

Introduction  
to  
Theology

by

Chris Bouter MA, BAH

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*I dedicate this work to rabbi Albert Ringer, a cherished friend and fellow student of Tanakh and to all those souls that seek God.*

*“Know the Lord!”*

Jeremiah 31, 34

Hosea 2.20

## INTRODUCTION

In life I have often wondered about *the* truth, not just about the truth of why grass is said to be green. In this volume you can read some of my discoveries. However you may experience what Solomon did. He said:

“And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness. And folly. I recognized that this is also vexation of one’s spirit. For in much wisdom there is much grief . And he that increases knowledge, increases sorrow.”  
(Eccl. 1.17,18)

Yet I went ahead to write this book, and if God permits I will add a few more volumes, so as to have a compact ethics of theology, comprising life important truths.

While studying all kinds of ideas, from various religions and anti-religions, I discovered that they fit in a recognizable pattern. What this means, and how it all fits together, will become gradually clearer. If you care to stay with me. What I want to say here is that according to Joshua 23.6 we must not deviate from the truth, neither to the right, nor to the left. I argue that this not only holds in moral questions, but also in doctrine. Therefore it says in 2 Timothy 2.15 that we must divide, or cut the word of truth in a straight manner. I think that means that aberrations on the right and left are cut off. The Bible speaks of a pure, a weak, a tainted and a singed conscience. And I

think these may well be called the truth and the worsening stadia of the deviations, on the right and on the left

This theory is a discovery of my own. In that respect it is new. However it deals with things as old as the world. No doubt most of the items are well known already for centuries. However the way I have arranged them and worked them out I have never seen anywhere before.

The translation of Bible verses quoted is my own. As a student of the biblical languages, I have tried to produce a relevant rendering. You can check my translation with the one you are used to.

The topics in this book are ranked in as logical as possible a hierarchy according to importance. So the book starts with God as the supreme truth to monotheists, or the worst lie to atheists.

## **THEOLOGY OR: WHERE DO WE COME FROM?**

### **A. CREATION: Introduction**

Did Satan create the material world or did God? Is the origin of the universe impersonal chance, or is there no origin at all? Is there a benevolent Creator, or perhaps an evil master mind, or both? Or are questions like these irrelevant, or even meaningless? They may sound strange perhaps, but the so-called gnostics (from *gnosis*, Greek for 'knowledge') in the early ages of Christendom seriously believed that Satan was the Creator of the material world. They had come to this conclusion through an ancient type of dualism (belief in two equal ultimate principles e.g. mind/matter, good/evil).

The problem is how these questions are to be settled. Everybody deals with them in some kind of way. But what, if any, is the best way to come to terms with them once and for all?

I am fully convinced that theology can help us here. Theology (from *theos*, Greek for 'God' and *logos*, 'knowledge') is the discipline that is occupied with the study of God's nature. In the broadest sense it includes all of Revelation and Creation.

It is not just an activity of the rational mind. In its root it is an act of the heart. The heart is directly connected in a religious way to either God or an idol that takes His place. I hope to make this clear. For instance in atheism (belief in no God at all) the

material is idolized, in deism (God-does-not-care belief) the rational mind, in mysticism (belief that feelings must be holy) the soul, in polytheism (belief in many gods) the spirit, and in Satanism Satan is worshiped as God. Materialism mostly is more or less agnostic and is situated between deism and atheism. Pantheism sees the divine in everything (particularly in your own self) and is situated between mysticism and polytheism.

It is true that in the name of spiritual truth, or pseudotruth, the greatest sins have been committed. It is because the spirit gives ultimate meaning to life, and we all sense that intuitively. Thus the communists have sacrificed millions of lives on the altar of their anti-religion. So have the Moslems, so-called Christians, and others. Religion is at once the greatest source of trouble and the most fertile fount of blessing in the world. It is because the heart is what we live for and by. Let nobody think one can do without a religious stance. Everybody lives by a certain belief. One simply must take a position. Our hearts clamor for it. Even if one says that one is uncommitted, in practice such a person is forced to make a certain choice.

In this chapter the eight mainstreams of religion are explained. Everybody falls in a certain category. We must be theologians. *Homo homo religiosus est*. Man is religious by nature.

