of our modern Christian view of New Testament teaching on forgiving and loving our enemies:

- (1) Lord, the king shall be glad in Your power,

- (2) And in your salvation he will greatly rejoice.
- (3) You gave him his soul's desire, And You did not deprive him of his lips' request . . .
- (4) For you anticipated him with blessings of goodness; You place a crown of precious stones on his head.
- (5) He asked You for life, and You gave it to him, Length of days unto ages of ages.
- (6) Great is his glory in Your salvation; Glory and majesty You shall place upon him.
- (7) For You shall give him blessing unto ages of ages. You shall fill him with the joy of Your presence.
- (8) For the king hopes in the Lord. And in the mercy of the Most High he will not be shaken.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (9) May your right hand find all who hate You. (10) You shall make them like a fiery furnace in the time of Your presence; The Lord shall throw them into confusion in His wrath, And the fire shall devour them, (11) You shall destroy their offspring from the earth And their seed from among the sons of men. (12) For they vented all their evils against You: They reasoned through a counsel they could not establish. |
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A Psalm that likely is never quoted by Christian writers is Psalm 34(35):1-7, for some of the same reasons we alluded to above, and in this case surely because it begins with cursing rather than blessing and seems to be more personal in nature pointing out the wrongs inflicted on the Psalmist by his enemies:

- (1) O Lord, judge those who injure me; Make war on those who make war on me.
- (2) Take hold of weapon and shield, and rise up to my help.
- (3) Bring for the sword, and confine those in opposition who pursue me; Say to my soul, "I am your salvation."
- (4) Let those who seek my soul be dishonored and shamed; Let those who plot evils against me be turned backward and disappointed.
- (5) Let them be like dust in the wind's face. And let the Angel of the Lord afflict them.
- (6) Let their way be dark and slippery; And let the Angel of the Lord pursue them.
- (7) For without cause they hid the destruction of their trap for me.

But even in the Old Testament God is not without a witness that His will for men then as now was to leave vengeance in the hands of God (which the Psalmist acknowledges and does very well on the *y*-axis) but rather seek from God higher spiritual values and blessings that *bracket* the need and desire to destroy one's enemies and take pleasure in seeing them defeated even by God. Solomon is the best example of this religious attitude when he began his rule over Israel. His request from God to be blessed with wisdom rather than killing his enemies (which he had a plenty) or riches; he received God's approval for this attitude of mind, as seen in this famous biblical passage **3 Kingdoms 4:4-14**:

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and the Lord said to him, "Make a particular request for yourself." Solomon said, "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because *he walked before You in truth, and with You in righteousness and uprightness of heart*. You have continued this great kindness for him, and gave him a son to sit on his throne, as I do today. Now, O Lord my God, You made Your servant king in place of my father David, but I am a little child, I do not know how to go out or come in. Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You chose, a great people, who will not be numbered. *Therefore give Your servant a heart to hear and judge Your people in righteousness, and to discern between good and evil*. For who can judge this great people of Yours?" The Lord was pleased that Solomon asked this. So the Lord said to him, "Because you asked for this, and have not asked for long life for yourself; nor have you asked for riches, nor for the life of your enemies, but asked understanding for yourself, to understand judgment---behold, I have done according to your words. *Behold, I have given you an understanding and wise heart*, so here has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall anyone like you arise after you. I also gave you what you did not ask---both riches and honor---so there has been no man like you among kings. If you walk in My ways, and keep My statutes and commandments, as your father David did, then I will multiply your days." Solomon awoke, and indeed it was a dream. He arose and came to Jerusalem and stood before the altar, before the ark of the covenant of the Lord in Zion. He offered burnt offerings and peace offerings and made a feast for himself and all his servants. (*The Orthodox Study Bible*).

The second "Outwardly-Focused Dimension of Spirituality" that LaPierre wants to apply too is **Evil's Community**. This is a fairly new and modern theological concept in Christian thought but it has some

basis in the Jewish idea that individuals persons within the community cannot be saved unless the entire community or at least a remnant is saved. There is no such thing as individual salvation in this notion. If the community is not redeemed then none belonging to the community are redeemed. It is Israel as a whole that is delivered not individual Israelites. This idea crossed over into the thought of the Early Church based on (Ephesians 5:27; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). While individual discipleship is important in the Early Church the individual disciple is always admonished to think of themselves as an inseparable member of the “body” once called the “Way” but now called the “Church” or “Church body.” Christ is therefore coming back after his “Church” of which includes all who confess Christ as Lord and Savior, the Son of the Living God. “Christ is the head of the Church, and he is the savior of the body.” (Ephesians 5:23b, EOB). Christ is coming back after his church and “present her to himself in glory, without any spot or wrinkle of any such thing, but holy and flawless.” (Ephesians 5:27b, EOB). In an apocalyptic passage in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Christ comes back and causes his disciples to meet him in the sky as an *inseparable body* “together” and in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55 it tells Christians *all those still alive* when Christ returns “*will be changed*” together and at one and the same time:

We do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like those who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. We tell you the following by the word of the Lord: we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. The dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are alive and remain will be caught up *together with them* in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, EOB).

Behold, I tell you a mystery. *We will not all sleep*, but *we will all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and *we will be changed*. For what is incorruptible must put on incorruption, and what is mortal must put on immortality. But when the corruptible will have put on incorruption and the mortal immortality, then that which is written will come true: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” *Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory?* (1 Corinthians 15:51-55, EOB).

However, is this what LaPierre means by “Community” or is he referring to a modern theological notion divorced from biblical understanding of a specific *religious community* known generally as the *body of Christ* and how is this *community* of his influenced by Evil on the *x*-axis of spirituality? LaPierre seems to be saying that community “*is a place or way to love and to be loved.*” The body of Christ professes to be this kind of community and in fact is often referred to as *the beloved* in the N.T. Bible and in theology as *the Beloved Community*, a conceptual idea given to us by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., based on Jesus Christ’s admonition: “I give you another command; Love ye one another. The world shall know that you are my disciples by your love for one another.” But LaPierre suggests this kind of love within community is not unique to the body of Christ but “many groups have provided their members with a strong sense of identity, the opportunity to serve humanity and he experience of being cared about and perhaps even loved.” (p. 107). But like all good things communities committed too and founded on love for one another can be corrupted and choose a negative pathway of Evil on its *x*-axis. LaPierre states: “Unfortunately, very negative outcomes can also be experience in groups that exercise a great deal of control over their members in an attempt to directtheir lives either in pursuit of a particular social objective or for the purposes of sheer destruction.” He goes on to state:

On a small scale cults often provide many of the benefits of belonging to a community but they can also cause people to surrender large amounts of freedom and even tangible assets. The outcomes of the 1979 Jonestown disaster in South America and David Koresh’s Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, in 1993 demonstrated how even a structured, allegedly Christian-based community can lead to a great deal of destruction. A more recent experience of a California-based group that

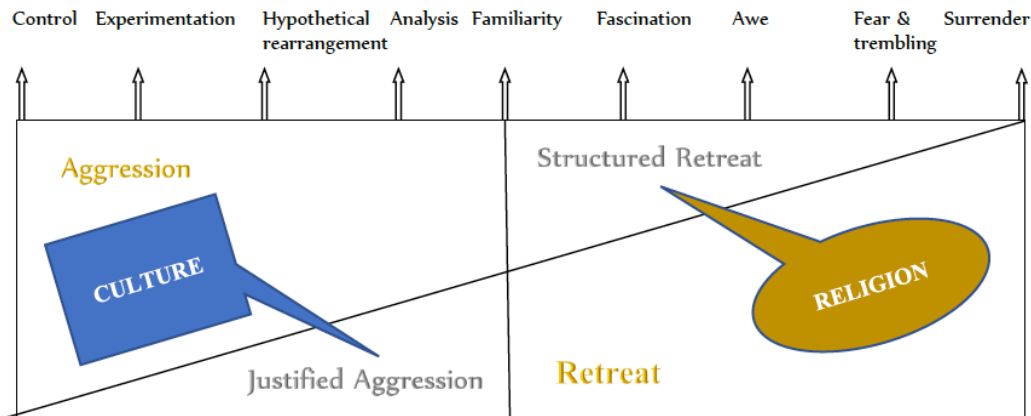
committed mass suicide at the approach of a comet (Hale-Bopp) once again demonstrated the negative ways [members were led to commit suicide to meet up with the comet, my insertion] in which some communities can be self-destructive.⁵⁴⁶

Death and destruction of this nature can be played out on a much larger scale as we all too well know in respect to the horrid institution of slavery, lynching, and rape of African-Americans, almost as a past-time and recreation; Jim Crow, Zip Coon, and the mass murder of Jewish people by the Nazi regime of Adolph Hitler. Even beyond this into more modern times the examples of these great Evils are many and too horrid to mention. However, it may be beneficial to see beyond this vale of obvious *Evil* to see behind IT the **dark principalities and powers** that influence larger groupings of people to enslave, subjugate and/or murder other groups (i.e. genocide) for their own national benefit, ideals, or held racial beliefs of racial superiority. Beside war itself actions by national groups against others for these and other reasons are responsible for a larger footprint of Evil through history within society. The question for us here is the inexplicable reasons one national group (with so many good and religious people in them) will at times act as *one man* and with zeal seek the subjugation and/or destruction of another people that are under ITs power. Here we can turn to Karl W. Luckert for some possible explanations as to why whole nations and groups of people will travel down the negative spiritual path of LaPierre's *x*-axis of *Community*. Luckert (1991) in his *Egyptian Light and Hebrew Fire: Theological and Philosophical Roots of Christendom in Evolutionary Perspective* he deals with the concept of *grand-domestication* of human beings that seek to aggressively control other people like cattle for their own needs and desires. He first builds a *Culture and Religion diagram* that shows how *aggression* is justified within societies that are religious or claims religious foundation; and the reasons behind IT, that is, this form of societal Evil. Where otherwise descent and religious people allow themselves to be influenced by IT, that is, Evil, the second member of the *Trinity of Nothingness* (i.e. **Death, Evil, and Sin**). Luckert states:

Religious soteriologies—gospels of salvation—are initially always predicament-specific. They are invoked in response to specific socio-cultural imbalances. Religious gospels are designed to neutralize specific aggressive excesses; they exist to balance specific cultural emphases or sins. Religion and culture together, up to this point, have been delineated behavioristically, as opposites, and in terms of directional movement toward one or the other extreme. A closer look at socio-political dynamics is now called for. Deliberations in this book categorically place “retreat” in opposition to “aggression.” The essential behavior that builds and supports culture is aggression; its outer limit is conquest, killing, and imposition of absolute “control.” In contrast, the essential religious behavior is marked by retreat that at its extreme limit culminates in the total surrender of egos. In the course of a person's struggle for survival, full religious retreat is compromised in the form of “structural retreat”: analysis and hypothetical rearrangement are imported from the aggression side to impose rational communicational structure on greater-than-human reality. Structural retreat behavior may be compromised further by folding it over into the general realm of aggression, thus establishing the subcategory of “justified aggression.” Aggressive behavior, for the sake of cultural balance and survival, must derive its justification from structured retreat at the other side; whereas, inversely, structured retreat was obligated to obtain its tools and skills of organization and communication from the aggressive side. And finally, the category of justified aggression may be compromised further by unchecked aggressive behavior.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁶ LaPierre, p. 107.

⁵⁴⁷ Karl W. Luckert. *Egyptian Light and Hebrew Fire: Theological and Philosophical Roots of Christendom in Evolutionary Perspective*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 18



Representation of Lukert's diagram, his **Figure 2**. Religious experiences and responses in relation to "culture" building and organized "religion."

Luckert gives an explanation of the character and dynamic of the diagram, Fig. 2 representation above:

As to our definition of *Culture* and *Religion*, and their interrelatedness, the matter may be summarized as follows: Culture is anchored first in its realm of Aggression, then so fortified by its own subregion of Justified Aggression, and contemporaneously is inspired in dialogue or tension with its most remote dimension, Structured Retreat. Religion is complementary to Culture and anchored first in its realm of Retreat; it is conceptualized and communicated in its subregion of Structured Retreat, and finally is organized or institutionalized in culture, more or less aggressively, in the dimension of Justified Aggression . . . An emphasis on Justified Aggression, however, which is no longer anchored in Pure Retreat and Structure Retreat, ceases to be religious. By the same token, Pure Retreat behavior by itself contributes nothing tangible to Culture as such. Religious retreat behavior and culturally aggressive behavior are expressed by all living beings. However among higher and rational animals there is copresent a heightened sense of self-awareness, namely, an awareness of one's own habits or analytic aggression (science) as well as of one's own habits of religious retreat (conscience). Aggressions or progressions on one side, and religious retreats on the other, therefore interplay with one another as checks and balances. (pp. 18-19).

Checks and balances against what? Societal Good and Evil that is the what! This supposition sounds so much like what the Egyptians were trying to do in achieving *Ma'at* balance between societal good and evil, since the Egyptians knew that mere men could not destroy Evil. Theophile Obenga said the following concerning this:

In the context of Egyptian cosmology, we must build order (represented by Osiris) in order to keep disorder (represented by Set) in abeyance. In thus choosing civilization over barbarism, we do not permanently erase the latter, even as Osiris did not --- and could not --- destroy Set. Rather, we reassume the vital and necessary position of eternal vigilance against anything less than the pursuit of a more just society (*Maat*). We seek to enjoy life and respect cultures, not to destroy life and create chaos.⁵⁴⁸

These are lessons modern men are just now reluctantly coming to terms with. The IT cannot be destroyed by men. Without admitting defeat men use notions like "being practical," "the necessity of compromise," "taking the path of least resistance," etc. So, in Luckert's scheme what happens when culture and religion no longer can balance the aggressive tendencies of humans with the tendency to retreat and (God forbid) surrender in face of the IT; like (for instance) what happened in Germany during the period of Nazi domination of the Western European Continent? What happens is that one culture subjects another

⁵⁴⁸Theophile Obenga. *African Philosophy*. Brawtley Press, 2015, p. 16.

culture or group under *grand-domestication*. To understand this, one has to have a good definition of what domestication is. Luckert provides this for us as follows:

Domestication

The cultures of domesticators are marked by the activity of taking control over entire life cycles of plants and animals, from fertilization to consumption. They claimed ownership of seeds, plants, and livestock, and they paid their gods with sacrifices in kind—often whole specimens of animals and sheaves. Creator gods vouched and bestowed titles to these properties. Domesticators also claimed ownership to dwellings and land; they roamed as less than nomadic hunters and built more permanent houses, especially where agriculture had become their primary basis for subsistence. . . . Success in horticulture produced for these people an increase in population; this, in turn, gave men fewer animals to hunt and subsequently saddled them with an identity crisis. . . . Subsequent aristocratic warrior societies and priesthoods, together, have drawn much of their ethos and myths from this crisis of readjustment among men—the transition from hunting to domestication.⁵⁴⁹

Of course, Luckert's sociological claims about the evolution of nomadic hunting societies to those based on agriculture which turned men from hunting animals to hunting people is a generalization; for not all groups of people and societies necessarily evolved in this manner. However, the general notion that men transitioned from hunting animals to domesticating animals is undeniably true, and that from here there is no great leap to the idea of domesticating other men in order to control both them, their animals, and whatever else they claim to own. To explain this idea Luckert introduces the notion of *grand-domestication* and explains the conditions under which such controls have become both the aim and practice of various human societies and what justifications (religious, and otherwise) are put forward to claim that such practices are necessary, and good rather than evil.

Grand Domestication

The grand domestication phrase in human evolution is important for understanding this book. Egypt has been a grand domestication system par excellence. The Hebrew "Exodus" tradition defined itself as a reaction against it. Greek philosophers, who also reacted to the problems of grand domestication, have themselves drawn much basic ontology from Egyptian grand domestication religion. Subsequently Christendom, from the moment of its conception, has inherited the Hebrew reaction against Egyptian grand domestication; but it also has taken up into itself some of Egypt's own ontology and theological structures. Grand domestication began whenever ambitious domesticators, very often men of a herder tradition, have pushed beyond the limit of merely controlling the life cycles of plants and animals. They proceeded to also control groups of people, as human herds, together with those people's gods. Their most conspicuous methods for over-domesticating humankind were militarism, slavery, castration, and human sacrifice. Methods for domesticating the gods of subjected peoples included the building of stately barns or temples, setting up their gods in form of statues, feeding them on altars and organizing the life of their subjected people by means of sacred calendars and festivals, thereby fixing the visiting and feeding hours for successfully sequestered gods. Many of these grand or over domestication schemes began innocently enough with the full collaboration of their subjects. Efforts of defense against other grand domesticator hordes required strict organization under some kind of King of kings and God of gods.⁵⁵⁰

Over-Domestication = Grand-Domestication

Grand domestication is a human effort, put forth by ambitious folk who thereby progress beyond the mere domestication of plants and animals to also control fellow humans, groups of people,

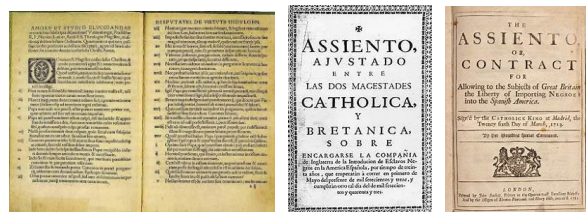
⁵⁴⁹ Luckert, pp. 21-22.

⁵⁵⁰ Luckert, pp. 22-23.

and their gods [i.e. negatively along the x -axis of Community using more and more extreme paradigms for human control, my insertion]. Militarism, slavery, exploitation, castration, cannibalism and headhunting, and human sacrifice are examples of excesses and crowding activities that have resulted from purportedly glorious or “grand” domestication schemes. On that account, imperialistic grand domesticators who have become oppressive are more adequately referred to in this discussion as *over domesticators*. By contrast, movements of universal salvation are popular reactions to systems of grand domestication that have become abusive—they are normal human reactions against over domestication. These reactionary movements are universalistic in the sense that their adherents pledge allegiance to more generous types of superior reality configurations. In the ancient Near East this meant allegiance to a deity that was kinder and greater than an emperor’s “God of gods” who was worshiped to legitimize the emperor’s violence. Seen within an expanded historical horizon, it was no accident that several movements of universal salvation—including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—were born between the very fangs of the two oldest civilizations in the Near East, between Mesopotamia and Egypt. . . . Universalistic reform leaders naturally learned most of their theological methods and logical structures from the grand domestication systems against which they reacted. On that account they reacted against imperial monotheism, invariably, by way of transcending the establishment theology with belief in a God who could embrace more of reality than imperial orthodoxies habitually accounted for. As a rule, a grand domestication system under a God of gods could be challenged only with another kind of God of gods [i.e. “Jesus is Lord” vs. “Caesar is Lord”].⁵⁵¹

It would not be long before Christianity, originally thought of as a Jewish cult religion [first called “The Way”] had negatively reacted against the *grand-domestication* of Roman imperialism and domination in Judea by Jesus and his followers; became a grand-domesticator itself as the “Universal Church” or the “Church Universal” with its own phrase of reaction against it called the *Reformation*, which leaders (beginning with Luther) were not initially trying to destroy or breakaway from Catholicism but wanted to do what its name suggested *reform* it against its abuses of overdomestication, outlined by Dr. Martin Luther, its leader in his *Ninety-five Thesis* that he posted on the church door of Whittenburg in 1517. When this movement for “reform” became fully engaged the Catholic Church itself branded it as a “bunch of *protesters, and separatist*” seeking to overturn the long held and cherished doctrines of the Church Universal from which it in a general way are to this day called **Protestants**[i.e. from the word “protest”] as a way of distinguishing their doctrines from Catholicism, from which this Western body of the Church was born. Oddly enough 1517-18 was the same year cycle that the *Asiento of 1518*, so-called “legal” document was proclaimed by Catholic sovereigns; beginning the mass capture and enslavement of 4,000 Africans (male and female) for transport to the so-called New World “*provided they be Christians*” and/or “*provided they . . . have become Christians on reaching each Island* (in the Americas):

Western Christianity Ends One Grand-Domestication System and Begins Another: 1517-1518



Martin Luther's 95 Thesis Against Catholic Church Indulgences (1517)&the Asiento 1518
&British Asiento Contract for African Slaves (1713) based on the Asiento 1518

⁵⁵¹ Luckert, pp. 141-142.

Asiento, Year of Our Lord 1518

"Permission Granted To The Governor Of Brea Four Thousand Slaves"

The King. Our officials who reside in the city of Seville in our House of Trade of the Indies; Know ye that I have given permission, and by the present [instrument] do give it, to Lorenzo de Correvod, governor of Bresa, member of my council, whereby he, or the person or persons who may have his authority therefore, may proceed to take to the Indies, the islands and the mainland of the ocean sea already discovered or to be discovered, four thousand negro slaves both male and female, provided they be Christians, in whatever proportions he may choose. Until these are all taken and transported no other slaves, male or female, may be transported, except those whom I have given permission [to take] up to the present date. Therefore, I order you to allow and consent to the governor of said authority to transport and take the four thousand slaves male and female, without molesting him in any way; and, if the said governor of Bresa or the persons aforesaid who may have his authority, should make any arrangements with traders or other persons to ship the slaves, male or female, direct from the isles of Guinea and other regions from which they are wont to bring the said negroes to these realms and to Portugal, or from any other region they please, even though they do not bring them to register in that house, they may do so provided that you take sufficient security that they bring you proof of how many they have taken to each island and that the said negroes male and female, have become Christians on reaching each island, and how they have paid the customs duties there, in order that those taken be known and be not in excess of the aforesaid number. Notwithstanding any prohibition and order that may exist to the contrary, I require you and order you in regard to this not to collect any duty in that house [of trade] on the said slaves but rather you are to allow them to be taken freely and this my cedula shall be written down in the books of that house [of trade].

**Done in Saragossa, the eighteenth day of August of the Year 1518, I the King,
By order of the King, Francisco De Los Cobos.**

On LaPierre's **z-axis** that he calls "Mystery of Creation" he makes God's creation in nature a spiritual category and dimension from which humankind experiences the wonders of God's *Good Creation* as we have called it in this book. From this perspective it is not only humanity and/or human persons that experience corruption, death, and is despoiled; but nature itself, that is, all non-human sentient being, i.e. plants and animals, and even none-living being that includes everything else in the environment that living sentient being needs in order to live and thrive. In Genesis God's put man in charge of His *Good Creation* for:

God made the wild animals of the earth according to their kind, the cattle according to their kind, and all the creeping thing on earth according to their kind. God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of heaven, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that moves on the earth. So God made man; in the image of God He made him; male and female He made them. Then God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it [i.e. bring it under control, bring cosmos out of chaos!], and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of heaven, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:25-28, The Orthodox Study Bible).