In ancient Greek thinking theology is part of philosophy. In the scholastic middle ages it is practically the other way around. Since God is the eternal Creator, to be praised forever, it should be clear that He should indeed be the true center of all our thoughts, words and deeds. Therefore theology,

the knowledge of God, is the most important study there is. It is not for nothing that in the middle ages theology was called *regina scientiarum*, the queen of the sciences. For it is theology, together with Revelation, that must make the final decision as to what is ultimately the truth. Biology alone, for instance, cannot make clear whether the world was made by God, Satan, atheistic evolution, a pantheistic god, or the gods. People have held all these positions.

Not even astrophysics can solve this question. One well known scientist aptly observed that astrophysics is like a long and dangerous climb over treacherous mountains. At the last moment when the last peak has been braved the poor scientist, who feels alone and exhausted, is greeted by a bunch of theologians who have been sitting at that final outpost already for centuries!<sup>1</sup>

Theology is first and foremost based upon what God reveals about Himself. Secondly it is based on philosophical deductions that derive from an interaction between our knowledge of Creation and Revelation. Therefore philosophy can rightly be called *ancilla theologiae*, “the handmaiden of theology.”

It is understandable that theology and philosophy often have been in conflict. For to accept Revelation is one thing, but to work it out with the tools of Creation is another thing. But since both

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers* (New York: Warner Books Inc., 1980), 105,6.

Revelation and Creation come from God there should be no conflict in principle.

It is indeed possible to look at theology from a philosophical and anthropocentric point of view. But this must not give us the idea that theology is subservient to philosophy. It is the other way around. Man can indeed look at God, to a point, through his own eyes. This is philosophical theology. But man can best look at God and himself through God's eyes. This is theological philosophy and theological anthropology (from Greek *anthropos* 'human being') and psychology (from Greek *psyche* for 'soul'). Revelation, that is revealing theology, does give us an idea of God's side. It is the power of the imagination that enables us to do this. For when we try to look at ourselves through God's eyes, we imagine ourselves in His place. Philosophy, then, must serve theology, for what God says must lead our understanding; as His Word goes far beyond ours in the scope of its meaning. In section B on Revelation it will be explained how Revelation and Creation, theology and philosophy, must be balanced.

Natural theology so-called is really simply philosophy that tries to be theological. It is a human attempt to come to terms with Creation apart from Revelation. Since however Revelation and Creation cannot do without each other natural theology cannot go very far. It has even been called 'the sick man of Europe.'<sup>2</sup> As soon as one philosopher had given him

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<sup>2</sup> Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1974), 271.

apparently the *coup de grace*, another theologian reanimates him, and so on. However it is my opinion that what the apostle Paul does in the epistle to Romans, chapter one, and Acts seventeen, can be rightly called a (partial) appeal to natural theology. It is the attempt to show that God's existence can be demonstrated from nature, and in observing the universe. As such it is a springboard from Creation to Revelation, from philosophy to theology.

Since I have used the expressions of theological philosophy and philosophical theology, one might be confused and wonder whether there is such a thing as theology and philosophy proper. To me the latter is the study that tries to give account of Creation in its diversity and totality, the former of God in His being. The latter is the systematic study of Creation, the former the systematic study of Revelation. Philosophy is theological when it views God and Creation through God's eyes, through what He says. Theology is philosophical when it views God through our limited anthropocentric understanding. Philosophy proper looks at Creation by means of Creation's tools (our body, mind, soul and spirit). Theology proper looks at God through God's utterances about Himself. I have called section A theology only, but it must be understood that it is a mixture of philosophical theology and theology proper. Section A is made up of the former and section B of the latter.

## *Proof of God's Existence*

There are really only four reasonable possibilities:

- A. God is the Creator of the universe.
- B. The world is eternal.
- C. The universe evolved by itself.
- D. Theistic evolution.

Let us consider these possibilities. What do Christians conceive when they say that God is a proven fact? Since God is infinite and incomprehensible, He cannot be proved at all in a rational way. For our minds are finite. To prove Him would be reducing Him to human limits. What then does the apostle mean when he says that God's "invisible qualities are seen by the intelligence, because of the things that have been made (Rom. 1. 20)?" I think he means that the finite world, because it is limited, cannot contain itself. It is dependent on the infinite, just like the ciphers 1,2,3 only make sense in the totality of the entire set of natural numbers. In this way the finite lives by the grace of the infinite. Creation is only part of the picture, the ultimate reality lies beyond the universe! This is not pantheism as if the finite world is part of God. It is the theory that finite Creation points to an infinite Maker. Not that God's infinity is just a spatial extension. But the vastness of space is an apt metaphor to picture God's divine quality.

Atheists claim that matter is the only reality. But who says that there is not another kind of reality that cannot be seen by our eyes? Deists say that God must exist as a first cause, since there must be a

beginning in the finite chain of cause and effect in the material world; and that God has nothing further to do with us. Pantheists say that matter is part of God. They are not very interested in the material world. God's spirit is the only reality to them. Matter is just an emanation. Polytheists believe that the material world is just an illusion. Its various forces are manifestations of the different gods. To pantheists the material world is caused by God's emanations; to polytheists by the manifestations of the gods.<sup>3</sup> Atheists believe the world is caused by the Big Bang. Actually all of these "ists" are not interested to prove God. The atheist and polytheist do not believe in Him at all, and the other two take Him for granted. It is because none of them believe in Him as a Person.

There have been materialistic monotheists, such as Tertullian, that believed that matter indeed is the only thing that exists. God for him consisted of very fine, invisible matter.<sup>4</sup> Rationalists have reasoned that God must be a super brain. Mystics have called Him the ultimate mystery. And occultists have tried to use Him as the ultimate magical power. Again there are no proofs here, just the intuitive knowledge that He simply is there.

There have been rational idealists that claimed that God is proved by the fact that the idea of an infinite, perfect God exists. Since this idea exists,

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<sup>3</sup> See a good information source under these headings.

<sup>4</sup> Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*, VII.

God must exist as well.<sup>5</sup> However such an idea at best establishes the possibility of God. The deeper motive behind this kind of “proof”, I think, is to create the highest reality in one’s own mind. It seems to be a deification of one’s own reason.

To me the best proof for God’s existence is the appeal to the heart. God is the ultimate source of love. Were it not so then life is meaningless in the end, because it ends in death. The unity of the universe shows God’s Oneness, and its diversity shows His Fulness.

### *God’s Essence*

God’s essence must be distinguished from His qualities or attributes. The former is denoted by the word deity (*theotes*, Col. 2. 9), the latter by divinity (*theiotes*, Rom. 1. 20) The former means absoluteness and simplicity, the latter the state that manifests His character in Creation. God’s qualities, which must be infinite in number, are all one in His essence. God is not divisible into qualities as if God were a conglomerate. He is pure simplicity.

I believe that, in our mind, God’s simplicity and qualities keep each other in balance. If you stress the former too much then His qualities are harmed, and the other way around. For instance in rationalistic deism God is mainly simple. He has only a finite number of qualities, it seems to me. For His simplicity

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<sup>5</sup> John F. Wippel and Allan B. Wolter, eds., *Medieval Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), 8,9, 154-74.

is His pure act of reason, His state is characterized by the qualities that are the various outcomes of His rational mind. Now this is really a compromise position between only simplicity and the balanced truth of both simplicity and an infinity in infinitudes. But if the number of God's qualities is limited, then everything is not possible with God. So He is not really almighty, it must be concluded.

Many deists have been caught in this vicious circle. God is not omnipotent, because His qualities are finite (in number). And His qualities are finite, because He is not infinite in power. But the careful observer notices that this position is fraught with tension. For if God is not almighty, then He is guilty of creating us in an imperfect world of trouble. To escape this conclusion one could make a double break away from the truth into the extreme position that God is only simplicity. This is atheistic materialism. God is altogether lost in a simple chemical projection of the human mind. Thus many atheists have been caught in a vicious circle as well. God is just an invention of the human mind, because a limited Creator is a farce. Because He is a farce, He is just an invention. However a new, ever worse, tension arises as a result. For if God does not exist then I am truly alone. And my life ends in nothingness when I die. One can hardly escape this tension. Most atheists just develop a pluck-the-day attitude. Others abuse substances, some start doubting everything.

I realize that I have left out many things on this slope into despair. Many people don't slide down all the way, though they are aware of the possibility.