It is clear from this passage that God put mankind in control “over all the earth” with the responsibility of *bringing it under control*; to bring about cosmos (order) out of chaos (disorder), with the additional command to “*be fruitful and multiple*” as well. It can be inferred from this that mankind as a corporate whole (and not just a few humans) have the authority to bring the whole Earth under control and develop from it ordered civilization for the benefit for all living sentient being (plants, animal, and human beings); subjected to structures and systems of domestication. The only sentient being that this cannot fully apply too is man him/herself. In a sense man does have authority to creation systems and structures (economic, political, social, and cultural) that brings other men under control; but in no sense can this mean “domestication” as it would be for animals, and the like. When it happens that other men try to domesticate men like they do animals this leads to what we have already described as *grand-domestication* and what Luckert has aptly described as *overdomestication*. Certainly, this is not what God meant in terms of men subjugating men, because all men have the divine/human authority to participate in *co-creative process of subduing* God’s *Good Creation*. When mankind goes down the negative path on the z-axis of either destroying God’s *Good Creation* or doing nothing about conserving it; and too, engaging in and creating political and economic structures of *grand-domestication* to control men themselves (without their consent) then this leads to negative outcomes of *over-domestication* that appears to be against God’s will for men in relationship to His *Good Creation*. When God said for men to *subdue the Earth* he was not talking about a small group of men *subduing* men against their will or a majority nation *subduing* a minority *stateless nation* of people. LaPierre with the *Mystery of Creation* as a spiritual reality and dimension that is affected negatively along the z-axis by Evil. This is where mankind (in violation of God’s commands) destroys God’s *Good Creation* for their own short term, and short-sighted desires grounded either in greed or ignorance. LaPierre states:

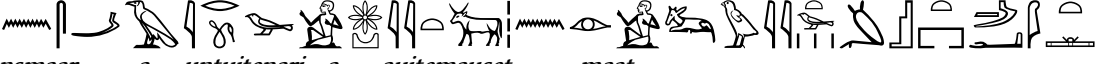
The sixth way to express one’s spirituality in my theory is the experience of the “Mystery of Creation.” The positive possibilities inherent in experiencing this dimension of spirituality range from the inspiration of painters on Monhegan Island off the coast of Maine to the thrills of walking through the flowers in the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen or contemplating the majestic views of the surf along the coast of Oregon or the Redwoods of California. However, as Rachael Carlson warned us decades ago in her book *The Silent Spring*, we also are at risk of destroying our environment. DDT is only one of the poisons that we have inserted into the ecosystem of this planet. Mercury works its way into fish. Acid rain forces its effects on the lakes and streams of much of America. Nitrous oxides lead to smog. Household and industrial wastes overwhelm our cities and towns and forces some areas to be set aside for landfills. Even buffalo, which are sacred to the Native American religions and cultures, were killed by the millions over a century ago for pleasure and/or to destroy the Native American’s way of life. Clear-cutting of trees has destroyed huge sections of landscape and inhibited the land’s ability to moderate water flow. It has also had the effect of eliminating whole stands of oxygen producing forests and possibly even negatively the weather. The “Mystery of Creation” has been subjected to the demands of humanity for its short-term pleasures or other gains. To the extent that we have despoiled Nature to that extent we have created or expressed a negative form of spirituality. (p. 107)

How are we to understand biblically LaPierre’s concern for the Evil that befalls nature; that constitutes God’s *Good Creation*? We have already mentioned passages in Genesis 1 that clearly shows that God is concerned not just for the survival and concerns of men or mankind, but God is concerned about *all of His Creation* and wants it grow and thrive. This as it turns out in Genesis 1 is man’s responsibility with divine authority given by God to do so, in relationship to God’s *Good Creation* “be fruitful and multiply.” But mankind understood God’s concern for His *Good Creation* well over a century before Genesis was written and well over 3,600 years before our post-modern political, economic, and social concerns about *climate change* and the argument one way or another as to whether human people are responsible for the disastrous changes in the climate that we are currently witnessing in the world environment and its effects on various eco-systems both on land, the air, and the sea, as well as in space, with millions of tons of space junk floating around with no control, where humans are literally making space into a giant *cosmic junkyard*; and on Earth with the philosophy “Not in my backyard” paying greedy

leaders in non-democratic nations large sums of money to take our non-biodegradable and dangerous junk to dump in their countries on their unsuspecting citizens. In addition letting cruise ships get away with dumping tons of garbage into the oceans; as well as frequent oil spills that kill fish and destroys coast lines. In the *Pert-em-Hru*, written around 1550 B.C.E., 110 years before Genesis, written around 1440 B.C.E., the so-called “Book of the Dead” it is clear the Egyptians understood that God was serious that men not participate in destroying His *Good Creation*. We have already quoted the following:


makuai - kuakher - k an - na - net maat
 Verily I have come to thee, I have brought to thee Maat.⁵⁵²


Ter - na - nek asfet enari - a asfet er ret
 I have driven away from thee wickedness. I have not done iniquity to mankind.


ensmaar - a untuitenari - a autemausest maat
 Not have I done harm unto animals. Not have I done wickedness in place of Maat.


enrekha - a netet
 Not have I known evil.


ensaat - a neterennem - a ennemh - a
 Not have I despised God. Not have I caused misery. Not have I caused affliction.


enari - a but neter ensmer - a enserem - a
 Not have I done what is abominable to God. Not have I caused pain. Not have I made to weep.⁵⁵³

Following the ethical standard put forth in ancient times to “do no harm” it appears from these passages in the *Pert-em-Hru* that the Egyptians both knew and honored God’s will to “do no harm” both to “animals” and to “mankind” in general, in the sense of causing “pain” or causing human’s to “weep”, which certainly included “not killing them.” Reference to doing no harm to animals makes it clear that the Egyptians believed that God’s care extended beyond themselves to the rest of God’s *Good Creation* and did not just concern them. Not doing these kinds of harms was tied directly with the Egyptians desire for immortality and eternal life to be granted by Osiris if the Osirian Traveler in his post-mortem state of existence could successfully defend his claim of being *innocent* of doing such harm to humanity and to the rest of God’s *Good Creation*, including animals. To do the contrary would be in their eyes be an *abomination* to God. The New Testament makes it clear that human person is not the only being (sentient and non-sentient, living and non-living) that are the aim of God’s plan of redemption with the final goal of *making all things new!* In fact the whole of God’s *Good Creation* is to be transformed and renewed and

⁵⁵² This reference “To Thee” is **Un-neferu** [] is a title of Osiris.

⁵⁵³ E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead (The Papyrus of Ani)*, pp. 194-195.

is *inextricably tied and link* (i.e. one is not going to happen without the other; If the Creation is destroyed, then Man is destroyed and *vice versa*) with the transformation and renewal of humanity and the human person. This is made clear in the following New Testament passage which personifies the *Creation* as “groaning and waiting” the “Sons of God to be revealed,” as follows:

As it is, the creation waits with eager expectation for the revelation of God's children. Indeed, creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that creation will also be delivered from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the totality of creation groans and labors in pain until now. Moreover, so do we who have the first fruits of the Spirit! We groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:19-23, EOB).

In fact there are negative and disastrous consequences for mankind not obeying God's will to properly “tend and keep it” (Genesis 2:15b, EOB). First, for failure to adhere to God's moral precepts in disobedience to His will the very ground is cursed for God told Adam, the very first representative of mankind that because of sin “*cursed is the ground in your labors, In toil you shall eat from it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground from which you were taken. Earth you are, and to earth you shall return . . . therefore the Lord sent him out of the garden of pleasure to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He cast out Adam, and made him dwell opposite the garden of pleasure. He then stationed the cherubim and the fiery sword which turns every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*” (Genesis 3:17b-24, EOB). For the first time God reveals to Adam his human nature as **Earth-Man** and his inextricable symbiotic connection to it and thus the full consequences are apparent to Adam as he and his *kith and kin* are for the moment blocked from sharing in the blessing of the *Garden of Pleasure* and most concerning the right to eat from the *Tree of Life*. Mankind is seemingly forever cast back into the harsh Earth environment from which his flesh nature was taken. Ever since then **Earth-Man** has been trying to forcibly make the Earth yield to him sustenance for his daily survival and its marvelous secrets; but not without great toil, pain, and trouble, ending up fighting horrible wars to claim its riches for themselves while denying others the same. The very Earth mankind lives on has become a bloody battle ground and mankind has just now begun to realize we really are not going to be able to go elsewhere and this Earth is all we have. Should we destroy it then we ourselves are destroyed. If that were not consequences enough God has reserved a final judgment for those of us who do not care enough, too afraid to Speak Truth to Power; or just motivated by greed (inherent in receiving Mark 666 = the Number of a Man) to adhere to this truth that is in plain sight, thinking they have gotten away with something or foolishly think there are no consequences for their actions that has left the Earth and its People despoiled; for in the Book of Revelation the Twenty-four Presbyters, who sit on thrones before the Throne of God, as they fall on their faces and expressed adoration to God say;

We give thanks to you, Lord God, the Almighty, the one who is, and who was, and who is coming; because you have assumed your great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, and your wrath came, as did the time for the nations to be judged. The time has come to give their reward to your bondservants the prophets, and also to the saints and to those who fear your Name, to the small and the great. And the time has come **to destroy those who destroy the earth!** (Revelation 11:16-18, EOB).

The unbreakable connection between mankind (Earth-man) and Earth his home is so evident that it has escaped the most erudite religious scholars this one singular biblical truth; no human beings are going to heaven to be with God. We are in fact going back to the Earth from which we came and in the resurrection to life God, the Father, Himself is coming down from Heaven to live with us and not the other way around as falsely and ignorantly preached from the Pulpit and as taught in Sunday School. We who are saved are not going anywhere. The Word of God in Revelation 21:1-8 makes this absolutely clear but unbelievably this passage of Scripture is ignored for ages and bears repeating:

21 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.² And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.⁴ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.⁵ And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.⁶ And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.⁷ He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (Revelations 21:1-8, KJV).

It is vital to know God is coming to Earth to live with men because it gives what is happening on this Earth now that much more importance. From this we can view our sojourn here with different spectacles. The only humans that are leaving this Earth for good are those who are and have become the adherents, acolytes, and devotees of Satan and the Dark Powers and Principalities, all of which, including the false prophet, and death itself will be cast into the Lake of Fire and then cast into outer darkness, no longer to influence God's *New Heaven and New Earth* to do Evil. Revelation makes this very clear and even if religious people read it a hundred times they will deny its reality in favor of what they have been taught from the pulpit and in Sunday School since they were young children. It behooves us then to know what then is the nature of Man. Before we can even begin to understand why LaPierre' *Mystery of Creation* is so important to men and why we are so enamored with this Earth, we need to know who we are. Why is mankind the subject of God's redemptive story whose aim is to deliver him from the Dark Trinity of Nothingness, that is, *Death, Evil, and Sin*? Why is Satan and the dark principalities and powers so interested in getting human beings to worship them and if not worship then Satan and demons to seek their destruction, or bring them to misery and as much pain as can be delivered? In short, *what is Earth-man* and why is his salvation and redemption inextricably tied up with the renewal of God's *Good Creation on Earth* and why is his redemption so important to the People of Heaven? Some of the answers to these questions are provided by me in my *Nu African Calendar* (2020) of which I have borrowed a bit from my Chapter on "The Tale of the Mutants":



The words **Hue, Human, Homo, Homage** are all based in the Latin root word **Humus**, meaning **earth, ground, soil, i.e. black or brown substance**. I also point out here that the *Qur'an*, Sura Al-Hijr XV, verses 26, 28, says that mankind was made out of **black clay, i.e. the Arabic word (صلصال) salsal = mud formed while wet into dry [sounding] clay**, that is, dry clay that emits sound like pottery once it is harden in the furnace of fire. This *Sura* states: "We created man from sounding clay [i.e. with a rational mind], from mud moulded into shape. . . . Behold! Thy Lord said to the angels: "I am about to created man, from sounding clay from mud moulded into shape (inexhaustible) with Us: but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures." It is not for nothing that Euro-Amerikan white supremacist call black people the **Mud People**, for without knowing it (in their racist hatred) they are ironically paying homage to the black man as the *Original Race of Men* that were **divinely transmuted** from the substance *earth = humus*, the *celestial black ooze* of the Kamau, via the *Divine Words of Power = The Word of God, Himself*: "The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being," [Genesis 2:7, NIV]. I interpret "man" from Genesis 5:1-2, stating "When God created man, he made *him* in the likeness of God. He created *them* male and female and blessed *them*. And when *they* were created, he called *them* "man", where "Man" = male and female collectively

together.⁵⁵⁴ The Egyptian sacred texts have the word  = *Reth* = the Egyptian as *men par excellence*, who were **created from the tears of Ra, the Sun God**. This Egyptian word shows its agreement with Genesis 5:1-2 in that the *collective male and female are called "Men" or the Man, par excellence*.

Diop associates this gender collective with ethnicity, such that in his view, it can be inferred that his use of  = **Hamitu** = **Kamitu** with the same definition as **Reth** = **the collective black man (male and female)**. This is why in this project I call *them* = "Men" = "The Man" the **Only Hue-Man**, on the basis of the Egyptian understanding of the **spiritual genetic origins of the races of mankind**.⁵⁵⁵ The collective man then are the *original creation* made in God's *image*, from the inert, but divine mass, via the celestial *god Nu*. Monogenetic theory suggests that the *Hue-Man Race* came *before* the *Mu-tant Race* of men. However, not in the racist sense that the collective black man is morally *superior* in respect of his state of being, noting that black men can be Setian Man as well; but in respect that the collective black man as the first *men* to acquire *divine knowledge* and by God's command the *first men* to be God's divine vice-regents. Made so the first Hue-Man's were made divinely responsible for transmitting the culminating material and divine civilization to the rest of the world, including too *Mutant Man*, as in fact happened borne out by history. This was the divine command to the *first man* = *Adamu* = the *Only Human*: "*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground . . . And it was so.*" [Genesis 1:27-30, NIV]. The Hue-Man = Black man was the **only rational being** God made *directly from His breath*, with a *rational right thinking mind*, as indicated by the fact that God gave Man the right too name all things on Earth according to his spiritual intellect and knowledge as a salute to Man's capacity for primal scientific knowledge and its development out of his own being for "*Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name, so the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field,*" [Genesis 2:19-20, NIV]. The Qur'an confirms this biblical inference in its sacred scripture. It states that not only was *man* made of **black clay**, indicating our racial type as does the name Adam in Hebrew, properly understood, but also that the Hue-Man Race were the *first beings* made of (صلصل) **sounding clay** meaning that the black man was the only living *being*, the *first*, to emit **rational speech** = *the ability to reason and transmit rational or relational thought to others!*

Hue = **Color** in its most intense form is **dark** = **black**, and **Homo** = **Man**, so that one can construct from that combination **Dark Man** = **Black man** = **Colored Man**. The Middle English word **Homage**, the Latin word **Humus** = **Black or brown substance**, the Greek word **Chthon** = **Earth**, and in Old English word **Guma** = **Man** are all derived

⁵⁵⁴White Setian males have co-opted the term "man" as a *second tier of defense* against the advancement of women's rights and claims too God given freedom which of course on the other side (female) has been distorted by inordinate feminist claims as a reaction to white-male domination and grand-domestication. God's design and genetic assignment of male and female (God made them male and female and called them "male") are subverted and distorted by legal and legislative fiat that uphold hybrid emotive and psychic personal and collective claims to civil rights for gender reassignment by human persons born male and female. The melding and melting of gender distinctions that God designed and created has led to the creation of whole communities of human persons that define themselves by their choice of sexuality where incredibly and ironically Lesbian and Gay communities could not exist naturally without heterogenic communities of human persons (i.e. they could not exist naturally without the autogenetic process of heterogenic communities) so they have to rely on socializing children and convincing others that they are born Lesbian or Gay. The black man has to somehow escape these demonic distortions of God natural design for the Hue-Man race as male and female and so understand who "Man" is.

⁵⁵⁵ See Egyptian "**Hamitu**" = man, par excellence, See Diop, "The Beginning of Man and Civilization," in Sertima, **Great African Thinkers: Cheikh Anta Diop**, p. 336, and in the same work, Diop's essay, "The Egyptians as They Saw Themselves," pp. 46-48, and his Chapter 2: Critical Review of the Most Recent Theses on the Origin of Humanity," Sertima, p. 174, 218, giving he Egyptian pictorial representation of the monogenetic origins of all mankind.

from the same so-called *Indo-European root word* **Ghthem**; thus we have etymological proof from the White man's own language that they perceive a direct relationship between **Man** and **Black Earth**. This knowledge is hidden in their language and is proof that **Black man = Earth Man = Humus Man = Man made from a black or brown substance**.⁵⁵⁶ Ethiopian scholar Legesse Allyn (2014) has some interesting nuances on the origin of the English word for "Man" in his book *Amarigna & Tigrigna Qal Roots of the English Language* in an attempt to connect its origin with Egyptian hieroglyphics and Amharic. I am not sure how successful Legesse Allyn was in respect to this particular

grammatical analysis for he suggests that the Egyptian word for "man" is  , is related too  , *pekht*, a "tearer" and  , *pekht-t*, a *male* bird that tears its prey, suggesting that man is like a bird of prey that *lives* or subsists off of prey that he hunts and tears in order to eat and live (e.g. meat eater). Legesse Allyn then suggests that the Amharic መኖር (*mā-nor*) "to live" comes from the primary word Old English *ener* "man" = individual male, fellow, husband, man, or sir. The Old English thereafter developed into "man", "mann", human being, person (male or female); brave man, hero, servant, vassal (i.e. vassal of the Lord of the *Manor*) ; Old Norse *maor*; Sanskrit *manuh*, Avestan *manu*. From this analysis one can associate the origin and character of "man" with *hu-man*, from Old English *humain*, or Old French *humain*, *umain* "of or belonging to man"; from Latin *humanus* "of man, human," also "humane, philanthropic, kind, gentle, polite; learned, refined, civilized," probably related to *homo* (genitive *hominis*) "man". . . and to *humus* "earth," of "earthly beings," as opposed to the gods. . ."557 Certainly Legesse Allyn is closer to the truth in comparing the Ethiopian word *mā-nor* (Cf. *man-or*) with the roots for "man" or "human" that result in English word for a place called "Manor" as in "Lord of the Manor" related to man as a vassal of his Lord on whom he depends for his sustenance to *live* but is hard put too associate the Egyptian word *pekht* with this notion accept that some words within the English domain for "man" or "hu-man" suggest that wild-man (Hebrew *Ish* and *Isha*) because of his sin eventually became a "meat-eater" but nevertheless retained his rational ability to think and name things and is called to higher civilization as an Earth-Man to subdue the Earth (i.e. bring it into ordered existence. After Adam's sin God declared that man's food would be the plants of the field. There would be no need for him to do violence to animals in order to *eat and live*.

Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toll you will eat of it all the days of your life. I will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return. (Genesis 3:17-19, NIV)

But after the flood God blessed Noah and granted that mankind would live by being *meat-eaters* as well and so using violence (killing animals as prey) to eat to live would become normative and so man having the character of the *Pekht-t* bird is descriptive of man's need and desire to live at the level of animal even though he is called to higher civilization as *Hue-man* (or *Hu-Man*):

Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands. Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. Whoever sheds the blood of man by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. (Genesis 9:1-6, NIV).

⁵⁵⁶ See **Webster's New World Dictionary Of The American Language**, ed. David B. Guralnik [Wm. Collins + World Publishing Co., Inc., 1976], p. 670 [homage], 672 [homo], 683 [hu-man], 684 [hu-mus], for the etymological relationships.

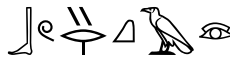
⁵⁵⁷ Legesse Allyn. *Amarigna & Tigrigna Qal Roots of English Language*. (AncientGebts.org Press, 2014), 26.

Legesse Allyn cannot make the grammatical connection between the English word “man” and the Egyptian

hieroglyph  , *Pekht* () = “tearer” for “mankind who must eat to live by tearing its prey” using the Amharic መኖር (*mā-nor*) “to live” even though there is a connection between that word and the Old English words for *manor* related to the semantic domain for “man” and “hu-man.” But he can legitimately make the analogy

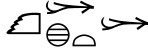
between the  , *Pekht-t* = a bird who eats to live by tearing its prey is consistent with Genesis that grants mankind the right to devolve from being a plant eater (that does not need to kill to eat and live) to a meat-

eater that must be a  , “tearer” that is, an animal killer in order to eat to live. However, I believe Legesse Allyn is on more sure ground in his grammatical analysis of the English origin of the word “black” which gives additional support to the notion that the White man must white-out human referents to blackness because the notion of blackness represents a genetic nullification of his own being and so a threat to his own existence. Legesse

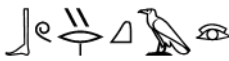
Allyn wants to make the case that the Egyptian hieroglyphic  , i.e. *burqa*, is the word for

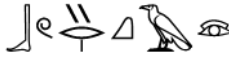
“black” (in color) and that from this word or phrase comes the hieroglyphic  , *barga*, which means according to Budge “to illumine,” “to give light.” While Legesse Allyn intimates that *burqa* () means “black” Budge states it means “to shine,” “to lighten,” “to glimmer,” “to sparkle,” “bright,” or “shining.”⁵⁵⁸

Taking the meanings of Budge for *barga* and *barqa* one can immediately see on the surface the semantic relationship between the two. But one would doubt Legesse Allyn’s grammatical statement about their relationship and meaning

especially if one knows that the hieroglyphic word for “black,” or “black thing” is  , *kam-t* and pronounced the same way  for “strong black” or “jet black.”⁵⁵⁹ We know that  refers

to the color black because of the determinative  is a lock of hair and when used as a referent to a human person means “complexion” (in this case “black complexion”). So, if these are hieroglyphics for the “color black”

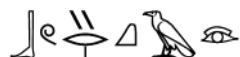
why does Legesse Allyn suggest that  , *barqa* means “black” when Budge clearly shows it means “to illumine,” and “to give light”? It turns out that Legesse Allyn is correct but he does not bother to let the reader know that the word *barqa* is an Egyptian euphemism for “black” or “dark.” How so? Budge is not correct in stating that *barqa* means “to shine,” or “to glimmer,” with the exception of the meaning “to lighten” which really gives away the true meaning of the word which Legesse Allyn has captured.

The hieroglyphic  is really a compound word **Bu-er-qa** (i.e. *barqa* with “u” sound changing to an “a” sound elided into “er”). Once we know this and that  *buis* is the *sign of negation* and means

“not”, and that  *er* with the intensified hieroglyphic sign for “double” means “really toward” and  *qa* with the determinative  together “to see intensely,” “to look intently” we can readily see that *barqa* really means “not be able to see toward the light” or “not to see the glimmer or shine” where the darkness or blackness can be cut with a knife. It therefore is no conjecture or jump in the imagination to suggest that

⁵⁵⁸ E. A. Wallis Budge. *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*. Vol. 1. (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), pp. 204, 215.

⁵⁵⁹ Budge, **Sawa**. Vol. II, p. 787.



refers to the “intense absence of light” so that one is trying to see through the “blackness” or “darkness” to the light or “living blackness = a intense blackness one can *feel*.” This gives an explanation for Legesse Allyn’s meaning given to *barqa*. Of great interest is his claim that both *barga* and *barqa* originated from the Amharic word ገለጽ አለ = “to be bright,” “flash” and ገለጽኦልጽኦ meaning “shiny.” This will eventually take us

back to Budge’s definition of ገረገረ meaning “to lighten” which we think is a giveaway to the true

meaning of *barqa* = “the absence of light”, or “intense blackness,” or “intense darkness” used as a verb to see through the darkness or change darkness into light. Legesse Allyn goes on to show that Ethiopic ገለጽኦልጽኦ, that is, *bləchəch* means “gleam”, “shine,” or “flash” and is related to Old English “blac,” “dark,”; from Proto-Germanic “blakaz,” “burned,”; . . . “to burn, gleam, shine, flash”; Greek phelegein “to burn,” “scorch,” and then he goes further to state that the cognate Old English words are “bleach,” “to whiten,” from the Proto-Germanic *blaikjan* “to make white.”⁵⁶⁰ We note here that expressions are psychic phenomenon associated with the White man’s fear of anything black as threatening and that it needs to be “bleached,” “whiten” or “made white” in order not to be a genetic threat. If black complexion is involved here then this whole analysis now makes clear that Budge himself knowing the grammar full

well of the compound phase ገረገረ nevertheless gives away the inner thought that this word

really means when used as a verb (action word) “to lighten” that which is black or dark. It is also instructive to know that the word **Homage** means showing **reverence for a lord**, or paying homage as a vassal to a lord, giving honor to that which is *first, superior = primordial*. The whole idea of homage and respect is contained in the philosophy of *humanism*, the *study of Earth Man*, *honoring his position as the only rational being, standing at the center of the universe as its highest rational form*. Of course the **Hu-manist** realize only subconsciously, according to the **Cress Theory of Color/Race Confrontation**, that they are actually paying *homage* to the **Black man = Original Earth Man = Dark Man = the First Rational Being Made In The Image Of God, from the Nu!** They have a deep suspicion that they in fact are paying such homage to the **original rulers of the Earth**, which to them is a disturbing thought that is embedded so deep in their subconscious that when they see *any* black man they feel an immediate fear, aversion and even hatred **for no apparent reason**. However, the primordial position of the Hue-Man Race *being first in creation* and with the *divine command to rule over it* is really the basis of their feeling of guilt for such a reaction, for they know with this position comes the notion of paying homage. Get in an elevator along with any white person and you will see this feeling manifested in various ways. They of course do not know that this fear of the *only Hue-Man* is because of his original divine status and their origins as beings born out of the black man’s being, identifying them (the white man) as **Mu-tant Man**. The *Qur’an* again points out in Sura II, verses 30-34 and Sura XV, verses 29-34, that God had made Original **Earth Man** His *vice-regent on Earth*, and it states that God demanded that even the Angels in Heaven bow down to *Him!* All of the angels bowed except **Iblis = Satan = Set**. This Islamic theological understanding is also reflected in the biblical understanding with Jesus, as the Son of God **incarnated** in the form of the **only Hue-Man = Son of Man = the Divine personage black according to the flesh**. The word of God testifies to this sublation or incarnation of the divine into HueMan form: “**And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him’**” [Hebrews 1:6, NIV]. God had even the angels worship the divinity that is sublated as the *only Hue-Man = The Only Begotten = Jesus’ Divine Being representative of that fact of original creation and purpose = God breathed into Man and he became a living soul and therefore he was made in God’s image and divinely worthy of praise when he allows the Holy Spirit to raise him to his original Osirian level of spiritual awakening!* Jesus is therefore the *Divine/Human*, whose divinity it incarnated/sublated in *black flesh*, as the *Only Divine/Hu-Man (Earth-Man) and Only Divine/Hue-Man (Black-Man of the Earth)*.

⁵⁶⁰ Legesse Allyn. **Sawa**, p. 21.



The *divine being* = *Osiris* lies dormant in the black man. Therefore, the Black Man is *asleep* as to his divine origin and purpose, and so must be awakened. Jesus Christ has come as Hue-Man *black according to the flesh* to wake up the divinity (the Osirian hidden in us) that is inherent to the black man's being. This is why the Scripture states: "Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee" (Ephesians 5:14). Paul admonishes against any philosophy or religion that says that Christ has not come in the *flesh* = *Hue-Man*, which idea and teaching he says has its origin in the Anti-Christ = Secular Religion (promoted by white Setian Men, who are anti-Hue-Man and anti-God). However, in order for this to happen collectively (i.e. *coming awake*) the collective black man, the Only Hue-Man (although not the *only* Hu-Man) must go through a process of divine **metanoia** and **palingenesis**, that is, **repentance and regeneration** of his mind (i.e. *transformed by the renewing of his mind*) before he can receive within himself the Kingdom of God (i.e. the Osiris lying innate in him) that God has prepared for the righteous. As long as the black man fails to come *back up where he belongs*, and continued to be followers of this Setian demonic culture the black man will never enter the bliss of eternal life that awaits him in the New Jerusalem of God's Kingdom. In fact, if the black man, the Only Hue-Man keeps imitating and following this Setian culture they live in they are going (according to every sacred text that I have read) *directly to hell and the Lake of Fire, immediately*, because they have denied God's divinity, His sovereignty over their lives, and violated His holiness in return for the temporal and thus temporary pleasures of *demonic experience* that this Setian anti-God, anti-Hue-Man culture offers in various forms. Jesus said as much to Nicodemus "How can a man be born again?" *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3)*, using a Greek word from a close semantic domain [i.e. meaning to *Change state of being and behavior*]. This term is related to παλιγγενεσία [**palingenesis**] = **being regenerated in one's mind back to a higher state of being and thought, back to the original state of rational thought or right thinking = level of divine thought or righteousness = a spiritual mutation = a Spiritual Mutant.**⁵⁶¹ A word in this same domain and theologically a necessary predisposition before *palingenesis* and eternal life that follows can occur is *metanoia*. Herman Ridderbos sees a direct connection between "regeneration" [Matthew 19:28] and receiving "eternal life" [Matthew 19:29], both of which are grounded in predisposition of "repentance" of the evil life in this world.⁵⁶² It is a fact that Jesus began preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God by demanding, like John the Baptist before him, that men *repent* [μετανοεω, *metanoeo*] and *believe the gospel of the Kingdom of God* [Mark 1:15] in order to enter the state of being that is *palingenesis* = *the regeneration of all created things*.⁵⁶³ However, the black church, pursuing it humanistic approach to the gospel of the Kingdom of God, that is, seeking to please its congregations, and making them feel good through preaching celebration (i.e. "pretty preaching") a strange genre of *religious motivational "turn to your neighbor" inspirational speeches* that have been copied by secular *motivational speakers*, and through their *motivational and religious inspirational books*, which has eclipsed the reading of the Bible for direct knowledge of the Mind of God, has fore-sworn telling its people that they need **metanoia = to first repent of their sins and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ** before they can have a *changed life and mind = being born again*. This is the "declared" object of the two *motivational and inspirational mediums* being used to achieve the same purpose, *but in vain*. The black church as the *watchman on the wall* for the life and salvation of the collective black man is under the same indictment that God made to the Prophet Ezekiel, who was a dynamic preacher who people of God loved to hear. God stated:

⁵⁶¹ Louw & Nida, **Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains**, Vol. 1 (New York: United Bible Society, 1989), s.v. "γενναωανοθεν; παλιγγενεσία", 41.53, p. 510.

⁵⁶² Ridderbos, **The Coming of the Kingdom**, p. 80. Cf. Pp. 35-36.

⁵⁶³ Ridderbos, p. 36.

As for you, son of man, your countrymen are talking together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, saying to each other, 'Come and hear the message that has come from the Lord.' My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to listen to your words, but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice (Ezekiel 33:30-32, NIV)

This current state of black preaching and its philosophy of Hu-Manism = man centered preaching in the black church is sending our people directly to hell and the Lake of Fire. It was not God's intent that we become worshippers of our black selves, despite any claims we make to *the divine state of rational being* as the Only Hue-Man. That is unwarranted idolatry that allows us to think more highly of ourselves than we ought [Romans 12], and center our being on what God and his church can do for us, rather than what we can do for God and His church. God is not our *bellhop*, rather we are the *doulos of God*, literally the *slaves of God*, who should, given are humble *intermediate state of created being*, make ourselves into a *living sacrifice to the praise of His glory that is in Jesus Christ the Lord!***Hu-Manisms** Judaic-Christian religious expression is found in the truth-myth of Satan's fall from grace for failing to obey God's command to bow down to **Adam**. Adam's name means **Dark Red Earth** or **Dark Red Clay**. He is the **Original Man** of Christian fame, *his color hidden in the meaning of his name* as we inferred above. **Mu-tant** on the other hand comes from the Latin root word **Mu-tans = To Change**, as it were from the *original parent*. **Mu-cus** in connection with this idea of *change* is a *secretive, slimy, mu-cid colorless liquid*. **Mu-cus** means **to slide** or **secrete from** some other *primal, i.e. first substance* and therefore is connected with *mu-cid* meaning a *colorless liquid* secreting from something or some place. Thus **Mu-tant** and **Mu-cus** taken together carries the meaning of **color change**, or more precisely, **change to that which is colorless**, i.e. so that the new thing [sublated thing] or substance no longer has **hue = color**, but technically is **absent color = a mucus type thing or substance**.



*If the Black Man is the First Hue-Man or Earth-Man, who heard God's command directly to "subdue the Earth" and "be fruitful and multiply", that is, bring cosmos out of chaos; and finally understanding that God is coming down here on Earth to live with men; what is our duty as Earth-Men, the Only Hue-Man in conserving and preserving God's Good Creation?*Caring for this Earth is more than some fancy by radical environmentalist as far as Christianity should be concerned. For Christians it should be more than our religious duty because God desires for us to care. Fundamentally, in God's wisdom He has inextricably tied us to this Earth by our very nature as **Earth-men**, as we have demonstrated above. We are a special order of spiritual being clothed in flesh, just a little lower than angels, but certainly of a different order. And for this reason **we are not going anywhere** *en masse* for as the Ecclesiastes 1:4 says: *"A generation comes and a generations goes, But the earth stands forever."* This word is true because according to Revelation God does not intend to destroy this world He has made; but rather God intends to *renew both Heaven and Earth* in some kind of spiritual cosmic transformation that must remain a mystery until it is done. The only thing leaving this Earth is Evil, Death, Sin and all Evil does. All will be cast into outer darkness! Revelation 21:5 says: *"The one who sits on the throne said to me, 'Behold, I am making all things new!'* He said, *"Write, for these words are faithful and true!"*. This is not a new saying just because it is in the last book of the New Testament. The same language is found in Isaiah Chapter 65 as follows:

But those who serve Him shall be called by a new name; which shall be blessed upon the earth. For they shall bless the true God, and those who swear upon the earth shall swear by the true God: for they shall forget their former tribulation, and it shall not come into their heart. For there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and they shall not remember the former things, nor shall these things come into their hearts. But they shall find gladness and exceeding joy in her, for behold, I will make Jerusalem an exceeding joy, and My people gladness. I will rejoice exceedingly

in Jerusalem, and I will be glad in My people. There shall no longer be heard in her a voice of weeping, nor a voice of crying. There shall not be the untimely death of a child there, nor shall there be an old man who does not fulfill his time. For a young man shall be a hundred years old, For according to the days of the tree of life, so shall be the days of My people, and the works of their labor shall not grow old. (Isaiah 65:15b-22, The Orthodox Study Bible).

This prophesy from Isaiah appears as if he had looked into the future and actually read Revelation 21:1-5 for the words of Isaiah above are uncanny and mirrors almost idea for idea in Revelation 21:1-5 and in the case of the wording of “a new heaven and a new earth” they are exact, as follows, showing (1) that heaven and earth will not be destroyed but spiritually and cosmically *transformed*, because as God said, “*I am doing a new thing*” (Isaiah 43:19) because the old order of things, that is, the old oppressive order of grand-domestication and subservience to the ways of death and sin; and (2) that this new heaven and earth will last forever, and finally, (3) that Earth-man is not leaving his Earthly home; but God is *coming down from Heaven to live forever* with Earth-men that have been spiritually and cosmically transformed. Here I believe **theWord of God over theWord of Man**, which has been ignorantly preached that we are *going up to Heaven!* What they don’t understand is that *what goes up, must come done*, and in this instance *Heaven is coming down to us* in the form of the *New Jerusalem* with God as our sovereign King. Here is the Word of God on the matter:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, God’s dwelling is with people! He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes! Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, crying, or pain any more. For the first things have passed away. The one who sits on the throne said to me, “Behold, I making all things new!” he said, “Write, for these word are faithful and true!” He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who is, thirsty, I will freely give from the spring of water of life. (Revelation 21:1-6, EOB).

But how (one might ask) is this spiritual and cosmic transformation accomplished? We know first that God will be the Divine Power that will accomplish bringing about a *new heaven and new earth*, that is, *a new cosmic order* finally governed by God’s will as Jesus taught us to pray for: “Our Father, which art in Heaven, holy is this Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.” Much of how God will do this will remain a mystery until it is accomplish, that is, when God finally says, “It is done!” However, we make some brief comments about this spiritual and cosmic transformation that going through all of the above argument has likely caused questions in the mind of our readers. The *Omega-Christ* is the concept we want to explored based on God’s affirmation to John that “I am the Alpha and the Omega.” Because God is the beginning and end all things (as Jesus said) are possible with God. There is one important theologian that can give us a brief understanding of this as we close our thoughts on LaPierre’s “Mystery of Creation” that no matter all we do to protect and conserve God’s *Good Creation* it will be God Himself that shall bring about the final transformation of both Heaven and Earth. In fact God has already placed the necessary energy for this transformation and renewal innately within the cosmic order of which Earth and Earth-men are apart. That cosmic energy is love. Here we look at the work of Catholic theologian and cosmologist Teilhard de Chardin in this respect, as explained by Doran McCarty (1976) in his *Teilhard de Chardin* who talks about de Chardin’s understanding of “The Mechanisms of Transformation” that culminate into what de Chardin surmised is the *Omega Point*, that is, how God’s *Good Creation* will be transformed into a *new thing*. McCarty states the following:

Evolution is the most obvious mechanism of transformation. As we have seen Teilhard is dedicated to a kind of transformism whereby the species are not fixed but are transformed into new emergents. Part of the evolutionary process is the mechanism of convergence and centration. The infrastructure of reality is such that it will being about convergence of all things. “Everything that

risers must converge.” . . . Sometimes Teilhard refers to this process as unanimisation . It is a basic presupposition of Teilhard that the principle of divergence of species and reality at a given moment, all will finally come to a place of convergence. The ultimate convergence is the final Omega Point. . . . Another mechanism of transformation is love. Teilhard is willing to admit that love is the emotional reaction between persons, but he feels it is much more real than this. He often speaks of love as an energy within the psychic universe. It seems as though he means that love is not just emotional reaction and sentimentality but is also a full biological reality of affinity of being to being which reaches down below the level of the human.

Considered in its full biological reality, love—that is to say, the affinity of being with being—is not peculiar to man. It is a general property of all life and as such it embraces, in its varieties and degrees, all the forms successively adopted by organized matter. In the mammals, so close to ourselves, it is easily recognized in its different modalities: sexual passion, parental instinct, social solidarity, etc. Further off, that is to say lower down the tree of life, analogous are more obscure until they become so faint as to be imperceptible. But this is the place to repeat what I said earlier when we were discussing the ‘*within* of things.’ If there were not internal propensity to unite, even at a prodigiously rudimentary level—indeed in the molecule itself—it would be physically impossible for love to appear higher up, with us, in ‘hominised’ form.

Here his thought reaches the full cycle. It is love which is the energy that has brought about the attraction or affinity of reality to one another, which in turn is the power of centration and convergence.⁵⁶⁴

This concept that love is the cosmic energy that God has already made a part of the “Mystery of Creation” and that God Himself is love demonstrates bypower and energy that is in God’s love for His creation, which He will use too transform and renew both Heaven and Earth. What is fascinating is that God has already implanted love as the attraction of being to being, even at the lowest level of life so that He will be able to converge all thing together by His divine love, where according to de Chardin it is not possible in higher forms of being without already being innately part of lower levels of life. This is one of the great mystery’s of creation that goes beyond our sentimentality for protecting the environment. God already has the mechanism of love innately implanted within all of His *Good Creation* so that when the prophesy of Revelation 21:1-5 is fulfilled we know in part how this is going to be done. *It will be down by the cosmic energy of love that is innately within all things.* For de Chardin the divine energies of love that God has infused all of creation with will converge at what he calls he **Omega Point**. Later he will identify the *Omega Point* with the **Cosmic Christ**. This convergence of love began before the creation and existed in its pure form between the Trinitarian God-head, God, the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit, God One. This divine convergence of love is how the universe was created in the first place from that divine energy and we can surmise that it is through the divine convergence of Love between the Trinitarian God-head and Creation itself because all of creation has this energy. According to McCarty this convergence in various phrases will result in a “pan-organized world” and a “personalized universe. From here it is possible to surmise that Evil itself (at least the left hand aspects of God’s nature) will be converged with everthing else at the **Omega Point** and sublated with the **Cosmis Christ** as **God’s End Game**, that is, God’s **Final Solution** to *the Problem of Evil*. How is all of this possible? McCarty talks about de Chardin’s views on:

The Omega Point and the Mystery of Creation

For Teilhard this is a result of the principle of centrality which operate on all phenomena so that as species evolve, they curve in from diversity toward a unity at the center. Teilhard sees the world as having burst forth from one primal peduncle into a myriad of forms and further peduncles which now are all beginning to move back toward a single point. This is not the primal point but the Omega Point. The Omega Point is

⁵⁶⁴ Doran McCarty. *Teilhard de Chardin*. In *Makers of the Modern Theological Mind*. (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1976), pp. 92-94.

he apex of all of nature, the end of the historical process. The Omega Point is not just a collection of all the things which have preceded it in nature and history but contains an emergent new order. Teilhard describes it from time to time with the Christosphere or the *cosmic Christ* [my *Italics*]. Beyond this he gives at least four attributes of the Omega Point. The first is *autonomy*. The physical earth, as it is now, faces death especially because of the operation of the law of entropy. The time will come when the universe no longer has available energy. . . . Nevertheless, the basic position of Teilhard is that the earth will die as a result of entropy. Therefore the Omega Point must be *autonomous* from the superstructure of the earth in order for it to survive the death of the earth. As he put it, "Omega must be independent of the collapse of the forces with which evolution is woven." *Actuality* is another attribute of the Omega Point. Teilhard believes in emergence in evolution. What arises out of evolution is not just a combination of things but a new reality. That is, there emerges a new ontological actuality which was not in existence before. Out of the womb of the evolutionary process there will be born from the physical threshold a new entity or actuality [i.e. *a new heaven and a new earth*, My insertion]. *Irreversibility* is an important attribute of the Omega Point. History itself is irreversible, so that you cannot go back and redo it. Once that reality, entity, or actuality has crossed the threshold, something irreversible has happened. That entity has appeared because its time has come, the right set of conditions came together only at that one time. Therefore, the production of the entity can never be repeated. Nor can there be a step back through the threshold, in order to become less than the entity it now is. So in the future, the whole process of the Omega Point is irreversible. Once it has been reached, it becomes the ultimate new entity in the universe. The Omega also has the attribute of *transcendence*. Transcendence occurs whenever a new entity arises out of an old attribute or reality. . . . So when the Omega Point is reached, it will not be just the universe carried to a more complex degree, but will be a reality which transcends the building blocks which compose it. The principle of convergence, which has been an important characteristic in Teilhard's thought, is very evident here. Everything is moving from *Alpha to Omega*.⁵⁶⁵

The Christosphere, Cosmic Christ, and the Mystery of Creation

Teilhard's reference to the super-Christ may sound strange to ears accustomed to traditional religious terminology. Teilhard understands that "in position and function, Christ, here and now, fills for us the place of Omega Point." This super-Christ, who is the Omega Point, is the final point whether you arrive from theology or anthropology. The two coincide or at least overlap. It is Christ who fills all things. Here Teilhard appeals to St. Paul, especially to his letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians (Co. 1:17, 2:10, 3:11; Eph. 4:9). It is Christ who consummates all things, and who gives meaning and coherence to the structural lines of the world which converge upon him. Whenever Teilhard speaks about the other spheres (bio-sphere, noosphere, etc.), he speaks of a layer which surrounds the earth. There is some question whether that image holds true of the Christosphere or not. Sometimes it sounds more as if the Christ is a part of the infrastructure of the world rather than a layer of reality surrounding the earth. At other times it appears as though the Christ is the energy which pervades the universe. Once Teilhard commented that "Christ is linked, not simply in a moral or juridical context but as it were structurally and organically with the cosmos." Another time he indicated "that Christ is the great source of power and energy which is drawing all things toward itself." . . . The Christ of the Christosphere is a universal and cosmic Christ. Teilhard says: "By the Universal Christ, I mean Christ the organic centre of the entire universe." This is the Christ who is the infrastructure of the world. He is also the cosmic Christ because he is the Christ of the entire universe and cosmic system. . . . The cosmic Christ is not one who is the result of imagination or theologizing, but is the product of the long historical process of the universe. . . . A love which is the major attribute of the Christ can only be expressed adequately through the individuals who are here in the universe. . . . Teilhard is not interested in narrowing the body of Christ to a particular confessional group. He believes that there is a convergent Omega Point in all of the universe. There is a way in which the whole universe is the body of Christ, but the church is that specially selected instrument which knows the way the future is going (eschatology) and which therefore has the ability to lead in being both the body of Christ and the vehicle of super-charity. All of this is possible because there is a movement toward unity. All things will be united in Christ in the universe. While this force is working upon religions so that they will be converging, it is also at work at every level of the universe. . . . All things are going to come to their climatic head in Jesus Christ who will be the summation of all the forces of the universe. Teilhard describes this with such words as *hyperpersonal*. All is caught up in Christ after it has crossed the critical threshold and has moved into the Christosphere. Salvation is bound together with the whole process. Teilhard does not discuss the salvation of individual men but discusses salvation in terms of the race reaching the Omega Point. . . . It is

⁵⁶⁵ McCarty, pp. 96-98.

the universal and cosmic Christ who is the final goal of salvation. The final step will be at the universalization of all things and the crossing of the critical threshold into the Christosphere.⁵⁶⁶

Divine Energies of Love as a Mystery of Creation

De Chardin is not the only cosmologist to talk about the divine energies of love that were intimately involved in the first creation and were Trinitarian in nature, and so will be the same source of divine energy of love that is the cause and force behind the *re-creation* and *renewal* in the second creation coming out of the first creation because within the first creation God has endowed all being (living and non-living) with energies of love that are the divine DNA for a *new heaven and a new earth*. We might add here that this deposit of *divine energies of love* is the substance of the *Good* that will overcome *Evil* in the world, because it being diffused within *all of creation* and so it cannot be uprooted, rooted out by *Evil* or *Death* or overcome by *Sin* (the three temporal/cosmic entities of the *Trinitarian Power of Nothingness*) until it converges as the *Omega Point* sublated within the divine nature of the *Cosmic Christ*, who is indestructible. The saying “Love conquers all” is true even though mankind generally do not know the deep meaning of this truth. An Ethiopian scholar and at this writing Dean of Holy Trinity Theological College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Kesis, Dr. Mebratu Kiros Gebru grounded in apophatic theology, which holds that “we cannot know God outside of the economy in which He reveals Himself,” that is, God’s *Good Creation*; presents his view of Essence-Energies Distinction arguing convincingly that “this world is the result of the personal energies of God. . .” as presented in his doctoral thesis *Liturgical Cosmology: The Theological and Sacramental Dimensions of Creation in the Ethiopian Liturgy* (2012, pp. 83-84). Kesis Dr. Gebru states the following:

Central to the apophatic theological method is the concept that “we cannot know God outside of the economy in which He reveals Himself.” While the essence and the intra-trinitarian relationship of the Person of the trium God (immanent Trinity) are beyond our comprehension, that same God is revealed to us in the divine energies through which communication with God is possible. . . . The energies or the “life, power, and glory of God” are understood to be “no less God than his essence.” This means that, the grace, mercy, and power of God given to humans and the rest of creatures are not mere effects, but “God himself, in his energies.” God is known and communicable through the uncreated energies, and the harmony of the created universe presupposes “the direct and energetic presence of God in the world.” In other words, this world is the result of the personal energies of God, a “creation” revealing the Person of the *Logos* and witnessing to the Father through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Hence, in terms of the divine revelation and activities in this world, which bring about our communion with God, we are able to express in positive terms (cataphatic approach). Though the essence-energies distinction appears to be paradoxical, the distinction is important to understand God’s existence in the divine essence and the presence of God’s energies in creation. While “the divine *essence* is God *in his being*, the divine *energies* are God *in his actions*.” By the essence-energies distinction God’s transcendence is honoured, whereas the divine intimate immanence in creation is celebrated. The distinction is a fair way of saying that “God exists both in His essence and outside of His essence” and even if no human participation is possible in the divine essence, we are able to share the life of God through the energies. Moreover, the essence-energies distinction, by showing how God differently exists in the divine essence and pervades creation through the energies, combats the idea that the world is identical to God (pantheism). . . . Moreover, as James Payton purports, though we are not able to contemplate the divine essence “contemplation of the economy of salvation, the mystery of God and the wonder of divine love” is possible. As an example, Payton mentions that God is addressed twelve times as “Lover of humanity” in the Byzantine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. Similarly, highlighting God’s good work in creation and the redemptive act in the economy of salvation, elsewhere in the Ethiopian Liturgy God is addressed as *Gābare Sānayat* - ገብረ ወናይት (Beneficent) and *Māfāqāre Sāba*’ - መፍቀሪ ሰብአ (Lover of humanity). . . . Implicit in this expression is that the transcendent God is known through creation. . . . These expressions demonstrate that every action outside of the divine essence belongs to the energies of God through which “the immanent Trinity manifests itself as the economic Trinity.”⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁶ McCarty, pp. 99-101.

⁵⁶⁷ *Liturgical Cosmology: The Theological and Sacramental Dimensions of Creation in the Ethiopian Liturgy*, a Doctoral Thesis, Toronto, Canada; University of St. Michael’s College, 2012, (pp. 83-86).

The Work of the Trinity of Love in the Mystery of Creation

In the explanation above the distinction between God's divine essence and His creative energies that pervades all of creation *Kesis* Dr. Gebru is concerned that we know that this work of creation is Trinitarian in nature and "that every action outside of the divine essence belongs to the energies of God through which 'the immanent Trinity manifests itself as the economic Trinity' in love, and that the "latter distinction further elucidates how creation is the work of the common will of the three divine Persons as discussed below."