I have tried to show you that when you overly accentuate one side of the truth, your belief becomes

lopsided. Inherent trouble results. If you try to escape the impasse, you are only pulled down further, and so on. In the end you lose even the very thing you cherished--God's simplicity. On the other side of the scales exactly the same thing happens. For in pantheism God's qualities, as they appear in His emanations, are stressed. His essence is only a *mysterium tremendum*, worshiped as a wonderful thing. But the real joy comes from the enjoyment of the variety of Creation. His qualities override His simplicity here. However if God's very essence were divisible into equal or unequal principles, then He would be composite. In that case He cannot possibly be fully Himself, like the sun and the moon do not make up the solar system. God is not the sun of His qualities. All His qualities are fully divine. Moreover compositions are always caused to be united. But God is not caused by a higher principle. Pantheists have simply accepted the position that God depends on Creation like the sun is part of the sun's rays. This is again a compromise, weaker than the slight emphasis on qualities. They get stuck in a vicious circle. God is part of Creation because God is the sun of His qualities, which make up Creation. Together they form reality. God is not fully Himself because He is part of reality. Because God is the sun of His emanations, he is part of Creation. Notice that this position is implied in the claim that God's qualities override His simplicity. Because if God's essence consists in His being made up of different qualities, then He is really caused by these. But then His qualities are really a higher principle. God is just a result of them.

I know this train of thought may sound simplistic to a scholar of pantheism, there being so many different kinds of pantheism. But these are really compositions of various principles. So I know that there are also pantheists that say that Creation depends on God, like the rays of the sun result from its nature. I argue however that that belief is a dualism of rationalistic deism and mysticistic pantheism. In mysticistic pantheism God's qualities override His simplicity.<sup>6</sup> But these qualities are only seen in His created emanations. So His essence depends on these. Of course pantheism is a contradiction in terms really. For how can something created make the Creator depend on it? Ultimately God lives in Himself, as the Bible says that He lives "in an unapproachable light."

The same thing happens in deism. For there God's qualities flow forth from His simplicity, not the other way around. Dependence is a one way street here also. But then His qualities are like acts or results. They are not divine in themselves. If God's qualities are not divine, then His simplicity is not either. That is a *contradictio in terminis* of deism. For

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6 Apparently it is Voltaire who stated proudly that if God did not exist, then we must invent him. This statement seems to be an overemphasis of the simplicity of His rational being. A mysticist, however, overemphasizes Gods mystery as derived from an emotional approach to His alleged emanations, via which he desires to become one with God. Cf. Voltaire, *Mélanges* (Dijon: Editions Gallimard, 1961), 167.

each quality of God qualifies or characterizes His absolute deity. And His absolute deity or simplicity guarantees the divinity of all His qualities. The conclusion is that God is not really infinite or omnipotent, which is a mark of deity. In deism God is not really God. He is just a rational mind that created a rational mechanism. I would not dare state this, were it not that the Word itself talks about deity and divinity. But of course that does not imply that God is a duality. He is the ultimate mystery and at the same time there is no end to His understanding.

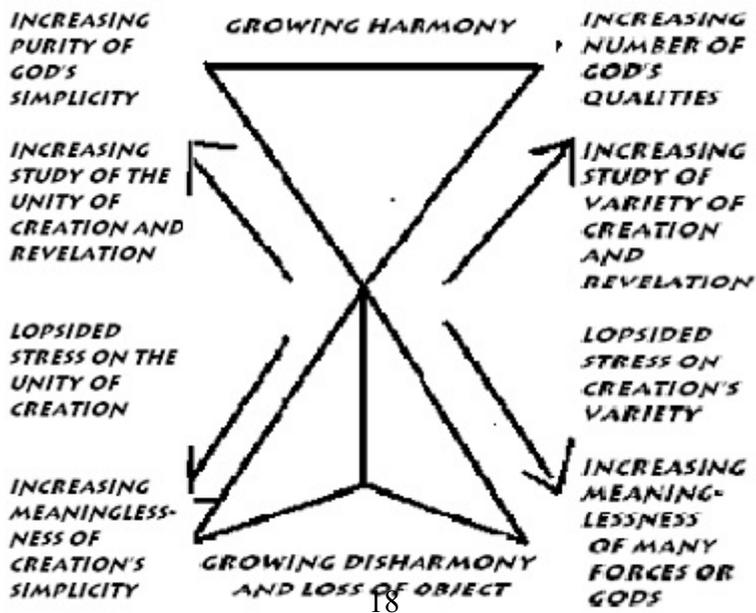
The tension in pantheism is seen in the argument that if God is part of Creation, then He is part of its imperfections, even evil. So God is also evil. To escape this tension one could make a double break with the truth and conclude that "God" is only different qualities. But then of course there is no God left at all. So polytheists have concluded that all the forces in Creation are different gods. They may still believe in a chief God like Zeus or Jupiter, who rules them all. But God's absoluteness is all torn to shreds. They are stuck in a vicious circle. There is no one God for reality consists only of different spiritual powers. Because reality consists of different powers only, there cannot be an absolute God. The worst tension arises. If there is no supreme God, then there can be no supreme solution to the conflicts of reality. Everything will remain a hopeless mess.

The two roads that lead off from the truth, by tipping the scales on either side, in the end converge into the same point of madness. I hope to make this gradually clear.

The downward pulling vortices, and their downward spiraling vicious circles, as well as their

upward spiraling virtuous circles, as the solution, are represented graphically as follows.

The upward spiraling virtuous circle moves between the two poles of simplicity and variety. The two increasingly strengthen each other. The vortices, however, pull one down off to one side. It seems that the two vortices can also unite to a certain extent. The



result is a very disharmonious dualism.

We have seen the mutually opposed sides of deism and pantheism. However both have in common that God is not omnipotent. The two extreme positions of atheism and polytheism obviously share the same identity as well, in that both deny God's existence.

There is a hidden motivation behind these four corrupted beliefs. It is the desire to create God in one's own image. By nature we do not tend to worship God's greatness. But we cannot totally get rid of Him. So we reverse the matter and imagine a God after our own understanding. It is our pride that makes us do this. We cannot stand the idea of a God towering infinitely above us. So we incorporate Him into our limited belief in order to have the (unconscious) feeling that we are in control. For to

comprehend God means that He is not above us. He is just one of the boys.

What confuses the matter is that many religions combine various elements from different positions. So Hinduism is a combination of spiritistic polytheism and mysticistic pantheism. Brahman is the ultimate oneness; all the spiritual powers are just ways to reach him. Neoplatonism (early Christian era) is a dualism in which God's rational oneness is stressed, but is combined with His pantheistic emanations in the material world.<sup>7</sup> There have been deists who did believe in God's omnipotence. However this is just a mix-up with monotheism. Many "ists" don't fully realize what their "ism" really is.

One of the strongest reasons to hold to both God's essential simplicity and His qualities is that if

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<sup>7</sup> See a good information source under these headings.

you don't, you land on a slippery slope that leads into the corrupted positions we have briefly mentioned, and will still analyze over and over again. Another reason is that the diversity of Creation (love, light, justice and so on) is necessary to show all God's qualities. The unity of Creation shows God's Oneness. If you tip the balance one side is hurt and the other blown out of proportion. But they depend equally on each other. If God is only simplicity, or mainly so, then how can He manifest the fulness of His qualities? On the other hand if He has mainly a fulness of qualities but His simplicity is not pure, then how can He be fully Himself? No matter what side you overly accentuate, in the end you lose not only the other side completely, but also the side you embraced as the ultimate truth.

The reason people have a tendency to overly accentuate one side of the truth, is that they feel a

tension between the two. This feeling is false, and caused by pride. Everything, even God, must be explained as simple as possible. Mysterious 'dualities' are incomprehensible, and that is a humbling thought. However faith can keep the balance.

Notice that I do not call God a dualism. He is not a composite of two ultimate principles. But He seems to have two sides in His manifestation, His simplicity and qualities. The back of His face is the former, the front the latter.

There is indeed a great mystery in all of this. For who can fully understand that God's love, life, light, just ire, beauty and so forth, are all one in His absolute essence? Deuteronomy 6.4 says "...The Lord our God is one Lord." And 1 Kings 8.27, "...Behold, heaven, yes, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee!" These are the two sides of God!