Prior to the creation of the whole universe, the Persons of the Trinity eternally existed in their intra-trinitarian communion of love. These Persons, in various Ethiopian doctrinal and liturgical sources, are understood to be consubstantially divine and eternal. According to the sources, the praise of glory of the triune God did not start with the creation of the world; but rather it had been eternally there within the Persons of the Trinity. . . . a book used in the EOTC for liturgical purposes, says that "before the creation of the world, God was praised by His own praise." This stand echoes the prayer of Jesus to his Father; "So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed" (Jn. 17:5). Though there was no existing creature to thank God prior to the creation of the world, the three divine Persons possessed eternal praise, inseparable from their nature. The Ethiopian anaphora of the 318 Nicene Fathers states that "Before he [the triune God] created the angels for his worship, his glory was infinite; the glory of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit was perfect." Similar expression is found in Sa'atat (The Ethiopian Horologium): "Holy, Holy, Holy, God the Lord of hosts, his glory is within himself and his praise from himself." All these liturgical prayers refer to the immanent Trinity prior to its activity in the economy, that is, before the act of the creation of the cosmos.⁵⁶⁸

The Work of the Cosmic-Christ in the Renewal of Creation

"I am making all things new"(Revelation 21:5)

"Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."(Isaiah 43:18-19, NIV)

Within the *first creation* the Almighty God had already placed within *all things* His *divine energies* that has been working interior the human/divine order or the cosmos to provide mankind with sustenance and everything they need for life and to participate as *co-creators* within His *re-creation* or as we have been calling it here the *renewal*; as a phrase *a new heaven and a new earth*. From a political point of view *a new order of things, where the old things or the first things* (e.g. grand-domestication, racialism, war, hatred, greed, and all that is *rude, crude, and lewd*, etc.) are *passed away!* What is important about this *renewal* or *re-creation* which human persons (who understand) are participants in is that Christ or the Cosmic-Christ is like as in the first creation the means by which the *renewal* and *recreation* will be accomplished. As De Chardin explains all *energies* that God has planted in the DNA of the universe that includes this Earth, put in the hands of Earth-men will converge at the *Omega-Point* which personified is the *Cosmic-Christ* himself. As *Kesis* Dr.Mebratu Kiros Gebru has summarized it "*the whole of creation at the birth of Christ and on the cosmic dimension of his crucifixion demonstrate that the main purpose of the Christ event was the transformation of the entire cosmos.*" (p. 130) . *Kesis* Dr. Gebru states the following regarding the connection between the Cosmic-Christ and the *renewal* that will bring about a *new Heaven and a new Earth*, where the *first things* empowered by the **Trinitarian Dark Power and Principality of Nothingness** (i.e. *Death, Evil, and Sin*) *have passed away* :

Though the whole universe has been redeemed, its ultimate transfiguration has yet to come. Creation is now in travail, awaiting the time when it "will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). While Christians experience the *renewal* of the cosmos in the sacramental reality of the body of Christ, who *has recapitulated the whole creation in himself*,

⁵⁶⁸ *Liturgical Cosmology*, pp. 87-89.

the final glory of the cosmos is still to come. Even though the Christ event has brought “the potential transfiguration on the whole cosmos,” we experience “the already and not yet tension” because the transfiguration of the cosmos is an eschatological reality. Though his redemptive work, Christ has given us the possibility to experience deification; but our full participation in the glory of God will be achieved after the second coming of Christ. At the general resurrection, by reuniting humans’ souls to their bodies, Christ will grant an everlasting deification to humanity, and along with humans the cosmos also will be given “unending deification.” The bodies of humans and the entire creation will be renewed as “an incorruptible, spiritual and divine dwelling place.” . . . Theokritoff asserts that what really happened at the transfiguration of Christ was the transformation of the cosmos. “As is often pointed out,” she contends, “not only Christ’s face but also his clothes are transfigured; non-human creation, even human artifacts are caught up into glory.” As “a consummate affirmation of the worth of the sensible and of matter,” Christ’s transfiguration underlies the transfiguration of the whole cosmos. God’s economy of salvation mainly consists of the deification of the created world, and since we belong to the material environment by our bodies, our transfiguration entails the transformation of the entire creation. While we will be deified by participating in the *energies of God*, Christ will relieve the universe from its groaning by transforming it into “a new earth and a new heaven” (Rev. 21:1), finally summing up all creation in him so that God would be all in all.⁵⁶⁹

Reflective/Reflexive Analysis, Grammatical Analysis, Commentary Analysis

Here we more specifically reflect on the following passage Revelation 21:1-5 with a focus on Revelation 21:1 as follows:

Then I saw *a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away*, and the sea is no more. (2) I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, *coming down out of heaven* from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. (3) I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, *God’s dwelling is with people! He will dwell with them*, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them!” (4) He will wipe away every tear from their eyes! Death will be no more, neither will there be mourning, crying, or pain any more. For *the first things have passed away*. (5) The one who sits on the throne said to me, “Behold, *I am making all things new!*” He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true!” (Revelation 21:1-5, EOB).

We begin our exegesis by serious reflection on the narrative of the biblical passage (pericope) to arrive at what God is saying to us through the text and then by asking a number of engaging questions derived from that reflection/reflexive (i.e. reflection on the reflection) process. For a new and/or student exegete this can be a very scary process because you are led to ask questions that may go against everything you have been previously taught in Sunday School, Seminary or through the preached word. However, never fear you are allowed to ask these reflective questions of God, because God wants you to grapple with the truth of His word and be convinced of this truth as the Holy Spirit both reveals it to you and gives you insight into what God is trying to say to you. Note that God says to His people “*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. . .*” (Isaiah 1:18, KJV). So it’s OK by God if we use our rational mind (i.e. intellect) to reflect on His word, just so long as we don’t go running off to teach in the church the first thing that comes into our heads. That would be irresponsible exegesis that could lead members of our theological faith community into wrong understandings about the truth of God’s word revealed in the *text*. A good orthodox exegete must somehow *reconcile* what they see in the text with orthodox teaching and doctrine. The biblical exegete’s job is *not to come up with new teaching and new doctrine* but to provide *fuller and deeper meaning* as we are encouraged by Jude to “*contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people*.” This *once and for all faith* makes the orthodox exegete not only a contender for the faith but a *fiduciary* (i.e. a trustee) of God’s word (not an innovator of it) entrusted with His truth found in the biblical text that properly exegeted will guide His people to the Kingdom of God. That means we must stay closely and prayerfully rooted in the biblical text we are considering; remembering what the word says in respect to this: “*Not many of you should be teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment*” (James 3:1, EOB). We as exegetes must make up our

⁵⁶⁹ *Liturgical Cosmology*, pp. 146-147.

mindsthat we are going to take on this fiduciary trust as a personal and serious matter of faith and faithfulness; and that we are not going too run off saying things that God did not say or mean in His word or that the orthodox church does not affirm or has firmly stood against. In the meantime we have the wonderful liberty of Christ too “love God with *all of our minds*” (Matthew 22:37, that is, to meditate rationally on who God is, His goodness, His holiness, His mercy, His love for mankind all in humble adoration) as first proclaiming the *Oneness of God* in the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6:4-9:

Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord, And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy soul and all thy strength. And these words, all that command thee this day, shall be in thy heart and in thy soul. And thou shalt teach them to thy children, and thou shalt speak of them sitting in the house, and walking by the way, and lying down, and rising up. And thou shalt fasten them for a sign upon thy hand, and it shall be immovable before thine eyes. And ye shall write them on the lintels of your houses and of your gates. (The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English. The LXX Translated by Lancelot C. L. Brenton, Hendrickson Publisher's, first published 1986, 8th edition 1999).

Encouraged by this joyful word we like the Bereans in Paul's day “*receive the word with all readiness of mind, and search the scriptures daily, whether* [the things preached to them by Paul and Silas] *were so.*” (Acts 17:11). *We therefore* are allowed by God (and even encouraged) to think and reflect as explained above, no matter the challenge that reflection on God's word can be disturbing (because it cuts like a two-edged sword) and perhaps scary for some exegetes, especially in passages like the one above as we focus on the meaning of Revelation 21:1. The first scary thought suggested by the text in verse 3 is that *we are not going up to heaven, but that God is coming down to Earth to dwell with mankind* (i.e. saved mankind, that is “His people”). That is a very scary thought because it seems contrary to everything we were taught in Sunday School and through preaching. We are taught that we are going *up to heaven* when we die *as believers and found in Christ!* This circumstance for Kesis Dr. Gebru was so startling that he had to grapple with it in order to affirm the orthodox view by providing a fuller understanding in order to show that this biblical text is true and is not contrary to our teaching in Sunday School for example. Kesis Gebru explains that we are indeed going *up to heaven* into a *temporary abode* called *Gännät* [ገንት], that is, “Paradise” that we ordinarily within the church are call “Heaven” without this fuller understanding. That is OK too think so in the ordinary life of the church without knowing or understanding the finer distinctions (thus disturbing some Christians who don't understand). This exegesis of the text may indeed disturb some Christians; but the biblical exegete cannot afford not to understand these finer distinctions, especially when we are *contending for the faith* with others who hold contrary biblical or interpretive views. We must know what we are about and able to contend as well as rationally defend the faith *once and for all given to the saints*. Kesis Dr. Gebru successfully does so in exegeting this understanding suggested by this passage. He states the following:

The teaching on the resurrection of the dead [*Tinsä'e Mutan* - ትንሥኤ ሙታን], according to the Ethiopian tradition, is intertwined with an eschatological speculation about the fate of the human soul known as “individual eschatology,” After the soul has been separated from its body by death, it returns to God [Ecc. 12:7] and faces a partial judgment. If the soul belongs to a righteous person, who was in communion with God in his/her earthly life, it will be allowed to stay until the Last Judgment Day in a temporary abode, known as Paradise (*Gännät* - ገንት). The Ethiopian liturgy acknowledges Paradise as a transitory dwelling place of the souls of the righteous:

In one treasury there will be gathered wheat without tares. There will be put and kept the souls of the righteous until all are rewarded according to their deeds. There are pleasure and happiness. There is Adam the Father of all. There are Abel, Seth and Enoch the patriarchs together with all their seed.

According to the commenatry on the anaphora of the Nicene Fathers, the “treasury” in the above quote is Paradise where the souls of the redeemed saints have been reposed since the day Christ released souls from the prison of Hades (1 Pet. 3:19). All the souls of the Old Testament patriarchs and that of the people of faith, whom the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews calls a “cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1), are not yet in the Kingdom of God, but in Paradise waiting for the remaining children of God. . . . While the souls of the just enjoy their temporary stay in Paradise as a foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven (*Mängästä Sämayat* -

መንግሥተ ሰማያት), the souls of the wicked are left in Hades (*Si'ol* - ሲኦል) until the second coming of Christ. In the Ethiopian eschatological tradition, the torment in the fire of Hades or Hell is taken literally so that it does not have any symbolic representation. The horrible torment that the souls of the wicked are said to suffer is *Si'ol* (Hades) will finally be followed by the eternal punishment in Hell (*Gähännäm* - ገነዝም), which is described in the Ethiopian liturgy as “the sea or river of fire.” The departed souls stay in their temporary abodes, Paradise [*Gännät*] or Hades [*Si'ol*]. Until the Judgment Day when a general resurrection of bodies (*Tinsä'e Za-guba'e* - ትንሥኤ ዘጉባኤ) will take place. After the final judgment the souls that had been in Paradise (*Gännät*) and Hades (*Si'ol*), being united with their bodies, would enter the Kingdom of Heaven (*Mängästä Sämayat*) for eternal life and Hell (*Gähännäm*) for eternal punishment respectively (Mt. 25:31-446).⁵⁷⁰

Kesis Dr. Gebru has presented a compelling argument to demonstrate that we are indeed *going up to “Heaven”* as taught in Sunday School and in preaching, and exemplified in the Ethiopian liturgy by demonstrating the fuller understanding of the biblical meaning that the *temporary abode* of *Gännät* - ገነት (i.e. Paradise) is what is being referred too (which occurs immediately after our death if we are found in Christ) and not the permanent abode of the blessed (after the resurrection and in the final judgment) *Mängästä Sämayat* - መንግሥተ ሰማያት, which is the *Kingdom of God*. He makes the same distinction for the cursed that *goes down to* what the Sunday School or preaching refers to as “Hell” but really is the *temporary abode* of Hades (*Si'ol* - ሲኦል). However, the *permanent abode* after the resurrection and during the final judgment is Hell (*Gähännäm* - ገነዝም). But this exegetical exposition he uses based upon Revelation 21:1-5, the Anaphora used in the Ethiopian Orthodox liturgy, along with the Ethiopian Commentaries (*Andemta*) brings up another question that is concerning. If God is coming down from Heaven to live among men in the New Jerusalem can this *Mängästä Sämayat* - መንግሥተ ሰማያት, the *Kingdom of God* be the *new heaven and the new earth* referred to in Revelation 21:1, where the “*first heaven and the first earth has passed away*”? It is inconceivable from an ordinary Sunday School understanding that God is going to leave Heaven and come down to live with mankind on this corrupt Earth. Kesis Dr. Gebru is going to answer in the affirmative on the first part of the question and suggest that the second part of the first question does not mean that the *first heaven and the first earth has passed away*, but they are rather *renewed* or *transformed*. Does not this part of his exposition fly in the face of the plain reading of the scripture that an exegete or reader would give it? On the face of it yes but finally no. We can show through a series of exegetical methods, grammatical analysis, and looking at the liturgical commentary references that he makes a compelling exegetical argument for both questions. It will turn out that *Mängästä Sämayat* - መንግሥተ ሰማያት, the *Kingdom of God* now consists of the *renewed* or *transformed first heaven and first earth* that are *made new*, and now can be called the *new heaven and new earth*. Since the first heaven and the first earth are now renewed or somehow transformed God is really not coming down out of heaven to a corrupt earth but both in the renewal have now (as the Revelation) become the *Mängästä Sämayat* - መንግሥተ ሰማያት, the *Kingdom of God* as affirmed by this biblical statement in Revelation: “*The seventh angel sounded, and great voices in heaven followed, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He will reign unto the ages of ages!*” (Revelation 11:15, EOB). Kesis Dr. Gebru makes the following argument (denying a “catastrophic eschatology”) where *everything* in God’s *Good Creation* is destroyed or annihilated as suggested by the references in Revelation 12:1 of *passing away* and supporting rather a fuller and deeper understanding *renewal and transformation* supported by both the biblical and Ethiopian church tradition revealed in its liturgical and commentary resources. From this view the old order of things are swallowed up by the new order of things, thus explaining what “passing away” actually means or entails:

The Ethiopian eschatological tradition underlines the passing away of the world (heaven and earth) and its replacement by a new heaven and earth. It is not clear, however, if the passing away of the cosmos and the coming of the new world mean the renewal of creation into a better state where righteousness would dwell forever. In the commentary of the Ethiopian doctors [*Andemta Commentaries*], the burning up of heaven

⁵⁷⁰ One of the recommended works: Mebratu Kiros Gebru. *Liturgical Cosmology: The Theological and Sacramental Dimensions of Creation in the Ethiopian Liturgy*. Thesis for Doctor of Philosophy in Theology. (Toronto, Canada: Toronto School of Theology, 2012), pp. 218-221.

and earth in II Pet. 3:9-13 is taken literally, so that it is understood as a consummation of creation by fire. But our Christian hope is that the groaning creation, which is in travail due to human sin, will be fully redeemed and “delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom 8:21). As our bodies will be resurrected and glorified, the cosmos as well awaits transfiguration, which is its release from sin and corruption. Our salvation achieved in Christ also extends to the material world, and thus the fulfillment of the redemption of creation would be realized by its anticipated transformation. . . . the Ethiopian biblico-liturgical tradition demonstrates the sacredness of creation and its redemption through the salvific work of Christ. Hence, one can safely suggest that the Ethiopian eschatological thought on the final destiny of the world should consistently reflect the completion of creation’s redemption through its transformation; but not its destruction. The Orthodox eschatological doctrine is not a “catastrophic eschatology,” rather it is a hopeful belief which witnesses to the “final liberation of all creation, of humanity and the world from all principalities and powers and dominions of the history of the world.” The Ethiopian traditional fathers need to be clear on their teaching about the passing away of the existing creation and its replacement by a new heaven and a new earth. The biblical references for the passing of the world (Mt. 24:35; II Pet. 3:11; Rev. 21:1), which the Ethiopian traditional fathers take literally, could be understood in a more positive way. As agreed by various modern scholars these references highlight the renewal of the existing world into a new heaven and earth. In both the Epistle of Peter and the Johannine Revelation the new heaven and earth are mentioned, and the recurrent theme in the references is transformation. In their commentary on the Book of Revelation, the Ethiopian traditional fathers expound that the Heavenly Jerusalem is called “a new heaven and new earth” (Rev. 21:1) because “it remains firmly established in renewal.”⁵⁷¹ Also commenting on Rev. 21:5: “Behold, I will make everything new,” the fathers understood this to mean that the Lord will renew all. This concept of renewal, thus, signifies the complete transformation of the created order. The coming Kingdom is “a new heaven and a new earth” so that it does not need renewal; what is to be renewed and transformed is the current groaning creation. Moreover, the “passing away” of this world suggest the end to its finitude (finiteness). This means that “the finite and time-bound” category of the world will finally be transcended. The form, fashion, and “image of the world” that has been marred by sin and corruption will pass away, whereas the whole of the cosmos will be glorified.⁵⁷²

Elegantly presenting his exegetical arguments Kesis Dr. Gebru has demonstrated or shown that God is not starting the creation process all over again (throwing out the baby with the dirty bath water) but that God is essentially taking what He has already made and transform it by renewal and liberating it by this renewal from corruption brought on by evil, sin and death. It is not so much that the created material and spiritual universal is being replaced but that the *old order of sin* that governed it no longer will have any effect or control over it. This is because *all of God’s Good Creation has been redeemed through the salvific work of Christ* so that the Word of God is true in 2 Corinthians 5:17 “*Therefore, anyone who is in Christ is a new Creation! The old things have passed away. Behold all things have become new!*” God does not need to destroy us and replace us with new human divine beings; but He takes the old human self and makes it into a new thing; a new redeemed and deiform person. Humanity’s renewal and transformation *will not precede that of all creation*. The renewal and transformation of *the old order of the first heaven and the first earth* will happen when the *son’s of God are finally revealed* (Romans 8:19, EOB) that is, this will happen, according to 1 Corinthians 15:52:

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. For what is corruptible must put on incorruption, and what is mortal must put on immortality. But when the corruptible will have put on incorruption and the mortal immortality, then that which is written will come true: “Death is swallowed up in victory,” “Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory?” (EOB)

Is there further exegetical support for Kesis Dr. Gebru’s arguments based on his exegesis of Revelation 21:1-5? There is! We have already amply demonstrated two methods of exegesis which are *using scripture to prove scripture* as we did by introducing Revelation 11:15 the *new heaven and the new earth* (that is, the *renewed heaven* and the *renewed earth*) are in the eschaton combined to become the *Mängəstā*

⁵⁷¹ Kesis Dr. Gebru cites the following sources in support of his arguments here: See “Ra’əyāYohannəs [Revelation of John],” *MāṣahəfətāHaddisatSālāsətu* [Commentary on the Three New Testament Books] ed. Tirfe, 468. See also Cowley, *Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John*, 347.

⁵⁷² Mebratu Kiros Gebru. *Liturgical Cosmology*

Grammatical Analysis

Then I saw a **new** heaven and a **new** earth for the **first** heaven and the **first** earth have **passed away**, and the sea is no more. . . . **4.** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes! Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, crying, or pain any more. For the **first things** have **passed away**. **5.** The one who sits on the throne said to me, "Behold, **I am making all things new!**" He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true!" (Revelation 21:1, 4-5, EOB, **bolded** words by the author].

Καίειδονοῦρανὸν**καινὸν**καίγινη**καινήν**·οὐγάρ**πρωτος**οὔρανὸςκαὶἡ**πρώτη**γη**ἀπὸ****πλθ**
αν, καὶἡθάλασσαοὐκἔστινἐτι.... 4. καὶἐξαλείψειπανδᾶκρυονἐκτωνὀφθαλμωναύτων,
καὶὁθάνατοςοὐκἔσταιἐτι,οὔτεπένθοςοὔτεκραυγὴοὔτεπόνοςοὐκἔσταιἐτι·ὅτι**τὰ****πρωτ**
ὰ**ἀπὸ****πλθ****αν**. 5. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ ἰδοὺ **καινὰ**ποιῶ πάντα.
καὶ λέγει· γράψον, ὅτι οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι πιστοὶ καὶ ἀληθινοὶ εἰσιν. (Revelation
21:1, 4-5)⁵⁷³

⁵⁷⁴ *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*. Vol. 1, Second Edition, edited by Johannes P Louw and Eugene A. Nida, et al. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 28.33, p. 338.

thing is not remembered (i.e. passed away in our thoughts or desires). Here everything in the old administration is not destroyed (but some are discarded and other made better). Even this statement may be too much of a burden to be put on the text but it is put forth as speculation because it is tenable.⁵⁷⁵ Nevertheless this Greek word and others we have considered so far; or any semantic domain related it *do not suggest* that this *new thing never heard of before* did not exist before or that it was just *created from nothing* (though we must admit with God it could be, because with God as Jesus declares “All things are possible”). It is just that the biblical text does not say that. Rather the reader or exegetes *reads this into the text* based on how they were taught to *understand it within their own theological community*. Nevertheless, here the exegete must stick close a conservative reading of what the Greek biblical text actually says, noting that translations and communities from various theological communities could (and sometime have) ventured a biased reading. The exegete just has to be aware of possible bias not only from various exegetes from various theological communities but their own as well. A word of caution is the biblical notion that Solomon warned when we are looking at something within God’s *Good Creation* that “*What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun. Is here a thing of which it is said, “See, this is new?” It has already been, in the ages before us.*” (Ecclesiastes 1:9-10, NRSV). *Again caution:* This Scripture is not denying that God Himself cannot *create a new thing* or bring to our knowledge and understanding *a thing already in existence* that mankind has never heard of before. Something like when the Angel of the Lord made Hagar aware that she was sitting near a water source in the desert that in her despair should could not see! Suddenly, God turns the light bulb on in our heads of something life changing that was there for us the whole time. The something was not made new or newly created. What is new is our awareness of it! We are only saying here in Revelation 21:1 that the grammatical meaning of this text (by itself) when referencing a “new heaven, and a new earth” is not suggesting this is a *new created thing*. As exegetes will have to reserve that conclusion based on what the rest of the pericope (Scripture passage says).

Πρῶτος/πρώτη – These Greek words for “first” in Revelation 21:1 refers to “first heaven and first earth” (where some ecological change is about to happen to it) the whole Greek phrase being **πρωτοζουρανὸςκαὶπρώτηγη** only means according to Louw and Nida something “first in a series involving time, space, or set”; perhaps something “happening for the *first time*” or “something happening *to the thing for the first time*.”⁵⁷⁶ Note here that I am “mining or unpacking the probable, possible, and/or tenable meaning within the text; so here we will go with “first in series” or “first in time” noting that the last suggests that whatever is replacing *the first heaven and the first earth is replacing it* (later on in the pericope) *within time* so itself must have some aspect of material corporability even though we have no idea how God is able to do this, that is, create a new spiritual entity within temporal space or a change or transform a already created material thing into a spiritual entity within time that is able to exist and operate within time. Men cannot do this but God can.

ἀπηλθαν/ἀπέρχομαι – These Greek words refers to something that “goes out of existence (in this case the *first heaven* and the *first earth* in Revelation 21:1 and later *first things* in Revelation 21:4. Further they mean that something “ceases to exist,” or as translated above “to pass away.”⁵⁷⁷ If we think of the first heaven and first earth as the *first order of things* from a cosmic horizon of thought then what is passing away is not corporeal and temporal entities, then what is *passing away* is the way these entities that God created *first* have been (in the past) administered or ruled. Otherwise the text carries the notion of some kind of ecological disaster where these entities are destroyed rather than “replaced”, “renewed,” or “transformed.” This Greek text itself does not detail what *passing away* means, so we need further biblical referents to help in this understanding. Our answer to these questions comes in the grammatical expositions of the following Greek phrase found in Revelation 21:5:

⁵⁷⁵ *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Louw and Nida), 58.71, p. 594.

⁵⁷⁶ Louw and Nida, 60:46, p. 607.

⁵⁷⁷ Louw and Nida, 13.93, p. 159.

καινὰ ποιῶ πάντα – This Greek phrase literal means the “*things made completely new*” and so seems to be the answer biblically derived that we have anticipated would be forth coming to support the meaning that these will be *annihilated* in some kind of econological disaster and them *replaced* by a *new heaven and a new earth*. If this is true then this exegetical derived answer would support the arguments and claims put forth above by Kesis Dr. Gebru. How so? Let look at each word. We have already noted above that

καινὰ refers to something “brand new” but not necessarily something “created brand new”⁵⁷⁸ but it could be something that already exists but “previously unknown” but not made manifest. In that sense the thing would be *new* to the one observing the thing. It would something like what Columbus experienced coming to what he called the “New” World in the Americas, in A.D. 1492. This so-called “new world” was “new” to him but not to the Native Americans and Africans that were already there and had been in the Americas since the first voyage sponsored by Rameses some time around 814 B.C.E. and then again with the West African Madinga voyages somewhere between 1304 and 1312 A.D., well over a thousand years before Columbus claims to have “discovered America” in the “New” World.⁵⁷⁹ (Sertima, pp. 15, 21-22). This so-called “new world” was just “previously unknown to him so he called it *new*! But further this Greek word could also mean *something new made out of something old*. Let us see if this last supposition has any grammatical merit, which is *just one biblical exegetical method* to ascertain the truth of what God is saying to mankind through His Word. Never forget it is God speaking through the mind of men to us so that we (however imperfectly can know Him better and His divine purposes for us and for the church of God and Christ).

πάντα (παῖς, πᾶν) – This Greek word “panta” presents little problem. It can be translated as *all* and further means (according to Louw and Nida) “a degree of totality or completeness – complete, completely, totally, totality.”⁵⁸⁰ It is nevertheless important to Kesis Dr. Gebru’s thesis argument that the *totality of the God’s Good Creation* will be *renewed, changed, transformed* just like the promise made to humans that are found in Christ, where he means *all of God’s existing creation* that includes the *first heaven and the first earth*. Based one further grammatical analysis lets finally determine if his arguments are tenable and cogent with the biblical witness in Revelation 21:1-5.

ποιῶ – This Greek word is the key affirming these arguments. According to Louw and Nida this word means “to produce [create] something new, with the implication of using materials *already in existence*. . .” Louw and Nida then makes the meaning clear by contrasting this Greek word **κτίζω** when translated means “to make or create something *which has not existed before*”⁵⁸¹ as in creating *ex nilo* (something out of nothing). Further in the New Testament this Greek word is exclusiely used for God’s activity in creation. [Louw and Nida, 42.35, p. 514]. Had the writer of Revelation (St. John) in this passage wanted to express that God was completely making a new heaven and a new earth *ex nilo* again like God did in Genesis 1:1 then St. John would have used **κτίζω** instead of **ποιῶ** therefore the only reasonable exegetical conclusion is that St. John was saying that the *existing first things* (the first heaven and the first earth) are not *passing away* in the sense of annihilation but God is somehow going to *make all of His Good Creation that already exists into something brand new*, in that sense and that sense only is the *first heaven and the first earth passed away*.

Summary Conclusion: The grammatical analysis of the Greek text we have done so far has virtually affirmed the exegetical arguments of Kesis Dr. Gebru that St. John in Revelation 21:1, affirmed by the verses in 21:4,

⁵⁷⁸ Louw and Nida, 28.33, p. 338.

⁵⁷⁹ Ivan Van Sertima, editor. *African Presence in Early America*. (Journal of African Civilization, Ltd., Inc., 1987), pp. 15, 21-22.

⁵⁸⁰ Louw and Nida, 59.23, p. 597.

⁵⁸¹ Louw and Nida, 42.29 & 42.35, p. 514.

and especially 21:5 is not saying that the *first heaven* and the *first earth* will *pass away* in the sense of annihilation (say by *fire next time*) and so the *new heaven and the new earth* that God will make will be done *ex nilo* (i.e. out of nothing or out of nothings) but what the reader and therefore the careful biblical exegete is being told is that God is going to *renew* or *transform* the first heaven and the first earth into something *brand new*, so indeed the first heaven and the first earth through some divine operation of God's will indeed *pass away*. We won't see it anymore and like St. John will notice the ecological change because "*there was no more sea*." Now we turn to the Ge'ez [Ethiopic] text to see what nuances arise from it along the same or similar lines (if that be the case) letting the biblical text speak to us as biblical exegetes listening to what God has to say through the inspired writing of men He has chosen for this purpose. Before we go to a grammatical analysis of the Ge'ez text we have the following bracketed interpretation of the EOB text above for Revelation 21:1, 4-5:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more [massive ecological change]. . . . 4. *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes! Death will be no more; neither will there be mourning, crying, or pain any more. For the first things have passed away* [because the old order of things, i.e. the way things are done now has passed away, and a new order and a new way of doing things according to the norms of the Kingdom of Heaven that now rules and has retaken (taken back, reclaimed, redeemed God's Good Creation by the blood of Christ) the kingdoms of the Earth, devolving its old order, and its way of doing things, that are generally contrary to the will of God and His Christ]. 5. *The one who sits on the throne said to me, "Behold, I am making all [first] things new!" He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true!"* (Revelation 21:1, 4-5, EOB, exegetical interpretive insertions by the author).

The Ge'ez [Ethiopic] Text:

፩፤ ወእምዝ ፡ ርኢኩ ፡ ሰማየ ፡ ሐዲሰ ፡ ወምዲረ ፡ ሐዲሰ። እስመ ፡ ሰሰለ ፡ ሰማይ ፡ ቀዳማዊ ፤ ወምድርኒ ፤ ቀዳሚት ፡ ወባሕርኒ ፡ ተሳዕርት ፡ እንብ። ፬፤ ወያሴሰል ፡ እንብዓ ፡ እምአዕይንቲሆሙ ፡ ወአልቦ ፡ አንብ ፡ ሞት ፡ ወኢላሕ ፡ ወኢገዓር ፡ ወኢሕማም ፡ አልቦ ፡ እንብ። እስመ ፡ ኅለፊ ፡ ዘቀዳሚ ፡ ሥርዓት ፡ ወናሁ ፡ ተሐዲሱ ፡ ኩሎሙ። ፭፤ ወይቤ ፡ ዘይነብር ፡ ዲቦ ፡ መንበሩ ፡ ናሁ ፡ እንብር ፡ ኩሎ ፡ ሐዲሰ። ወዶቤለኒ ፡ ጸሐፍ ፡ እስመ ፡ ዝነቱ ፡ ቃል ፡ እሙን ፡ ዘበጽድቅ ፡ ወእቱ ፡ ዘይከውን።⁵⁸²

Revelation 21:1

ወእምዝ - *wä-ämszē* : thereafter, after this, then, consequently, where *wä* means "and," "but," "then." (derivative of እም, *əm* : from, out of, since, hence-forth, because of, for . . .). ⁵⁸³

⁵⁸² *Novem Testamentum Domini et Servatoris Jesu Christi Æthiopice*. Edited by Thomas Pell Platt. (Londini: Impresis Societatis Ad Biblia Sacra in Britannia, M DCCC XXX). This edition of the Ge'ez New Testament was compiled by Platt in part from the Roman edition that was compiled by three Ethiopian priests that were in Rome, Italy during the first half of the 14th Century. The three Ethiopian scholars were (1) Tesfa-Sionis Mathesini, called Peter the Ethiopian (because he was the leader of the group); (2) Tensea Walidi; and (3) Za-Selasie. By 1548 they had edited and compiled the Gospels, the Apocalypse of St. John (Revelation), the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews. By 1549 they finished their work editing and compiling the thirteen Pauline Epistles. The Roman edition was made available to Platt with no acknowledgment of its source(s) but later a European scholar by the name of Ludolf acknowledged them as the source for the Roman edition in Latin so that it was still not widely known what was the origin of this work, making it still possible even today to publish it as "Anonymous." The Roman edition was known also as the *Ethiopic New Testament* and was reprinted in 1657 in Walton's Polygott. In 1749 a Latin translation of Walton's work was done by another scholar, Bode. Finally, in 1826 Thomas Pell Platt (relying on a collation of the same MSS) printed the Gospels and by 1830 he had printed the whole Ge'ez New Testament from the same source. Platt also used another unknown source for the Books of Acts and Epistles, as well without stating where he got the MS, but undoubtedly they came from other Ethiopian scholars visiting Europe or from European travelers that had picked up copies in Ethiopia, Egypt, or Jerusalem, wherethe Ethiopian Orthodox church had maintained a presence for centuries during the early Christian era.

⁵⁸³ Wolf Leslau. *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*. (Harrassowitz Verlag-Wiesbaden, 2006), p. 22.

ርእኩ - *rə iku* : “I saw” (derivative of **ርእየሩ** *yä* = *to see, observe, look, look at, look on, regard, contemplate, consider, watch, have a vision, take notice of, notice, behold, perceive, explore*. **Other semantic domains:** *to make manifest, make visible, reveal, display*).⁵⁸⁴

ሰማየ - *sāmayä*: “heaven,” “sky” (derivative of **ሰማይ** *sāmay* [same meaning])⁵⁸⁵

ሐዲሰ - *hāddisä* : “new,” “renew,” “renewal” (derivative of **ሐዲሰ** *hāddäsä* = *to renew, restore, renovate, repair, inaugurate*. **Other semantic domain derivatives:** *renewal, restoration*).⁵⁸⁶

ወምዲረ - *wä-mäddirä* : “earth,” “ground,” “soil,” “field,” “country,” “land,” “territory” (derivative of **ምድር** same meaning), where the prefix **ወ** - *wä* is “and,” “but,” “then.” **Other semantic domains:** **መደረ** - *mäddärä* : “create the earth”, i.e. reference to “the created earth” = God’s *Good Creation* since it is only God that can “create the earth.”⁵⁸⁷

እስመ - *‘äsmä* : *because, since, in that, that is, namely, indeed, infact*.⁵⁸⁸

ስሰለ - *sässälä* : *withdraw, recede, pass away, be removed, depart, be separated*. **Other semantic domains:** **አሰሰለ** - *asässälä* : *remove, do away with, take away, drive out, dismiss, shakoff, lay aside*.⁵⁸⁹

ቀዳማዊ - *qädamawi* : *ancient, first, former, primay, eastern* (derivative of **ቀደመ** - *qädämä*: *to go before, come before, precede, begin, have priority, be first, be ahead, surpass*).⁵⁹⁰

ወምድርኒ - *wä-mädr²-ni* – “and also the earth”, where prefix **ወ** *wä* is “and,” “but,” “then” as above, and suffix **ኒ** *ni* is “also,” “too,” “even,” “so,” “likewise,” “again.” (derivative of **ምድር** *mädr* : *earth, ground, soil, field, country, land, territoritor, district, region*).⁵⁹¹

ቀዳሚት - *qädamit*: *beginning, precedence, priority* (derivative of **ቀደመ**: *qädämä*: *to go before, come before, precede, begin*).⁵⁹²

ወባሕርኒ - *wä-bahr-ni* : “and the sea also” from **ባሕር** : *sea, lake, ocean, large river*.⁵⁹³ (p. 91)

ተሳዕርት - *täsa’ört* (derivative of **ሰዐረ** - *sä’ärä* : *remove, withdraw, cause to cease, undo, annul, destroy, cancel, cause to cease, undo, annul, destroy, cancel, rescind, abolish, dissolve, abrogate, dismiss, demote, discharge, depose, desecrate, violate, frustrate, make null and void, bring to naught, cause to be of no effect*).⁵⁹⁴

እንብ - *ənḃ-* (used with prefixes) – “was not” (e.g. “I am not,” “no, I refuse,” etc.).⁵⁹⁵

Revelation 21:4

ወያሴሰለ - *wä-ya-sessäl* – “and then . . .” *putting off, leaving, receding, departure, withdrawal, removal, abolition* (derivative of **ሰሰለ** - *sässälä*: *withdraw, recoil, recede, pass away, remove, do away with, take away, take off, drive out, dismiss, shake off, lay aside*).⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁸⁴Leslau. *Comparative Dictionary of Ge’ez*, p. 458.

⁵⁸⁵Leslau, p. 504.

⁵⁸⁶Leslau, p. 225.

⁵⁸⁷Leslau, p. 330.

⁵⁸⁸Leslau, p. 43.

⁵⁸⁹Leslau, p.516.

⁵⁹⁰Leslau, p. 421.

⁵⁹¹Leslau, p. 330

⁵⁹²Leslau, p. 421.

⁵⁹³Leslau, p. 91.

⁵⁹⁴Leslau, p. 481.

⁵⁹⁵Leslau, p. 27.

⁵⁹⁶Leslau, pp. 516, 625.

እንብዓ - *ənḄə'a* : *weep, shed tears, cause to weep* (derivative of ነብሰ *näb'ä* : *to weep*).⁵⁹⁷

እማእዕይንቲሆሙ - *əma'əyyänti-homu* : “*from their eyes*” where the prefix እም *em* is “*from*” and the suffix

ሆሙ *homu* is the 3rd person plural “*their*”⁵⁹⁸ - (derivative of አዕይንት - *‘äyyänt*, pl. “*eyes*” of more than one person or “*eyes*” of a group of people).⁵⁹⁹

ወአልቦ - *wä-alḄo* : “*and is not*” where ወ *wä* is “*and,*” “*but,*” “*then.*” (derivative of አልቦ ፣ አልቦቱ - *‘alḄo, ‘alḄottu* : (it) *is not, there is not, there is no, there are not, nothing, not, non-existence*).⁶⁰⁰
ሞት ፣ ምት - *mot, mēta* : *death, destruction*.⁶⁰¹

ወአላሕ - *waä-i-lah* : *mourn for, lament, bewail, weep, grieve, groan, sigh* (derivative of ለሐወ ፣ ለሀወ - *lähāwä*) where the prefix ወ *wä* = “*and,*” “*but,*” “*then*”; and the infix ኢ *i* = the negative not, i.e. “*and not*”.⁶⁰²

ወኢገዳር - *wä-i-gä'ar* : “*and not lamentation*” where ገዳር: *cry, shout, clamor, outcry, groan, groaning, lamentation, wailing, complaint*, where prefix ወ *wä*, means “*and,*” “*but,*” “*then*” & infix ኢ *i* = the negative for “*not*”, i.e. “*and not.*” (derivative of ግዕር ፣ ገዕር *gä'ar, gä'ar* : *cry out, cry in loud voice, clamor, groan, moan, sigh, wail, lament*).⁶⁰³

ወኢአማም - *wä-i-həmam* : “*and not pain*”, where አማም *həmam*- means *illness, disease, pain, suffering, grief, distress, affliction, tribulation, passion* (derivative of ሐመ ፣ ሐመመ ፣ *həmmä, həmamä* : *to be in pain, suffer illness, be ill, have labor pains, be afflicted, suffer distress, have a fever*).⁶⁰⁴

ካለፈ (ሐለፈ) - *hālāfä* : *pass, pass by, pass away (from), pass through, pass over, cross over, depart, step aside from, go beyond, transgress, perish, die*.⁶⁰⁵

ዘቀደሚ - *zä-qädämi* : “*that which comes before*”, where ቀደሚ means *first, previous, ancient, original, prior, former, earlier, antecedent, predecessor, beginning, firstling, in the first place, at first, in the beginning, firstly, formerly, before, once, previously* (derivative of ቀደመ *qädämä* : *go before, come before, precede, begin, have priority, be first, be ahead of, surpass*); and where ዘ *za* means “*who,*” “*that,*” “*which.*”⁶⁰⁶

ሥርዓት - *sär'at* : *ordiance, ordering, order, arrangement, ordered rank, procession, ceremony, rite, ritual, rule, regulation, manner, precept, charge, disposition, administration, testament, custom* (way of doing things), *habit, tradition, covenant, decree, edict, statue, law, canon*. (derivative of ሠርዐ *sär'ä*, i.e. *set, set forth, set in order, establish, establish order, arrange, institute, enact, prepare, ordain, decree, stipulate, legislate, promulgate, make a covenant, make a testament, administer* (the Eucharist)).⁶⁰⁷

ወናሁ - *wä-nah'* - “*behold!*”, “*now that,*” “*here,*” “*now!*” (something that happens instantaneously, e.g. “*in a twinkling of an eye.*”⁶⁰⁸

ተሐደሱ - *tä-häddäsu* : *renew, renewal, restoration* (derivative of the active verb ሐደሰ - *häddäsä* : *renew, restore, renovate, repart, inaugurate*)⁶⁰⁹; all as in retoring, renewing, something already in existence; bringing that something back to its original glory or intended glory, such as retoring or renewing God's *Good Creation* back to its either original or intended glorious state it had in the *Garden of God* before mankind's fall from grace through Adam.

⁵⁹⁷Leslau, p. 382.

⁵⁹⁸Amsalu Aklilu. *Ge'ez Textbook*. (Addis Abba, Ethiopia: Shama Books), pp. 25, 28.

⁵⁹⁹Leslau, p. 2.

⁶⁰⁰Leslau, p. 18.

⁶⁰¹Leslau, p. 375.

⁶⁰²Leslau, p. 312.

⁶⁰³Leslau, p. 174.

⁶⁰⁴Leslau, p. 233.

⁶⁰⁵Leslau, p. 260.

⁶⁰⁶Leslau, pp. 421, 629.

⁶⁰⁷Leslau, p. 533.

⁶⁰⁸Leslau, p. 393.

⁶⁰⁹Leslau, pp. 225-226.

ኩሎሙ - *kʷəllomu* : *all, all the, every, each, the whole* (derivative of ኩል - *kʷəll* : *all, every, each*).⁶¹⁰

Revelation 21:5 :

ወይቤ - *wä-yäbe* : “*and he said*” (derivative of ይቤ - *yäbe* : *he said*).⁶¹¹

ዘይኑበር - *zä-yə-näbr* : “Then who sat” where ዘ *zä* means *who, that, which* and ይ *yə* means *then*; and finally ኑበር - *nabr* from ኑበረ - *näbärä* means *to sit, sit down, be situated, remain, stay, continue, last, endure, abide, persist, live, reside, inhabit, dwell, be*.⁶¹²

ዲበ (ዲቤ) – *dibä (dibe)*: *upon, on onto above, over, against, in opposition to, concerning, on account of*.⁶¹³

መንበሩ - *mänbäru* : “*his throne*” (derivative of መንበር - *mänbär* meaning *seat, chair, base, residence, dwelling, high place, pulpit, throne, altar* [on which the *tabot* (ark) rests], *session, office, function, state, position*).⁶¹⁴
ናሁ - *nahu* : *behold!, now that, here, now!*⁶¹⁵

እገብር - *əgäbr* the causative form of ገብረ *gäbrä* : *to act, do, work, make, be active, labor, perform, produce, bring forth, create, build, fashion, carry out, achieve, execute*.⁶¹⁶

ወይቤለኒ - *wä-yebeläni* : “And told me” (1st person common of the the irregular ይቤ *yebe* is *he said* in combination with ወ *wä* : *and, but, then*).⁶¹⁷

ጸሐፍ - *sähäf* : *description, census, registration* from ጸሐፊ - *sähäfä* : *write, write down, inscribe, describe, register*.⁶¹⁸

ዝንቱ - *zəntu* : demonstrative pronoun meaning *this, this one*.⁶¹⁹

ቃል - *qal* : *voice, word, saying, speech, statement, discourse, command, order, sound, noise, expression, maxim, thing*.⁶²⁰

እምን - *əmun* : *faithful true, loyal, trustworthy, reliable, sure, real* from እምነ - *ämnä* : *believe, trust, have faith in, have confidence, be true, profess the faith, confess (sins), admit*.⁶²¹

ዘበጽድቅ - *zä-bä-sədq*; semantic domains : ዘጽድቅ *zä-sədq* : *righteous, true* and በጽድቅ *bä-sədq* : *rightly* both derived from ጸድቅ - *sədqä* : *be just, be justified, be righteous, be honest, be innocent*.⁶²²

ውእቱ - *he is, it is*.⁶²³

ዘይከውን - *zä-yəkäwən* : “*that it will be*” from ይከውን - *he will be*.⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁰ Leslau, p. 281.

⁶¹¹ Leslau, p. 625.

⁶¹² Leslau, pp. 625, 628, 383.

⁶¹³ Leslau, p. 119.

⁶¹⁴ Leslau, p. 384.

⁶¹⁵ Leslau, p. 393.

⁶¹⁶ Leslau, p. 178.

⁶¹⁷ Amsalu Aklilu. *Ge'ez Textbook*, p. 193., Leslau, p. 625.

⁶¹⁸ Leslau, 552.

⁶¹⁹ Leslau, 641, Amsalu Aklilu, p. 37.

⁶²⁰ Leslau, p. 426.

⁶²¹ Leslau, p. 24.

⁶²² Leslau, p. 548.

⁶²³ Amsalu Aklilu, p. 30.

⁶²⁴ August Dillmann. *Ethiopic Grammar*. Revised by Carl Bezold. Translated by James A. Crichton. (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), p. 169.

Translation of Ge'ez [Ethiopic] into English with Exegetical Notation:

፩፤ ወእምዝ : ርኢኩ : ሰማየ : ሐዲሰ : ወምዲረ : ሐዲሰ። እስመ : ሰሰለ : ሰማይ : ቀዳማዊ ፤ ወምድርኒ ፤ ቀዳሚት : ወባሕርኒ : ተሳዕርት : እንብ። ፪፤ ወያሴስል : እንብዓ : እምአዕይንቲሆሙ : ወአልቦ : እንብ : ሞት : ወኢላሕ : ወኢግር : ወኢሐማም : አልቦ : እንብ። እስመ : ኀለፊ : ዘቀዳሚ : ሥርዓት : ወናሁ : ተሒደሱ : ኩሎሙ። ፭፤ ወይቤ : ዘይነብር : ዲቦ : መንብሩ : ናሁ : እንብር : ኩሎ : ሐዲሰ። ወደቤለኒ : ጸሐፍ : እስመ : ዝንቱ : ቃል : እሙን : ዘበጽድቅ : ወእቱ : ዘይከውን።⁶²⁵

After this I saw a *renewed* heaven and a *renewed* earth; Because the *former* heaven and the *former* earth had *passed away*; and the sea also was caused to be no more. . . .⁶²⁶ 4. And then *passed away* the cause of weeping from their eyes. Then there was no death, and no mourning [lamentation], and no crying and pain *passed away* [was no more]. *Behold!* The whole order of things that came before is *renewed*.⁶²⁷ 5. And He who sat upon His throne said: "*Behold!* I am making all things new." And He also said to me: "Write this word of truth [i.e. true word], which is righteous [and] which will be [i.e. shall be; is certain]."⁶²⁸

⁶²⁵*Novem Testamentum Domini et Servatoris Jesu Christi Æthiopice*. Edited by Thomas Pell Platt. (Londini: ImpresisSocietatis Ad Biblia Sacra in Britannia, M DCCC XXX). This edition of the Ge'ez New Testament was compiled by Platt in part from the Roman edition that was compiled by three Ethiopian priests that were in Rome, Italy during the first half of the 14th Century. The three Ethiopian scholars were (1) Tesfa-SionisMathesini, called Peter the Ethiopian (because he was the leader of the group); (2) Tensea Walidi; and (3) Za-Selasie. By 1548 they had edited and compiled the Gospels, the Apocalypse of St. John (Revelation), the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews. By 1549 they finished their work editing and compiling the thirteen Pauline Epistles. The Roman edition was made available to Platt with no acknowledge of its source(s) but later a European scholar by the name of Ludolf acknowledged them as the source for the Roman edition in Latin so that it was still not widely known what was the origin of this work, making it still possible even today to publish it as "Anonymous." The Roman edition was known also as the *Ethiopic New Testament* was reprinted in 1657 in Walton's Polygott. In 1749 a Latin translation of Walton's work was done by another scholar, Bode. Finally, in 1826 Thomas Pell Platt (relying on a collation of the same MSS) printed the Gospels and by 1830 he had printed the whole Ge'ez New Testament from the same source. Platt also used another unknown source for the Books of Acts and Epistles, as well without stating where he got the MS, but undoubtedly they came from other Ethiopian scholars visiting Europe or from European that had picked up copies in Ethiopia, Egypt, or Jerusalem, where there were the Ethiopian Orthodox church had maintained a presence for centuries during the early Christianera.