Having discussed briefly the relation between God and Creation, we will now look superficially at God and man. God is at once like and unlike us. The Bible says "...Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness (Gen. 1.26)," and "for I am God, and there is nobody further like me (Is. 46.9)." Again these two sides must be kept in equilibrium. However also here we have a false feeling of tension. So we start tampering with this truth. The rationalistic deist dares not reduce God outright to our limits. But He does believe that God is mainly like us.<sup>8</sup> A proud deist does not tend to say that God is an unfathomable mystery, like a mystic would. He believes that we are just as rational as God. Only God has or is pure reason, or intellect. This is the first real

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Voltaire, *op.cit.* 167, 8. According to Voltaire God must be an intelligent being as he created us as such.

break with the truth. For if God is mainly like us, where is the infinite Greatness of His Person, the divinity of His qualities? Deists have an attitude of presenting God with a cigar, and tapping Him on the shoulder for the good job He has done. But now they can do without Him. But if this is true then God is just a mad genius who has no real future for us. To solve this tension one could make a double break with the truth and conclude that God is wholly like us.<sup>9</sup> However if God is really completely like us then He is just a human being. How then can He be our Creator? Every artist transcends his composition. God doesn't? We may as well accept the extreme conclusion that

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<sup>9</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 284, says “God is man’s highest feeling of self, freed from all contrarities or disagreeables,” which is just another way of saying that the concept of God is ultimately exactly like the concept of humans.

God just does not exist. Man has invented Him in His own image. The vicious circles here are practically the same. To break out of them is nearly impossible. If God does not exist, then I am my own God. But then I carry the weight of my own world, which is way too great for me. I can only exist by living in arbitrary decisions. They become meaningless, seeing that everything ends in death. Thus a person or society ends up in the worst tension. Everything turns sweetly sour.

We started out cherishing God's likeness, but wound up losing it. At the other side the scales make the same tip of the balance towards God's unlikeness. This also is a break away from the truth. For if God is mainly unlike us, how then can we fully relate to Him? Then there will be for ever a frustrating gap between Creator and Creation, unless we or God changes. Hindus indeed say that we must shed all our

humanness.<sup>10</sup> But then why did God create us in such a way that we forever are to be alienated from Him, unless our humanness is just a coat? But what are we then? Not really human! But this is all madness. In this way we run into a maze of problems. To escape this maze one might conclude that we as well may face the music and say that God simply is the wholly other.<sup>11</sup> But if God is really completely different from us, then there is just no way we can relate to Him. How then can He be our Creator? Every artist leaves his stamp on his handiwork, God didn't? Such a God is wholly unreal. We may as well break with the truth altogether and become polytheists. Perhaps the gods can help us to become gods in our own right. But

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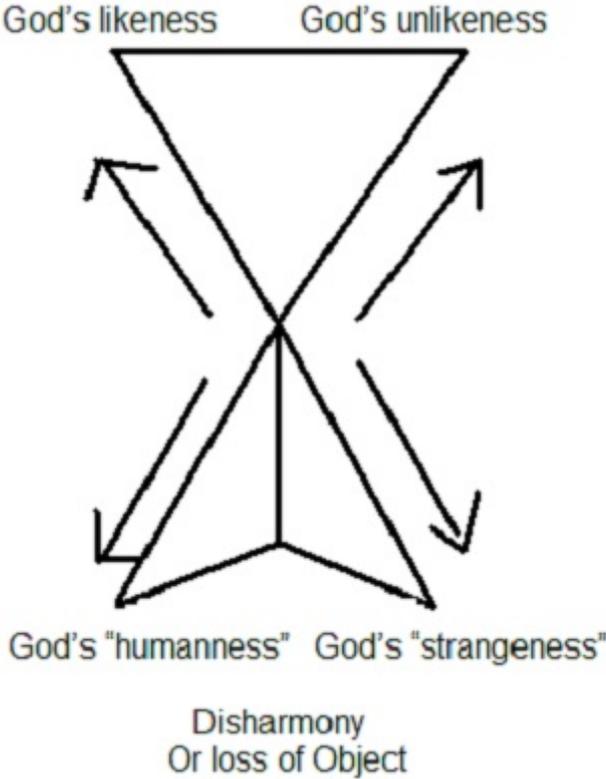
10 Robert S. Ellwood, Jr., *Many Peoples, Many Faiths* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976), 91.

11 Cf. the *theologia negativa* of the gnostic Basilides, Gilles Quispel, *Gnostic Studies* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1974), 14.

what then does it mean to be God? God is infinite, absolutely good, and altogether lovely. To be God means to be unique, absolutely unique. The “gods” are just powerful spirits. But if I can become a god, what does my power serve for? Just to feel great? But if that is the goal of life, then I will never be completely satisfied. For it is clear that not everybody can be the greatest. I just cannot be like God, if He exists. How can I escape this mess?