⁶²⁶**Notes on Revelation 21:1** : Heaven and earth in the divine process of *renewal* is undergoing some kind of major ecological overhaul. There is no grammatical hint that God is here engaged in destroying the old heavens and earth, which Kesis Dr. Gebru calls "catastrophic eschatology" in his doctoral thesis *Liturgical Cosmology* (2012, p. 226). Rather God is seen clearly in this passage (periscope) *renewing, remaking, re-creating, transforming* the *former* heavens and earth into a *new thing* (i.e. *a new heaven and a new earth*) although we know not how. Nevertheless, it is clear that God is making this new heaven and new earth out of the former, first, old heaven and earth. There is a material cosmological basis for this transformation that this time is no *ex nilo*, that is, the creation of the heavens and the earth *out of nothing*. This time in the renewal and re-creating process there is *something* already there from the *first creation* that is being transformed by some kind of *renewal process* that is well within God's power to do and also consistent with others biblical passages like Romans 8:19-23, which states: *As it is, the creation waits with eager expectation for the revelation of God's children. Indeed, creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that creation will also be delivered from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the totality of creation groans and labors in pain until now. Moreover, so do we who have the first fruits of the Spirit. We groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body.* (EOB). It is certain from this passage that the *total creation* (including humans) are not groaning, waiting, and in pain for no good reason. Here, the whole [totality] of God's *Good Creation* is hoping for *renewal* from *decay* allowed for God's own purpose and because of mankind's sin. The *renewal of the creation by God will end this groaning, this waiting in hope, this pain by transforming and perfecting His already Good Creation into something brand new, finally delivering it and of course us from death, decay and destruction* (eschatological or cosmological destruction). Destruction is not the Divine Promise and Christian Hope but *total renewal is!*

⁶²⁷**Notes on Revelation 21:4** : Because the former heaven and the former earth with its old order (i.e. old way of doing things according to carnal passions and materialistic motives) and how all that is administered through its various systems of *grand-domestication* has or is *passing away* as a result of God's *renewal and recreation* there will be no more death, weeping, crying, groaning, lament, mourning, or pain, and death itself will be abolished. It is implied that a new divine order and way of doing things, a new administration of the heavens and earth by God's Christ will take place upon the completing of this *renewal* and so abolish all of these sorrowful things belonging to the old order of sin and death that has up and until now subjected the totality of the creation to death and decay. In God's renewal of the heavens and the earth all of this will be over and done with, that is, *passed away*.

Commentary Analysis

Now since we have done our grammatical analysis of the text; we can pass on to our commentary analysis, fully grounded in a thorough understanding of what Revelation 21:1,4-5 says. Further we can with confidence support the exegetical analysis and exposition given to this passage by Kesis Dr. Gebru and affirm with him that God in this passage is engaged in *renewal of the former heavens and earth* and *not its cosmological or eschatological destruction*, noting that for this reason (and others) that the EOTC cosmological liturgical is grounded in this same hope, which he nevertheless believes needs a new horizon of thought by going back to the traditional Ethiopian commentary sources produced by the Ethiopian doctors of the church. For this reason we will do a brief analysis of the *Andemta Commentary* source on this passage in Revelation from both the Ge'ez and Amharic corpus to see if it supports the above thesis and exegetical understanding concerning *renewal of God's Good Creation*. Once this is done we can briefly examine the exegetical view of the Tadros Malaty who belongs to the Coptic theological community concerning the same passage and for the same purpose. The first thing to note about the *Andemta* (አንድምታ) *Commentaries* in both its Ge'ez corpus and Amharic corpus is that it allows (especially in the Amharic corpus) a number of different interpretations of the biblical texts under consideration and a number of different exegetical views (often leaving it up to the reader to choose that which is most cogent with their faith and doctrinal understanding). This does not mean that the Ethiopian doctors did not note a preference for either the biblical translations presented or the interpretations advanced through exegesis. But it is often opened ended in recognition that even within the Ethiopian Orthodox theological communities there were and are various doctrinal schools of thought on specific biblical traditions. This is no different when we look at its commentary on Revelation 21: 1-5. We first look at the *Ge'ez Andemta Commentary on Revelation* on the Apocalypse of St. John, that is, the *Tärg'amä Qälämäsīs* (ተርገሙ ቀለምሲስ) states:

Then every visible thing will be changed, suddenly, like the twinkling of an eye. All creation will burn and melted in fire, [as the apostle says], and heavenly Jerusalem will take the place of this accursed earth; in place of this firmament which was created from water, there will be this supreme Heaven made from divine light. Concerning this, he says, 'I saw a new Heaven and a new earth'. It is not that he (God) creates another creation; [but the holy book says] that this firmament will take the place of this world of fleshly thing in order that it be a world of spiritual things.⁶²⁹

The commentator in exegesis of **Revelation 21:1** presents a number of different views of what will happen to the first heaven and the first earth. Note that the commentator first says that “every visible thing will be *changed, suddenly*, like the twinkling of an eye.” Then he says this earth (which he called accursed *will be burnt up*) and then *replaced* by the New Jerusalem (which will come down from Heaven) where the first Heaven is concerned it will be *replaced* by a new Heaven made from divine light. The commentary then sees that the biblical text does not support the notion that the first earth and heaven are destroyed in some kind of ecological or eschatological destruction or disaster, and so goes back to his original position that some kind of sudden change will happen to the first heaven and the first earth so that a spiritual transformation occurs that brings about a new spiritual heaven and earth; since, as he says, God is *not creating another creation*, but apparently the old fleshly or material creation is going to be *replaced* (in the sudden transformation) by a new spiritual one. This transformation will be so sudden (in the twinkling of an eye) that it appears (to our senses) to *burn up* or *obliterate* in a conflaguration of fire the old earthly creation, thus replacing it with that of the spiritual creation. The old fleshly material order of things is burnt up suddenly and just as suddenly replaced by a new spiritual order of things.

⁶²⁸ **Notes on Revelation 21:5** : This verse in the passage under consideration reaffirms the renewal mentioned in verses 1 and 4; and further shows God saying that His *Word of Truth* is a *true word*; it is a righteous word, it is a just and justified word, and finally that His word on the promise of *renewal* is in fact *certain*. It is going to happen; and so God tells John to write this word down, because what God says here is *certain to come to pass*.

⁶²⁹ Roger W. Cowley. *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*. (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 152.

Summary Conclusion: The essence, kernel, and/or weight of the Ge'ez commentary on Revelation 21:1 is that some kind of *change* or *transformation* is going to occur to the first heaven and the first earth. That this change will be *sudden*, that is, *so sudden* that it appears to the human eye or mind to be *burnt up* in some kind of fiery conflaguration. It seems that the old heaven and earth undergoes a change of some kind and then is said to be either destroyed or replaced. This interpretation is supported by the commentators claim that *God is not making a new creation* but doing something new with the old creation, so that in the transformation it is changed from the old material cosmic order and *replaced* by a new spiritual order, the nature of which we are not told except that it will be spiritual one and that the new Heaven will be made from divine light. *Change, Transformation, and Replacement* seems to be the primary focus of this Ge'ez commentary exegesis of Revelation 21:1 and a spiritual interpretation seems to govern the different aspects of the exegesis, which allow the Ethiopian exegete too seemingly hold three different contradictory views of what happens to the first heaven and the first earth at one and the same time. Is it changed like he starts out saying or destroyed like he enjoins? And since God is not creating a new creation where does the new heaven and the new earth come from? If it is not re-created or renewed from the old creation then how. The only thing we are told is that the new heaven is made (created) out of divine light that is already in existence and that old fleshly earth is *replaced* by a spiritual one that is called the New Jerusalem. At this point we need further clarification that we may get from the Amharic corpus of the *Andemta Commentary* that is based on a reading of the Ge'ez and the Bible but with the advantage of more advanced exegetical methods and tools that are evident and clearly identified by the Ethiopian exegete in the text. We will see that the Ethiopian exegete has clearly come to the view that God is engaged in some kind of *renewal of the first heaven and the first earth* as he looks at Revelation 21:1, 4-5 as follows:

1. *And then I saw a new Heaven and a new earth, And after this I saw a new earth, because the first Heaven fled away, because the former Heaven passed away, and also the first earth, because the former earth passed away. He means, 'The kingdom of Heaven was given. H. He called (the new Heaven) 'Heaven', because it is substituted when Heaven has passed away, because people will inherit it having done heavenly work, because heavenly angels will inherit it. He called (the new earth) 'earth', because it is substitute when earth has passed away, because it is inherited by reason of the work which people did on earth, because the earthly righteous ones inherit it. On earth, the pleasures of the flesh are fulfilled; in the kingdom of Heaven and earth) 'new', because it remains firmly established in renewal, because it is hitherto unseen, and because (people) inherit it having been renewed. And the sea also then was removed. And the ocean passed away. Is. 65.17, 2 Pet. 3.13. Ch. 20.11. . . .*
4. *and he will remove tears from their eyes, He said, 'He will remove tears from their eyes', (meaning), 'He will make them happy.' A. 'He will give them the reward of tears.' And then there will be no death, or weeping, sorrow, mourning, or affliction, not any more, After that, they will have no death, sorrow, mourning, or tribulation, because the ordinance of former (times) has passed away, and behold, all is renewed.' The old work has passed away, behold, all is renewed. Is. 35.10.*
5. *And the one sitting on the throne said, 'Behold, I will make all things new.' Because the one on the throne – A. 'the one in the position of lordship' – has said, 'I renew all.' And he said to me 'Write, He said to me, 'Write'. Because this word is true, which will be in righteousness, He said to me, 'Write, because this word, which will be truth be done, is faithful.' A. 'because this word which is faithful will in truth be done'. A. He said to me, 'Write, because this is the word which is faithful and will be done in truth.' Ch. 4.2,9 and 5.1, 2 Cor. 5:17, 21.⁶³⁰*

Summary Conclusion: One thing is important to note in this Ethiopian exegesis is that the exegete is using the well worn (but valuable exegetical tool) of *interpreting scripture with scripture* as well as some attempt to provide *alternative readings* and understanding of the text. This is not so evident in this passage (pericope) as in others but the exegete in some cases marks out one way to read the text by citing "A"

⁶³⁰ Cowley, pp. 357-359.

and then another way by citing “H”, etc., so that these alternate readings are distinguished and evident. The other notion that sticks out in his exegesis is the idea of *renewal* but the question remains the *renewal of what and what exactly is passing away?* What is being *renewed and is passing away* cited in **Revelation 21:4** is *former ordinances of the old temporal order associated with time* (the old man made laws, policies, ways of living and doing things) that is the cause or brings about *weeping, mourning, death, crying, pain*, etc. There is no notion of a catastrophic ecological disaster where the former heavens and former earth burns up. The exegete uses the word *substitute* a number of times to demonstrate that the former order of things will be *substituted* by a new heaven and new earth called the Kingdom of God, which is now *invisible* but will be visible and realized when the former order *passes away* and will appear for those righteous persons on earth who have done good and righteous works, who will inherit it. This whole promise of *renewal of a new order of things* that will end death, sorrow, pain, crying, weeping according to the text and understood by the exegete is a true word, righteous, and certain. God wants St. John to write this *Good News* down *because* this *renewal* will happen and it will come to pass in favor of the righteous who will inherit it along with the happiness and joy it brings. Of course this Ethiopian exegete is very careful and wants to provide other scripture in the Bible to support his readings. For example, regarding Revelation 21:1 the Ethiopian exegete cites Isaiah 65:17 from this old testament prophecy to show that God made the promise of a new heaven and a new earth well before the Christian era and this promise is connected with the notion that God’s righteous ones in this promised *renewal* will no longer remember the “*former tribulations*” of their past experience of sorrow and suffering because of the administration of the “*former things*.” This notion is clearly in evidence if the surrounding verses are included:

15. *For you shall leave your name as an example of excess to My elect, and the Lord shall destroy you. But those who serve Him shall be called by a new name, 16. which shall be blessed upon the earth. For they shall bless the true God, and those who swear upon the earth shall swear by the true God; for they shall forget their former tribulation, and it shall not come into their heart. 17. “For there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and they shall not remember the former things, nor shall these things come into their heart. 18. But they shall find gladness and exceeding joy in her, for behold, I will make Jerusalem an exceeding joy, and My people gladness. Isaiah 65:15-18, The Orthodox Study Bible⁶³¹*

This Ethiopian exegete then cites 2 Peter 3:13 which states: “*But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness is at home.*” (EOB). We make note here what we noticed above in his exposition of Revelation 21:1 that this Ethiopian exegete does not mention any ecological or eschatological annihilation wherein the first heaven and first earth are burnt up and then replaced by or substituted for the *new heaven and the new earth*. He studiously avoids using the surrounding verses of 2 Peter 3:13 that talks about this catastrophic event that would usher in a new heaven and earth. It is possible that his theology does not encompass this notion of ecological destruction since his contemporary *theology of renewal* excludes such a dreadful possibility. This is perhaps why he proposes talking about the *former things passing away* without explaining how that happens and then talks about an *invisible Kingdom of God* (already in existence but unseen) that will take its place once the former heaven and former earth *passes away*. This Ethiopian exegete sides steps what he cannot at the moment explain in 2 Peter 3:10-12 that challenges his theological however biblically derived for it states clearly the following:

10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; and in this day, the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, the elements will be dissolved by intense heat, and the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11. Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be in terms of holy living and godliness! 12. You should look for and eagerly desire the coming of the day of God, which will cause the burning heavens to be dissolved and the elements to melt with intense heat! 13. But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness is at home. (2 Peter 3:10-13, EOB)*

⁶³¹ *The Orthodox Study Bible*. Translated from the St. Athanasius Academy Septuagint [SAAS]. (St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, 2008).

In avoiding the surrounding scriptures this Ethiopian exegete falls into the same quagmire of biblical thought as others have in the past. Once you have adopted a particular theology and/or doctrine or horizon of thought that governs what you expect to see or come out of the scripture the exegete may (even sometimes without knowing it) avoid dealing with difficult biblical passages that do not square easily with his/her view, doctrine or theology, such as a *theology of renewal* this Ethiopian exegete is advancing. Nevertheless, this is where all biblical exegetes must be careful and never willfully place ones own theology above the plain reading of the biblical text but rather *reexamine* the biblical basis of the theology ones holds and revise it in the light of a new biblical understanding or if it cannot be explained at the moment reserve any dogmatic claims until it becomes clear what the scripture is saying. If it becomes clear that the biblical texts taken together contradict ones cherished theological beliefs then it is incumbent on the exegetic to say so and be willing to abandon them altogether in favor of the new biblical reading or understanding. The exegete must always hold to the principle that *the Word of God* is always over *the Word of Man*. However this caution the Ethiopian exegete may be justified in passing by the surrounding verses leading up the one he cites in 2 Peter 2:13 because (1) nothing in Revelation 21:1-5 refers to any kind of eschatological annihilation of the former heavens and earth as it does clearly in 2 Peter 3:10-13, and (2) that Revelation 21:1-5 is superior in authority to 2 Peter since it came to St. John as a *direct revelation* [vision] from no less than Jesus Christ Himself; and since Christ says nothing about such an catastrophic event or puts emphasis on it neither is the exegete compelled to say more than Christ Himself says about how the former heavens and earth *pass away*, whether through some kind of change in a twinkling of an eye, sudden renewal, substitution, or destruction and replacement. Each biblical exegete must make up in their mind if their exegetical arguments hold responsibly to the truth of the Scripture and affirmative church doctrine grounded in the Scripture.

Revelation 21:4 that talks about a new heaven and earth with a new divine administration and because of it there will be no more death, weeping, pain, mourning or sorrow. In support the Ethiopian commentator and exegete cites Isaiah 35:10, wherein his exegesis he views the Apocalypse of St. John as fulfillment of this prophesy found in Isaiah, even though it has not been *fully realized*. Chapter 34 and 35 Isaiah talks about the Day of the Lord's Judgments and what it will be like for the wicked and the righteous. In Chapter 34 there is a promise of condemnation and woe (where death, sorrow, mourning, weeping abound) but in Chapter 35 a promise of salvation and happiness for the Lord's people where all of these evils have *passed away*. The following verses from Chapter 35 describe this blessedness:

8. *A pure way shall be there, and it shall be called a holy way. No unclean man shall pass through there, neither shall there be an unclean way there. But those dispersed shall walk in it, and they shall not go astray.*
 9. *No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous animals go upon it, nor at all be found there. But the redeemed shall walk in it,*
 10. *and those gathered by the Lord shall return and come to Zion with gladness, and with everlasting gladness over their head. For praise and exceeding joy will be on their head, and gladness shall possess them. Pain, sorrow, and sighing fled away.* [my *Italics*](Isaiah 35:8-10, *The Orthodox Study Bible*)

Revelation 21:5 affirms that it is a true, just and certain word that God is going to *make all things new*, which he interprets to mean *to renew all things* he cites 2 Corinthians 5:17 that says: *"Therefore, anyone who is in Christ is a new creation! The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new!"* (EOB). In respect to our promised *human/divine renewal in Christ* what is being promised here? What things *in us* or *about us* is being *renewed*, that is, besides the whole of God's *Good Creation*, itself that has until now been waiting and groaning for the revealing of the Son's of God. What kind of *renewal* are we to go through? The Ethiopian exegete is more interested in the cause of the renewal than he is the nature of the renewal or change in respect to the human person, because he further cites 2 Corinthians 5:21 *"For God made him [Christ] who knew no sin to become sin for our sake; so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God."* (EOB). So it because of Christ that we are going to *become* (in the *renewal*) the righteousness of God. But what does this mean in terms of the phrase above *"old things have passed away"*? What old things in us have passed away because Christ became sin for us, such that we

are now the righteousness of God in the renewal? That only becomes clear if we look at 2 Corinthians 5:16, which says *“Therefore, we do not think of anyone according to the flesh any more. Even though we used to think of Christ according to the flesh, we no longer think of him this way.”* (EOB). What has *passed away* from us in the renewal and made us a *new creation* is the old flesh way, the old materialistic way of thinking about everybody, everything, and even about Christ. In the renewal (which for us begins now and is for the moment hidden and not fully revealed in us as the Sons of God) is *a new spiritual way of thinking such that the old way of thinking has passed away!* Finally, we can examine the commentary and exegetical views of Tadros Yacoub Malaty (who is a cleric in the Coptic Church and theological community) on Revelation 21:1,4-5 found in his *The Commentary on The Book of Revelation* (1999). Malaty states:

[REVELATION 21:1] - ONE CHURCH

Many of the philosophers, writers and poets like Plato kept drawings for us ideal cities according to what their minds could imagine. *They introduced laws, regulations and principles for these cities according to what their philosophy and thought implied on them.* Yet in the middle of all that, certain wrong and fanciful principles immediately pollute their imagination, and the result is a deficient city full of weaknesses. The apostle John did not imitate them, but ascended in Spirit and saw a true, perfect, and eternal Church. In its truth it is: “an encounter of God with the believers,” or let us say it is a “heavenly unity.” As it was hard for him to draw or express this matter, he recorded what he actually saw in simple symbols; leaving us to get deeper into it, that we may understand and taste this *heavenly city* as much as our spiritual stature can, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle says: *“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.”* Our Lord Jesus explained to us that the new wine cannot be put in an old water-skin but in a new one. *In the same manner, we, the wine of His kingdom shall take off this corrupt body to be clothed with an uncorrupted, this perishable body becomes imperishable. We are raised in glory and power with spiritual bodies* (1 Cor. 15:42-44). Thus the Lord puts us in a new heaven. As children of the new kingdom, we are worth not to come back to this earth, because our Lord Jesus has assured us that *“the heavens will be destroyed... and the elements will melt.”* The apostle Peter reassured us that by the coming of our Lord, *“The heavens will be dissolved being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat! Nevertheless, we, according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells* (2 Pet. 3:12,13). We dwell in the “earth of the living,” with all the saints living in spirit. By saying “new heaven and new earth,” may bear another meaning, that is *all that exist now will disappear*, and we will return to a new heaven where we meet with “The Lord, God of heavens.” We become in a new wonderful fellowship with the heavenly, perfect and complete. We also meet with our brethren who were with us on earth in a “new earth.” It will be an encounter of love of a new kind, in a total perfect unity in the Person of our Lord Jesus. It is a meeting of one Church that tastes eternal unity in a unique way, thus he says; “Also there was no more sea.” There is no room for the sea there, as the sea indicates division and separation. It separates the cities, the countries and the continents. But in heaven nothing will separate the members of the Church from each other. The sea also refers to confusion and worry, as the Bible says: “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. Whose water cast up mire and dirt” (Isa. 57:20). Not one single wicked can hide in the heavenly Church, and in its perfect unity, inner and outer peace will prevail.⁶³²

In Malaty’s commentary and exposition of Revelation 12:1 *there is no cosmic renewal* of the first heaven and the new earth. It either will be destroyed and *burned up in some kind of horrific fiery conflagration*, according to 2 Peter 3:12-13; or it bears another meaning that *all that exists will have to disappear*. What is the reason for these two possibilities? : (1) The Earthly Cities and the weak and flawed administration thereof cannot coexist and is inferior (being so because they are based on man-made idealism and wisdom like those civic ideals proposed by philosophers like Plato) to the City of God [the *heavenly city* which he confuses with the Church] all reminiscent of St. Augustine’s theology of the *City of God*; (2) The only *renewal* is the spiritual change that will happened to the disciples of Christ (being the new wine of the Kingdom of God), whereas *“the wine of His kingdom shall take off this corrupt body to be clothed with an uncorrupted, this perishable body becomes imperishable. We are raised in glory and power with spiritual bodies”* as promised in 1 Corinthians 15:42-44. We will need a

⁶³² Tadros Yacoub Malaty. *The Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (1999), pp. 268-270).

completely brand new heaven and new earth; not one merely *re-created* or *renewed* out of the *former heavens and earth* that are really imperfect and beyond the process of renewal and thus redemption (of course contradicting Romans 8:22-23, where the same existing creation is groaning and like the Sons of God doing the same is waiting for this vary redemption). It is here that Malaty's exposition and exegetical argument is seriously flawed, as his reason for there not being anymore sea in the new heavens and new earth; which is the Heavenly Jerusalem in the Kingdom of God that just shows up only when we ourselves are *changed and become incorruptible and immortal*. First if the only place we are going is to Heaven why do we need a New Earth? Secondly, the seas represent separation of cities and countries and so symbolizes division among human persons; and since in the new heavens and earth that is now the Kingdom of God there is no need for seas because the renewed human population will not need to be divided. We will all be one and one in purpose. Perfect unity and inner and outer peace will be the norm since we are changed and we are under a spiritual rather than an earthly administration with all of its imperfections and flaws.

[REVELATION 21:4-5] THE STATE OF THE ONE CHURCH

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." As Tertullian says, that God shall wipe away every tear the eyes had shed before. These tears would not have dried out unless they were wiped away by God's mercies. Blessed are those whose eyes are tearful, because God shall wipe them away and perfume them! "There shall be no *more* death." And as prophet Isaiah says, "He will swallow up death forever. And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces" (Isa. 25:8). "Nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" The imperfect, perishable, old world had passed away! While all things in eternity became new, cheerful and joyful to all.⁶³³

Malaty argues that there will be no more tears, sorrow, crying, or pain because the *former things* have *passed away*, but his supposition that *things in eternity become new* leaves one perplexed. *What things in eternity have become new?* What does he mean by eternity? Is he talking about a *new heavens and a new earth* that appears only when the Sons of God appear, which are until then invisible just waiting to be revealed in order to receive the redeemed of the Lord? Since Eternity itself encompasses time does *all things* include the *former things* (i.e. the *former heavens and earth*)? Is the new thing from eternity the New Jerusalem coming down from Heaven this *new thing* Malaty is talking about? He does not make that clear here. He further confounds the origins of this *new heavenly city* by inferring that it is the Church as well as the Kingdom of God, seeing that the Church is undeniably part of the *former things* operating in the *first Earth*. Nevertheless, he believes that the *former things* are "imperfect, perishable, old world" and must therefore pass away, either in some kind of fiery conflagration or simply disappear. That also includes the Church as a human institution, although it is perfectly understandable if by *the Church* he means the redeemed of people of God (who are to be a Kingdom of Priests within the New Jerusalem = Je [God] + Ru [Gate] + Salem [Peace] = the Gate of God's Peace) and not the ordained but earthly administration of it; for does not Jeremiah 31:34 say "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest!" (see Hebrews 8:11 as well). And is not this the primary function of the Church in the first Earth to "teach every man his neighbor and brother to know the Lord?" Since that function no longer is needed in the New Heaven and the New Earth, then the Church as it functions today will no longer exist as it is now and/or will no longer be needed *per se*. It certainly will have completed its earthly mission and function now in the renewal is a pure body of worship! Yet it boggles the mind that God is going to allow all that He has ordained and made of the former things be completely annihilated, and/or all of its' principle works disappear. If this is the case then what does Revelation 21:24 mean when it says that in the New Jerusalem "The nations will walk by its light; the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it." (EOB). Is not Revelation here talking about most glorious creations that must of necessity have been produced within the administration of the *former things* so that the when Revelation talks about the passing away of the *former things* it is only talking about the *former things* that do not have this characteristic of glory and is honorable for "Nothing profane will enter into the city, or anyone who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Revelation 21:27, EOB). We can only conclude that not everything from the *former things* will *pass away* and the only way to avoid the biblical affirmative statement that it will the exegete must affirm that the biblical assertions that refer to *renewal* of the *former things* must be the *best of the former things* (the most glorious, honorable, magnificent, perfect, perfected *things*) that human kind has created by the will of God that shall become trophy's of victory in the New Jerusalem. Dr. Johnny Pressley in his syllabus notes for *The Book of Revelation* (1997) suggests that the most excellent things mankind has made in respect to the arts, music, thought, paintings, ideas, designs, etc. is what Revelation 21:27 is referring too, where the Greek for "glory" that is, δόξα, are things that are "unusually fine and deserving honor," praise worthy, glorified because of its excellence, etc.⁶³⁴ noting that these praise worthy and honorable *things* are being admitted into the New Jerusalem (and like the *renewed* people

⁶³³ Malaty, p. 274.

⁶³⁴ *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, 33:357, p. 430.

of God, that is, the Sons of God, the *Children of Light*, who are *revealed*) do not *pass away* merely because they once belonged to the *former things*, that is, the *first earth*. These things are made honorable through their works (*which follow them*, Revelation 14:13) are not subject to annihilation nor will they disappear according to the express word of God rightly understood, and are indeed admitted into the New Jerusalem as *Trophy's of God*. They will be displayed in the New Jerusalem as God's own work through human persons that helped them create these *things* (i.e. such extraordinary acts of faith, love, hope, and mercy, extraordinary breakthroughs in the medical arts that benefit mankind, and the like resultant from these) all to the glory of God. These *things* will not *pass away* or be obliterated. There are (for certain) three primary things that will survive into eternity and we can presuppose any resultant work or deed proceeding from them will survive into eternity as well as noted by 1 Corinthians 13:8 *"Love never fails. But as for prophecies [as important as they are for this dispensation] they will come to an end; as for tongues [as important as speech and communication is for conducting human schemes or civic order and law in this dispensation] they will cease; as for knowledge, [as important as it is for advancing wisdom and understanding in this dispensation] but in the next dispensation] it will pass away."* . . . *But now faith, hope, and love remain: these three, and the greatest of these is love* (13:12, EOB).

[REVELATION 21:5] THE STATE OF THE ONE CHURCH

"Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." In the world to come the soul will never be bored or tired. Nothing there will become old or aging, but every moment - if it is appropriate to say that - we find all things new. For then we are present before God, whom the soul will never feel sufficiency full of, and will always be the more eager for, Him St. Gregory of Nyssa says, [The vision of God in the present life will not precisely fulfill us, but it grows continually day after day, from beginning to beginning, in endless beginnings, until it reaches its fullness in eternity.] The more man meditates on the vision of God, the more he sees Him as if for the first time. All new in his sight, so he feels more longing to kneel before Him, and gaze at Him. And thus he continues to no end. Because this matter is so glorious that many find it hard to get, the Lord wanted to revive hope in them. Therefore the Apostle says, "And He said to me, 'write, for these words are true and faithful.' And He said to me, 'It is done!' ". These are all true and actual matters, that God had prepared for humans. The only thing left, is for us to enter and inherit. As if He says to His bride, "God in truth has prepared the matrimonial house; what remains is for the bride to come."⁶³⁵

Malaty goes beyond what Revelation 21:5 states and promises. You can be sure however that life in eternity with God is experienced as brand new every morning and as the great hymn of the church *Amazing Grace* (1779) by John Newton, a repentant former slave trader proclaims *"When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise, Than when we first begun"* gives wonder and expression to something in this dispensation we can only guess at or even contemplate how we will experience living with God in the New Jerusalem given our human limitations. This truth is expressed 1 Corinthians 2:9 declares: *"But as it is written: Things which an eye did not see, and an ear did not hear, Which did not enter into the heart of men, These God has prepared for those who love him."* (EOB). And another reason we can only contemplate it is because God Himself has placed for the time being a shroud over our understanding for His own reasons and purposes but when the time comes will lift it so that for the first time we can see truth and fully experience God in truth and the wonders of His renewed Heavens and the Earth. Isaiah 25:6-8 demonstrates what will happen in God's renewal of his *Good Creation* : *"On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, or rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth."* (NRSV). Revelation 21:5 does indeed say this one thing: *this renewal of God's Good Creation* (the one He created *from the beginning*) *is true, just, and certain*.

Participation and Role of the Collective Human Person in the Renewal of Creation

Kesis Dr. Gebru clearly shows that the Cosmic-Christ (as we have called Jesus here) is the *Omega Point* or convergence of the energies of God that will consummate the final renewal or transformation of the first Heaven and Earth (and everything associated with it. This is because all things have the divine DNA or energies within them or it); but he also shows that the collective human person has a role in participation of this process he called *transfiguration* as well. What he did not make clear is that sense all things good and evil has the DNA of the energies of God then must we not say that Christ as the *Omega Point* is obliged to sublate both good and evil within himself? How is this possible without tainting the

⁶³⁵ Malaty, p. 274.

process of renewal that contains only that which is good and perfected. Is not God going to cast all Evil into outer darkness? This is a mystery but some theologians surmise that instead of repelling the negative energies that are found on the *z*-axis that somehow the Cosmic-Christ will be able to absorb all energies both positive and negative within himself in some kind of divine reconciliation process that none of us at this moment could possibly understand. Remember here that Barth call these negative aspects of God's energies things that are on His *left hand*. Barth would say that this process does not include the Trinitarian aspects of Nothingness, because God did not create them. What is unsolved then is how God's *End Game* deals with disposing of the **Trinity of Nothingness**, that is, *Death, Evil* and *Sin*. Will God cast all agents, acolytes, and devotees of Nothingness into the Lake of Fire, and then cast all of these agents, including Satan, his angels, the false prophet, and those humans that have the Mark of the Beast into *Outer Darkness* well beyond God's *renewed Creation* represented by the New Jerusalem or will God as some Cosmologists like De Chardin claims sublate all of His energies both good and evil, positive and negative within the Cosmic Christ that takes them through some transformative process or reconciliation that would be impossible for any human person to do or contemplate. Here we must stand with Barth. Whatever these two possible *end games* it is for sure that the collective human person has a participatory role in the bringing about *a new heaven and a new earth*. So what is that participatory role that LaPierre calls the "Mystery of Creation" aligned with his *z*-axis? For sure human persons can travel down either a positive or negative path of spirituality regarding the mystery of creation. By all accounts what happens to humanity and what they do within God's *Good Earth* has consequences for both Heaven and Earth as the Egyptian dictum suggests *as below, so above*, and material creation itself groans as it awaits the *reveal* or *manifestation* of the Son's of God. Evil as representative of the IT also knows and understands the critical role of the collective human person in the process of God's *renewal* to bring about *a new Heaven and a new Earth*. It is not for nothing that Revelation in its metaphor to show that when the Dragon failed to destroy the Christ-child of the woman clothed with the sun that he then proceeded to make war against the collective human person themselves as displayed in the text below:

When the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to earth, began to persecute the woman who had given birth to the male child. Two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly from the face of the serpent [and escape] into the wilderness, to the place where she might be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. Then from his mouth, the serpent spewed water like a river after the woman, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing up the river which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. The dragon became enraged with the woman and departed to make war with the rest of her seed, those who keep God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 12:13-17, EOB).

The attack of the Dragon (i.e. Serpent, Satan, the Devil, etc.) is meant to send human persons down the negative path of the *z*-axis of the Mystery of Creation. On God's *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience* which we submit here is conceptually similar to LaPierre's *Cartesian Coordinated Axes of Evil* as a Spiritual Reality explains who Evil impacts. It is the collective human person as IT travels along side them on God's *Superhighway* to influence them to behave and act negatively in consort with Evil in return for temporary pleasures of various *demonic experiences*. Evil advances toward and attacks the human person through their own super-ego which becomes for them an object of worship. Once the human super-ego becomes its own god and object of worship, Evil completes the process by identifying with IT so that the two (i.e. human and dark principality) become one and is indistinguishable (i.e. united) so that the possession of the person by IT is complete and likely irreversible, except by God's grace. That Satan's *end game* is to prevent the Son's of God from being revealed, transformed, and renewed is fundamental to maintaining his position as "god of this world" and the "prince of the air[waves]" in order to continue a program of further corrupting and ruling over God's *Good Creation*, pursuing the homicidal aim of murdering the body, soul, and spirit of each and every human person that God made in His image, with His *energies*. Therefore, the human responsibility for maintaining and sustaining God's *Good Creation as good* is paramount. That humanity has such a responsibility and participatory role in the *renewal*,

recreation, and *transformation* of God's *first* creation into *a new heaven and a new earth* is made clear by *Kesis* Dr. Gebru, who states:

Fundamental to the Christian thought of the created matter is that God created it and said "it was good" (Gen. 1:25). The *good creation* was affected by sin, not because of its fault but due to human person's unfaithfulness to the divine commandment. Christianity upholds the goodness of creation in many ways. The incarnation of the *Logos* shows the place of material creation in Christianity, highlighting that matter is "God-friendly." Moreover, in the Eucharistic Liturgy, the church uses the products of nature to offer thanksgiving which is a modest act of referring creation back to its creator. In its original state though creation was good, its goodness did not entail perfection. Having created the *good creation*, God intended further development of creation towards perfection. "Created reality was not made perfect in the sense of being its final goal," writes Payton, "it still had to develop in the direction [positive on the *z*-axis of Mystery of Creation] of ultimate perfection." Though the divine command: "fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over . . . the living thing that moves upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26) the human person was given a special role to cultivate nature and give names to animals. The special role of the human person was mainly to be the "king and priest of creation" who brings the rest of creation into communion with God. Unfortunately, however, the human person refused "the vocation to live eucharistically" by returning creation back to its Creator. Violating the divine command, the person "lost the eucharistic life [and] the power to transform it into Life. Instead of controlling nature as the crown of creation, the human person rather preferred to be controlled by it. Moreover, failing to be in communion with God, the person led creation to futility, bondage, and death. Christ redeemed the whole of creation which is now heading to its final glorious goal of transfiguration. But at the present age, looking for its fulfillment, creation is in a defective state, and its destiny is by no means fulfilled. Creation is still suffering, and its travail is seen in the on-going ecological crisis, such as "air and water pollution, global warming, depletion of non-renewable resources, destruction of the ozone layer, increasing nuclear radiation, deforestation and desertification of best areas, etc." At the current stage, since forces of disintegration and division are actively at work in creation, humans should fulfill their God-given task of uniting creation with its Creator. Every person can truly be the priest of creation if "he or she freely turns it into a vehicle of communion with God and fellow human beings." This Orthodox perspective of creation signifies the vocation of humans as steward of God's creation who could offer it back to God in order to make it "an epiphany of the Kingdom of Heaven." It is the responsibility of humans to unveil the transfiguration of the world by being the priests of creation in the "immense cathedral which is the universe of God." (pp. 147-149).

It is significant that *Kesis* Dr. Gebru illuminates the negative *z*-axis path that human person's have taken in respect to abdication of their role as "king and priest of " God's *Good Creation* to live a Eucharistic life by "returning creation back to its Creator" as part of their stewardship over it as God commanded from *the beginning* to *subdue the earth, be fruitful and multiply*. God gave humanity the grace and power to engage in "**thinging**" (Massey) that is, *naming authority* over all things within God's *Good Creation*, so that it is affirmed that mankind has absolute *zoological authority* first to name all living things, where Genesis 2:19 says: "Also, God formed out of the ground all the wild animals of the field and all the birds of heaven, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. Thus whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name," and secondly, God gave *dominion and domestication authority*, where Genesis 1:28b "have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of heaven, and over every living things that moves on the earth" with the further responsibility to "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it . . ." Rather mankind went astray and before long went down the negative pathway on the *z*-axis representing the "Mystery of Creation," so that instead of subduing the created order and all material being (i.e. things); a select group of humans themselves were and are subdued by it, leading to the demonic experience of seeking self-deification and so the desire to force other men to worship them *or else* in various schemes of *grand-domestication*, going beyond God's positive command too negatively engage in *subduing men*! For this reason the *first Adam* failed to carry out this responsibility of dominion as prescribed by God making it necessary for the *second Adam* in the person of Jesus Christ

as the *Cosmic Christ* and *Omega Point* to reconcile God's *Good Creation* back to Him so that God will be *all in all*. This is plainly stated in one of the most neglected Scriptures in all of the Bible because of its controversial Christological statement that flies in the face of our Sunday School Theology, which is often not biblically grounded. First Corinthians 15 talks about Christ, the Second Adam coming to end all human grand-domestication schemes, which is the old order of things and *returning* God's *Good Creation* back over to Him, as mankind, as the First Adam in liturgical worship should have done. This singular text states the following (rarely preached and rarely commented on):

*But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead! He did become the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since death came through [one] man, the resurrection of the dead also came through [one] man. As in Adam ["first man"] all die, in Christ ["last man"] all will be made alive. But each in the proper order: Christ (the first fruits), then those who are Christ's at his coming. When the end come, he [Christ] will deliver the Kingdom to the God and Father—that is, when he will have abolished all the rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For, "He put all things in subjection under his feet." But when he says, "All things are put in subjection," it is obvious that this does not include the one who subjected all things to him. When all things have been subjected to him, then the Son will also subject himself to the one who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:20-28, *The Orthodox Study Bible*).*

Therefore, Hue-manity, representing the "first man" or "first Adam" failed to reconcile themselves in obedience to God's original command bring cosmos (order) out of chaos (disorder) within God's *Good Creation* and in human/divine worship as a Eucharistic act return this transformed and renewed creation (completed and perfected) back to its Creator, God and Father of us all. The Cosmic Christ through Divine reconciliation had to come and do this for us by acts of redemption. The "last man" or "Second Adam" offered himself as a Eucharisticsacrifice to accomplish reconciling the world and all that is within it back to God, the Creator, Sustainer of the Worlds and our Redeemer by means of our Savior, Jesus Christ who suffered and died for us on the cross. Philosophically, this drama has already taken place in the Cosmic Christ and will be fulfilled at the end of Time itself, where the Cosmic Christ as the Omega Point will reconcile *all things*, that is, paradoxically both good and evil as an spiritually operative mystery with God, so that all things, cleansed by his redemptive act of self-sacrifice, becomes sublated under God, who shall finally be *all in all*. Paradoxically (keeping in my Barth's cautionary tail that this does not include anything God did not create) all energies, both positive and negative will be transformed and renewed in such a way that both good and evil all worked together for the good. This mystery of creation can only happen, that is, be reconciled within Cosmic or Omega Christ, the *beginning and the end*..

LaPierre's Conclusion

LaPierre like this work itself started out with the worthy task of answering this question: **"This great evil—where did it come from? How did it steal into the world"** formerly stated in the Augustinian way of saying it **"whence is Evil?"** Further, LaPierre wanted too at least ask the important question about the nature of Evil itself, that is, *"What is this Evil?"* as we have explored in this work as well. We think LaPierre did not really pursue the last two questions *where did Evil come from and what is its nature* as much as he dwelled on the question *how did it steal into the world*, which is the burden of explaining the meaning behind his *six dimensions of spirituality* and how with human acts of good and evil mankind chooses to travel in one direction or another, positively or negatively. But he bemoans the same substance of the matter that we here bemoan as well that the "solution to the problem of Evil is not obvious since we still debate the nature of Evil." We can know something about the human pathway that Evil takes within his six dimensions of spirituality, that is, we can know something about "how did [Evil] steal into the world" but little else about the "What is Evil?" that is, its nature, and "Whence is Evil?" that is, "Where did Evil come from?" In this work we came along way in answering some of these questions, which

exploration will open the door for further examination to reveal more truth concerning these matters. LaPierre concludes the following:

Spirituality is clearly a significant force in the lives of many people throughout the world and has been so for most of recorded history. Too often, however, the negative or dark side of spirituality receives insufficient attention. Carl Jung concluded years ago that the theological writings either said nothing, or, after a long technical discussion, concluded that the origin of Evil was “unexplained and inexplicable,” which to Jung meant that they simply did not want to think about it. Anyone concerned with the spiritual journey needs to wrestle with both the reality of evil “out there” and the impact of evil within his or her life. There are ways to understand the nature of evil that are both popular and have survived the test of time. At various times in history people have experienced evil as the opposite of good, as the consequences of the initial sin in the Garden of Eden, as the product of an Evil force or personality leading human beings astray, and/or as the result of a collaboration between the Evil force or personality and human beings working together. This essay describes evil as a process in which a person, or conceivably a group, moves away from the Good in any of six relatively discrete directions. Whether that is because the person or group is being misled, controlled, or brought along as a willing partner does not change the basic nature of the process. Evil is motion away from whatever is good [i.e. St. Augustine’s *privation of the good* theory, my insertion] and it can be experienced along any or all of the six dimensions of spirituality I describe in this essay. The solution to the problem of Evil is not obvious since we still debate the nature of Evil. However, the implication of the theory of evil offered in this essay is that, irrespective of the actual **ontological nature of Evil**, a person can move away from Evil. Whether the impetus to do so arrives as a result of grace from God, a sudden insight into one’s misdeeds because of a loved one calling our attention to our wrongdoings, the application of the Law or another stimulus, the spiritual reality is that we can change. “Metanoia” is both possible and believable. In other words, just as most of us originally turned away from the “Good” or, more personally, from God, we can turn back to God no matter how far we have traveled along one or more negative dimensions of spirituality.(pp. 109-110).

LaPierre believes that a process of *metanoia* is what moves a person to make the choice to turn from Evil and travel back toward the positive path of any of the six spiritual dimensions. So what is *metanoia*? The general definition of *metanoia* is *a change in one’s way of life resulting from penitence to spiritual conversion*, so what Jesus demanded of mankind was “repentance” that is, “a complete change of heart.” This understanding is not just spiritual in nature but religious, so that one cannot try to divorce this supernatural experience from its religious context and source, which is perhaps what LaPierre is attempting to do here and place it within some kind of context devoid of its divine source and catalyst, which is God’s saving power and grace through Jesus Christ, the Lord. Once this is accomplished the concept becomes a mere spiritual tool to explain how a person (by their own choice and volition without any Holy Spirit regenerative power or energy) repents of their past Evil deeds and turns around on any of the *six spiritual dimensions* that LaPierre suggests. Nicodemus, a Pharisee and one of the leaders of the Jews, who came to see Jesus *at night* had the following conversation on this point. How is the human person “**reborn**”:

Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God because no one can perform the signs which you accomplish unless God is with him. Jesus answered him, “Amen, amen, I tell you; unless one is born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” Nicodemus asked him, “How can someone who is old be born? Can one enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be born [anew]?” Jesus answered, “Amen, amen, I tell you; unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God! What is born of the flesh is flesh. What is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, **You must be born anew**. The wind blows where it wants to, and you hear its sound, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said, “How can this be?” (John 3:4-9, EOB)

The black church used to believe (based on this biblical text) that for a person to be saved and be empowered to live a new and renewed life under the saving grace of God through Jesus Christ that **“You**

must be, You have to be born again” as the old song proclaimed. The black church no longer believes this in these post-modern times because they have stopped openly teaching and preaching it from the pulpit; turning God’s church into some kind of secular institution that believes that men and women can be saved merely by making the good confession that Jesus Christ is their savior and start living a moral correct life within the church without the public act of repentance followed by Baptism and the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit. And even though the church still counsels baptism (i.e. being born by water) for new converts to Christ they have all but abandoned the kernel of *metanoia* itself, that is, *being born and supernaturally transformed and renewed by the Spirit of God*. You literally don’t need to have or demonstrate that you have had that experience anymore to be regarded as being saved and marked as a Christian. Within this contextual religious environment it is certain that the orthodox view of the meaning of *metanoia* would not be acceptable because teaching it openly and demanding adherence would not be popular with people seeking a spiritual experience but needing to avoid at all cost openly repenting of their old life and seeking help from God to supernaturally change their hearts to obtain a renewed life (become a new creature in Christ, a deiform regenerated person) which they believe they can do by simply making the good confession, going to church and following either some moral inspirations teaching and/or preaching from the pulpit. So, what is the orthodox or theological view of *metanoia*?

Orthodox Views

Metanoia (Greek **μετάνοια**) means a “change of heart,” or, more literally, “after perception,” tying it closely to the idea of repentance. *Metanoia* is also another name for a prostration, with the idea that the physical movement of prostration is an indication of an internal reorientation to follow Christ. “[*Metanoia*] involves, that is, not mere regret of past evil but a recognition by man of a darkened vision of his own condition, in which sin, by separating him from God, has reduced him to a divided autonomous existence, depriving him of both his natural glory and freedom.”

Theological Views

Metanoia, a transliteration of the Greek **μετάνοια**, means after-thought or beyond-thought, with *meta* meaning “after” or “beyond” . . . and *nous* meaning “mind” . . . It’s commonly understood as “a transformative change of heart; especially a spiritual conversion. The term suggests repudiation, change of mind, repentance, and atonement; but “conversion” and “reformation” may best approximated its connotation. In the King James Version of the Bible, its verbal cognate *metanoeo*/μετανοέω is translated as *repent*.

Pagan Views

In Classical Greek *metanoia* meant changing one’s mind about someone or something. When personified, *Metanoia* was depicted as a shadowy goddess, cloaked and sorrowful, who accompanied Kairos, the god of Opportunity, sowing regret and inspiring repentance for the “missed moment”. This conventional portrayal continued through the Renaissance. “The elements of repentance, regret, reflection, and transformation are always present in the concept of *metanoia* to some degree. . . . Philo Judaeus of Alexandria (c 25 BCE – c. 50 CE) depicted *metanoia* as “in heaven, a beautiful and especially good daughter of the Most High.” There, “she entreats God Most High” on behalf of people.

New Testament View

Modern English translations of the Greek New Testament use the word “repentance” for both the word *metanoia* and *metamelomai*. The former term is so translated almost ten times as often as the latter. *Metanoia* can be traced to Mark Chapter 1, where Jesus announces that the kingdom of God is at hand and therefore demands men to repent of their evil ways. Matthew 27:3 uses the Greek verb *metamelomai* in stating that Judas “repented himself” after he saw Jesus being led

away. *Metamelomai* denoted “painful sorrow” or “remorseful regret.” According to James Glentworth Butler, “as nearly as possible [*metamelomai*] is the exact equivalent of the word Repent or Repentance. Biblical scholar A. T. Robertson observes that Judas had only sorrow and regret and “mere sorrow avails nothing unless it leads to change of mind and life [*metanoia*]. Abid Rogers Bhatti in his book *A Textbook of Soteriology* writes about the meaning of *metanoia*/μετάνοια. In the Urdu Bible, the word for “repentance” is “toba.” Toba means regret, and sorrow over sinful deeds that lead to a change of mind and life. Abid agrees with Tertullian in preferring “conversion” rather than “repentance” to translate *metanoia*/μετάνοια in Mark 1:4. In summary, Abid believes that “conversion” (rather than “repentance”) is the best English word to express the meaning of the Greek *metanoia*/μετάνοια.

Contra Metanoia Means “Conversion”

Our argument here is that μετάνοια means “repentance” and not “conversion” even if during Early Christianity “Jews living at the time of Jesus, “repentance” meant “a fundamental change in thinking and living. . . . For the New Testament, this change is a necessary ingredient in accomplishing God’s plan for salvation and community for everyone.” The way *metanoia* was used during this period does not grammatically justify changing it to mean “conversion” rather than “repentance” as substituting “conversion” for “repentance” in Mark 4:1 would show: “John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching *baptism of [conversion]* for the forgiveness of sins” rather than “*baptism of repentance [μετανοίας]* for the forgiveness of sins” as it is translated in the *Greek New Testament* based on UBS 4th edition, of Nestle-Aland, 26th edition. It appears that some New Testament scholars want to *make* the word *metanoia* mean “conversion” to match how it was used and understood during the time of Jesus, but grammatically *metanoia* cannot carry the full weight behind the Greek word that actually means “conversion” as used by Jesus and which carries the very meaning that *metanoia* is being made to bare through a *Procrustean* process of making a square peg fit into a round hole. First, *metanoia* according to Louw & Nida in their *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, Vol. 1, is an *attitude of mind* that one needs “to change one’s way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness” and it is nowhere in this authoritative work translated as “conversion” but is translated to as “to repent”, “to change one’s way”, or “repentance.” It is a reflective process within the psychic-mind of the human person that they have been living a life of sin and contrary to righteous life established within the human conscience by God and His standards of holiness. *Metanoia* then is an attitude that develops within the human reflective consciousness that leads to a feeling of being sorry for the life one is currently living. At this point *no conversion whatever has taken place!* The volition of the *rational mind* has not as of yet moved the *rational heart* to make a positive change in the opposite direction toward living a holy and righteous life, for at this point the human person does not know how to accomplish this. They simply cannot do it by themselves no matter how sorrowful they are. What is needed is a *conversion experience* following *metanoia* or “repentance” in order for the person to move in the direction of a holy and righteous life. *Metanoia* is a *change in attitude* moving the rational reflective mind to be sorry, that is, move it to “repent” to say in other words “I am living a wrong, and sinful life and I want to change.” But how?

Conversion is the answer because it does not operate within the sphere of the *rational mind* but operates within the sphere of the *rational heart*, where one can experience a deep and abiding spiritual change that transforms the total human person. The Greek idiom or phrase used to express this notion is γεννᾶω ἄνωθεν [*gennao anothen*], which in general is translated as “to be born again” and shows up in John 3:3 in a reply or theological declaration of Jesus too a Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus, who stole away from his group to see Jesus secretly in the night. In fact this idiom is listed within the same semantic domain of “Change Behavior” by Louw & Nida (1988/1989) in their *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, Vol. 1. With μετάνοια numbered 41.52, and γεννᾶω ἄνωθεν following, numbered 41.53. The exchange between Jesus and Nicodemus, where in the exchange being *born again* is necessary in order for one to *change behavior* from *loving the light rather than*

darkness in order to hide one's practice of Evil into one who practices the truth and therefore "comes to the light" as evidence and demonstration that one believes in the Name of the only begotten Son of God, who has come as the light of the world to bring light into a world of darkness and Evil. One whose praxis is Evil will not be able to *see* the Kingdom of God, that is, the Kingdom of Light, because one lives in the darkness in order to practice Evil. Believing that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God and the Light of the World requires a complete change in one's behavior and requires *conversion* expressed in the Greek idiom *to be born again*, something like a change in one's nature from being a flesh being [desiring to the pleasures of *demonic experience*] which is darkness whose praxis and way of life is Evil into a spiritual being whose praxis is way of life is truth and living in the light that has been brought into the world by Jesus, the Son of the Living God and the Light of the World:

Now there was one of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night, and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God because no one can perform[sic] the signs which you accomplish unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Amen, amen, I tell you; unless one is **born anew** [γεννᾶω ἄνωθεν], he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus asked him, "How can someone who is old be born? Can one enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born [anew]? Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I tell you unless one is born of water [baptized] and spirit [transformative power of the Holy Spirit], he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God! What is born of the flesh is flesh. What is born of the Spirit is spirit. Nicodemus said, "How can this be?" Jesus replied and said, "You are the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things" Amen, amen, I tell you; we speak of what we know, and [we] bear witness to what we have seen, and you do not receive our testimony. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you [about] heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven, except for the one who came down out of heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, likewise, the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone believing in him should not perish but have eternal life. Indeed, God so loved the world that he gave his uniquely-begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. Certainly, God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world should be saved through him. Anyone who believes in him is not judged, but whoever does not believe has already been judged, because such a person has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment: that light has come into the world, and people have loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the light and does not come to the light, for fear that his works would be exposed. But whoever practices the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be revealed as done in God. (John 3:1-21, EOB).

So what is the semantic range and meaning for being *born anew* [γεννᾶω ἄνωθεν] as Jesus probably understood it or at the least Christian community during John's time, the author of the Gospel that bares his name? The best grammatical exposition comes from Louw & Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* that describes this idiom in conjunction with the Greek concept of παλιγγεννησια [*paliggenesia*] meaning "new birth" ; more specifically referring to "an era involving the renewal of the world (with special reference to the time of the Messiah) – new age, Messianic age.' . . . 'when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne in the new age.' (Louw & Nida, 67-147). Apparently, as related to being *born again* [γεννᾶω ἄνωθεν] a human person must also be "born again" to participate in this Messianic renewal, otherwise as Jesus said above *they will not see the Kingdom of God* [i.e. coming, when it comes, that is already come, etc.], because the one who is King is already here, and is the *ever coming One*, that is, *who is, who was, and who is to come*, the *Alpha and Omega*, the *Beginning and the End*. Louw & Nida (1989) state:

41.53 γεννᾶω ἄνωθεν (an idiom, literally 'to be born again'); παλιγγεννησια . . . to *experience a complete change* [a *conversion experience*, my insertion] in one's way of life to what it should be, with the implication of return to a former state or relation [inference to the state of humans before the Fall of Man and a negatively changed relationship with God, the Creator, my

insertion]—‘to be born again, to experience new birth, rebirth.’ . . . It is also possible to understand ἄνωθεν in Jn 3.3 as meaning ‘from above’ or ‘from God’ [so that the source of this conversion experience is divine and not human, where the new birth is an supernatural action that God does on behalf of the one who has *repented* with a new attitude, that is, μετάνοια, and who believes.] . . . however, Nicodemus understood ἄνωθεν as meaning ‘again’ . . . and γεννάω as ‘physical birth . . . ‘new birth and new life by washing’ . . . The metaphor of ‘new birth’ is so important in the NT that it should be retained if at all possible. In some languages ‘new birth’ can be expressed as ‘to cause to be born all over again’ or ‘to have a new life as though one were born a second time.’ [as understood by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church concerning baptism, a person is considered reborn and as such given a baptismal name, and whose birth day is changed seven years younger in harmony with the Ethiopian Calendar, my insertion].

Now we have given the general, orthodox, biblical, and grammatical understanding of *metanoia* since LaPierre does not provide his own view *per se*, and found that one cannot make or push *metanoia* to mean more than “to repent”, “to be sorrow for”, which is *an attitude* of the psychic-mind or rational-mind that one needs to change one's total behavior that has been Evil; but that this meaning cannot be pushed to include the notion of “conversion” or “conversion experience that is more closely related to the emotive rational heart; and therefore is not a mere attitude, but a deep desire of the heart that is transformative. That transformation is divine in origin and its source, because it is not innate within the human person so they can act on it through their own will or volition. *They must be, they have to be born again*, so that what Nicodemus’ response makes sense now that indeed no man is capable of causing themselves to be born again. In fact Nicodemus, without realizing it is right. Being *born again* is not a natural act but a supernatural act and since it is being *born again* it lies outside of human volition or will. Humans can innately feel sorry and repent of their Evil deeds (because God has granted all men a moral conscience in which they innately know what is right and wrong otherwise they would not feel bad about) but they do not have volitional power of the psychic-mind or heart to convert that attitude of *metanoia* into a *conversion experience*, i.e. παλιγγενεσία [*paliggenesia*]. This conversion experience has to come from a supernatural source that acts in response to a person whose attitude of sorrow, remorse, and need to repent. In other words *metanoia* (if one likes to think of it this way) is merely the first step in the process of being born again (i.e. γεννάω ἄνωθεν). In answer to Nicodemus Jesus confirms this supposition by saying “*What is born of the flesh is flesh. What is born of the Spirit is spirit.*” Being born again cannot come from humans who are flesh beings (or the order of spiritual being that are clothed in flesh) but must rather be *born again* in the final analysis by the Holy Spirit of God. Further what has interested us here is that LaPierre’s *six dimensions of spirituality* appear to be conceptually similar to this project's attempt to show how and why Evil as well as Good is allowed to travel along God’s *Superhighway of Unified Human Experience*. This conception however offers something that LaPierre fails to show. How do men turn around (repent) from going down the wrong pathway toward Evil within each spiritual axis? LaPierre seems to suggest that men do this by choosing the good over the bad, through a process of *metanoia* we have explained above, even though we do not know if this is what LaPierre means since it is the orthodox view of it we have presented. But we claim here that human avarice and greed within human nature does not have the power to cause a person to change course on their own through any process of *metanoia*, as accepted by any traditional denomination. Rather, we have suggested that unified human experience (confronted with God’s moral laws already embedded in the universe) itself along God’s superhighway is the mechanism that teaches mankind to turn from a path of Evil to that of the Good. It is the “school of hard knocks” theory that guided Israel back to God time and time again when they would repent after suffering God’s wrath after disobeying Him time and time again. We are not saying that *metanoia* does not play a part here but that something happening negatively in the human experience of going down the path of Evil has to be triggered to turn the person towards repentance. *Metanoia* then becomes more than repentance within the heart, it leads to actual *conversion* and thus the renewal of the person presaging a supernatural change in one’s flesh nature to that of the spirit, such that *God changes* the person from having “a heart of stone” to having a heart of flesh.” The heart is made

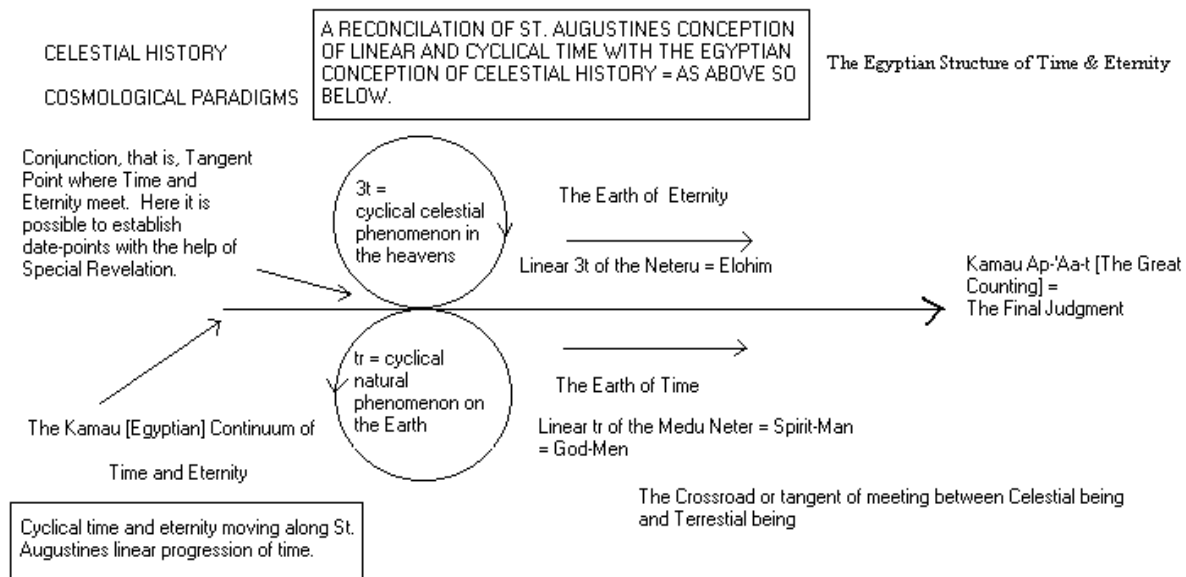
humble, teachable, more loving, more compassionate, more caring. There has to be a fundamental change that is grounded in more than the person's own volition because of some life-changing event or being taught what is right and good. Some people experience metanoia without such events. We have suggested that mankind on God's superhighway has within it various exits that lead to nowhere, warning men at their own peril to turn around. We have called these *cul de sacs*, where of necessity men have to turn around if they have went down the wrong street of life, or one way street to nowhere. Human experience itself bumping up against divine laws placed within it are what causes men to pause and think about what they are doing and if they don't they do so at their own peril. Here the human person does have the choice of their own will to ignore divine warnings that their *live-experience* confirms is the wrong path. God has made sure that man's volition is not absolute and he cannot get away with doing absolutely anything he wants without consequences. When human persons allow the short term rewards and pleasures of demonic experience rule in their life this inevitably leads to destruction and various forms of deaths because God's laws placed within both the spiritual and natural order where God's face is turned against every Evil work tends to reward either now or later every act or word whether it is good or evil.

APPENDICES:

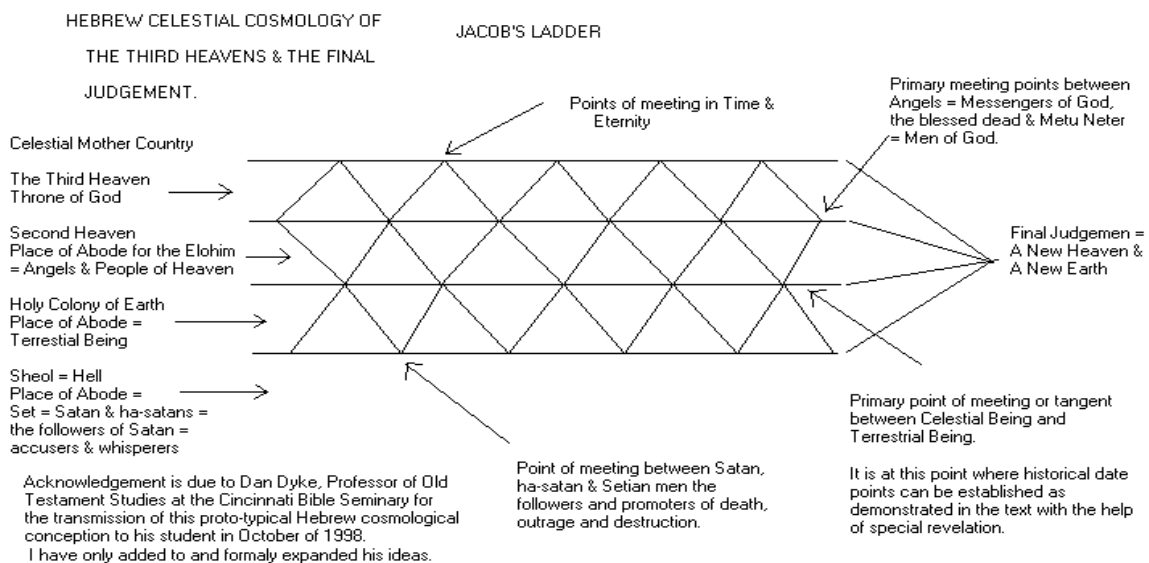
FOUR COSMOLOGICAL MODELS DESCRIBING EVILON GOD'S SUPERHIGHWAY OF UNIFIED HUMAN/DIVINE EXPERIENCE

Hear is the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole [duty of, my insertion] man. For God will bring every work into judgment, including everything that has been overlooked, whether it be good or evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, The Orthodox Study Bible)

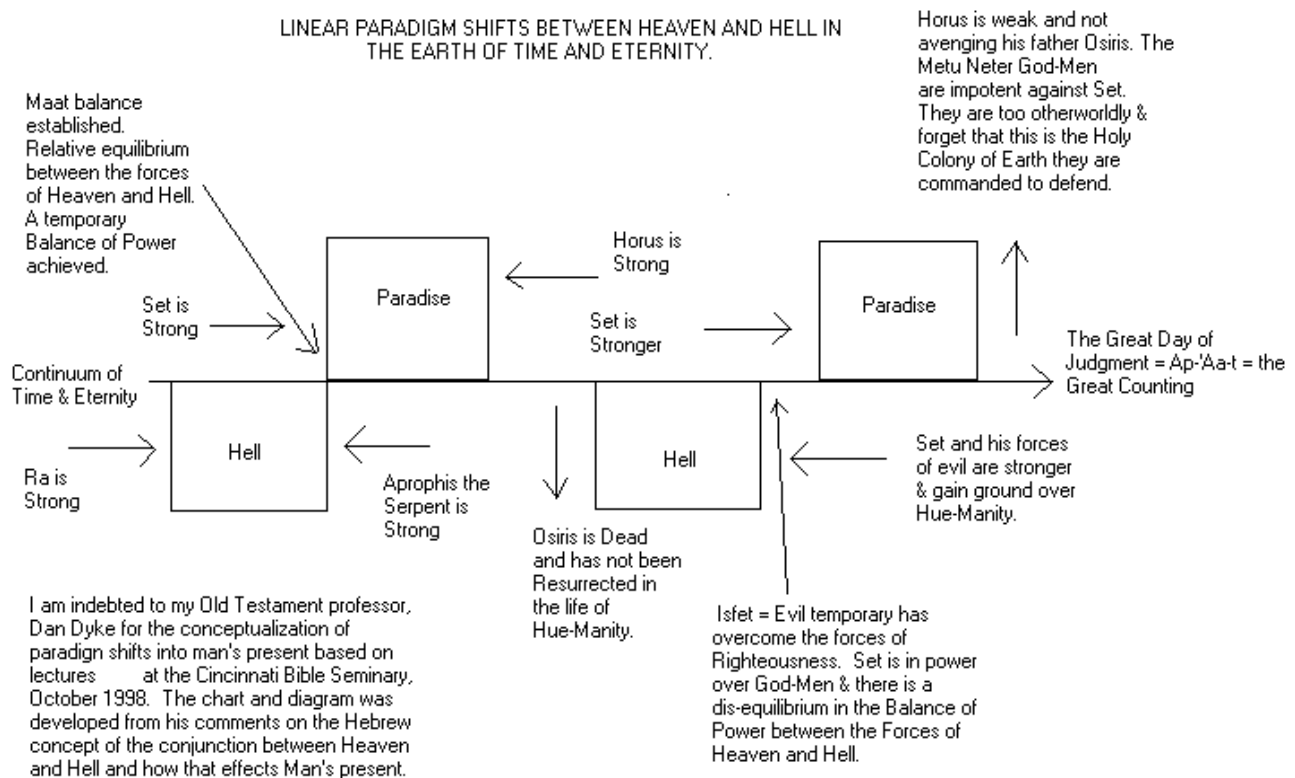
MODEL 1: The model below is my attempt to reconcile St. Augustine's linear conception of history with the cyclical notion of history held by the Greeks by means of the Egyptian understanding of the cosmos, that is, time and eternity. They called their view AS ABOVE, SO BELOW, and uranographically described what they saw in the cosmos, as a mirror image map of Earth of Time and the Earth of Eternity, a sort of a parallel universe of celestial and temporal being. I show that cyclical celestial phenomenon in Heaven and cyclical phenomenon on Earth run along the same linear pathway on God's superhighway toward the final judgment of all being. The most important thing about the diagram is that at the tangent point where time and eternity meet, or where beings in heaven and earth meet is where divine-human experience is conjoined and created on the superhighway of God.



MODEL 2: This model explains the Hebrew cosmological conception of Time and Eternity, which I called in this project Jacob's Ladder. It explains the same process of the human-divine persons going toward the final judgment, which culminates in a new heaven and a new earth on the superhighway of God. The model still contains St. Augustine's linear progression of history, found in *City of God* (Book XI, Chapter's 4, 5, and 6, pages, pp. 432-436), which is framed in terms of a relational connection between time and eternity (p. 435). However, the relational notion of the First, Second, and Third Heavens, which Apostle Paul talked about in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, is evidently in direct relationship with all decks of unified celestial and terrestrial experience, that is, between angels, human, and even demons in Sheol or Hell below. This is the Hebrew notion of AS ABOVE, SO BELOW, a sort of mapping of the cosmos.



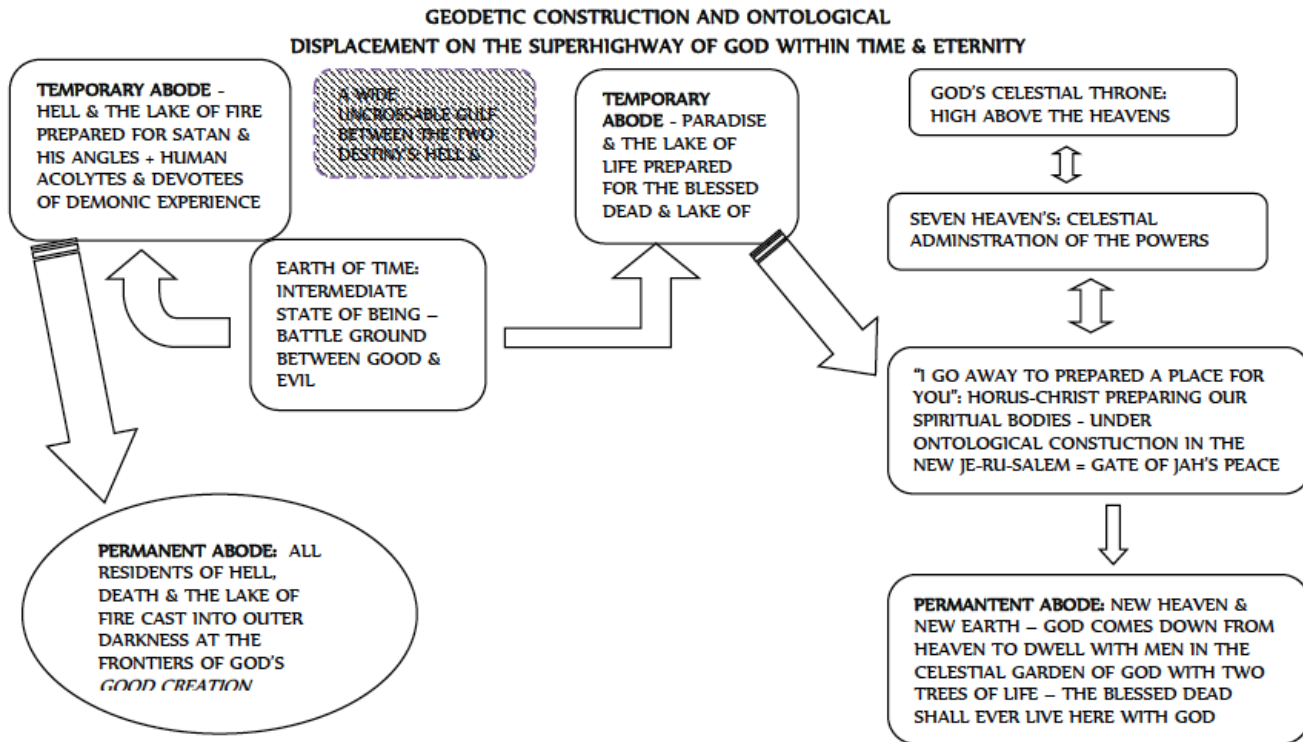
MODEL 3: The next model below, I call *Dante's Hell*. It is a description of how the forces of Evil and the forces of God's Paradise, in Heaven and on Earth are conjoined in an apparently eternal struggle that begins, but does not end in the Earth of Time. The battle, understood properly, began in Heaven, as I pointed out in citing Revelation 12:7-17, detailing a divine-human war that began in heaven, but continues on earth. The battle between Hell and Paradise is cast in Egyptian cosmological terms. However, a close reading of the notations will provide the reader with a good idea of the back and forth struggle of good and evil taking place, which depends on the participation of the human person, either in demonic or Christological experiences. I provide one clue as to how to read this model. When Horus, which is the deiform human-divine person is strong, then Paradise overcomes Hell. Isfet, which is the Egyptian term for Evil is temporarily defeated. However, when Set, that is, the Egyptian Satan, or the Devil is strong in the human-divine person, then Isfet is temporarily triumphant over Ma'at, which is the Egyptian term for "canon," "law," "righteousness," "goodness," etc. In either case the Egyptians propose that only a relative equilibrium can be achieved between good and evil on God's superhighway, which in this scheme is the continuum of time and eternity along which all beings travel toward the Great Judgment Day, they called "The Great Counting." This is still St. Augustine's linear progression of history. However, I have construed it to be a Celestial History of Time and Eternity that shows good and evil in a perennial back and forth battle, which can only end at God's throne for a final solution and determination.



MODEL 4 : TWO DESTINIES – “THY KINGDOM COME!”

DESTINY #1 – THE NARROW ROAD TO PARADISE – CHRIST JESUS, THE ONLY WAY – POPULATED BY GOD’S ACOLYTES & DEVOTEES (THOSE WHO DO GOOD)

DESTINY #2 – THE WIDE ROAD TO HELL & THE LAKE OF FIRE = MANY WAYS TO GET THERE – POPULATED BY ACOLYTES & DEVOTEES OF SATAN (THOSE WHO DO EVIL)



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