And also on this side the vicious circles are clear. This side of the scales converges into the same Slough of Despond. Whether we embrace God’s likeness or unlikeness, if we neglect the other side we lose even the side we embraced.

Graphically:



It seems paradoxical that the genius God of deism and the mystery God of pantheism could have something in common. However both share the same underlying identity. They are both impersonal, the one in His cold rationalism the other in His alienating mysticism. The hidden motivation behind these beliefs again is the human pride that likes to imagine God after his own liking.

Greek polytheism, because of its anthropomorphism (belief that God or the gods have a human form and/or personality), may make the matter seem confused. But that is because it is a *dualism* of the mainly like emphasis and the mainly unlike, or wholly unlike extreme.<sup>12</sup>

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12 Cf. H.J. Rose, *Religion in Greece and Rome* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 46; Wallace E. Caldwell and Mary F. Gyles, *The Ancient World* (Hinsdale: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1966), 229.

The reason that God is both like and unlike us, is that we only bear His image. This image is very reliable though. I think we not only represent His essence but also His qualities. Perhaps the word for 'image' represents God's essence. For in Hebr.1.3 Christ is said to be the image of God's Being (*hypostasis*, 'substance', 'nature', or 'essence'). In the modern Hebrew translation the same word is used here as in Gen.1:26. Of course the question is whether the word for 'image' here denotes Christ's divinity or humanity, or both. It is perhaps safest to hold to both possibilities. (But then you run into the problem why Christ, in Whom dwells all the fulness of the deity (*theotes*), is "just" called an image. I am inclined to apply this only to His humanity. In the Hebrew passage His two natures are alluded to in one breath, because they are one in His Person. Others say that the word for 'image' here means

exact representation; so that Christ as the eternal Son, as to His divinity, is the exact mirror image of His eternal Father. Perhaps this is the better exegesis).<sup>13</sup> If the word for substance denotes God's deity, then perhaps the word for 'likeness' (Gen.1:26), represents God's divinity. But this is a conjecture. It is hard, if possible at all, to get a better grip on the difference between God's deity and divinity, and the meaning of the word 'substance'. It is interesting to see that the Greek word for 'image' in Hebr. 1.3 (*character*), comes from a verb meaning 'to engrave'. If we take the liberty to apply this word to us, then we might say that man is a living statue of God. He put His artisanship into us personally. However He is also unlike us, because His essence is absolute, ours relative, and His qualities are infinite and ours finite.

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13 W.J. Ouweneel, *Wij Zien Jezus*, (Vaassen: Uitgeverij H. Medema, 1982), 24.

There is great mystery in this. Of us, unlike other creatures, in the Bible, namely animals or angels, these things are said. Therefore man has been said to be the crown of Creation, as if God has lent him the dignity to represent Him personally. Who can fathom the meaning of all this!!

Let us now zero in on God's Being. The Bible says that God is a spirit, or simply God is spirit (John.4.24). However God also has a soul (Lev. 26.11), a mind (1 Cor. 2.16; or Is.40.13) that has thoughts (Is.55.8,9), and a spiritual body; for He is seen sitting on a throne (Is.6.1), and He has a face (Mt.18.10). Other references to body parts are simply metaphors, such as in "a stretched out arm" (Ex.6.6). However the quoted verses are definitely not metaphors, or symbols. Anthropomorphism, to a point, is certainly scriptural.

As to the Isaiah (40.13) passage, the translators of the King James version might have done better to translate *ruach* ('spirit' 'wind') with 'mind'; as the Greek translation of the O.T. the so-called Septuagint, has. For the N.T. follows it in this verse. The Hebrew does not have such a pinpointing word as the philosophical Greek. The Hebrew however shows that God's soul, mind and body are all different facets of His spirit. Therefore we must not say, it seems, that God *is* a soul, mind, or, body, but that He *has* these. But He *is* (a) spirit.

In this context we will briefly disarm different proofs that people have come up with for God's existence. This is done here because they are intimately related to His being.

It is the monotheists that have tried hardest to prove God's existence, because they have the greatest love for Him. Thus Thomas Aquinas has

pointed out that there must be a first cause. For if you go back far enough in the array of causes in the universe, then you must end at the very beginning. God is this beginning. He is the *causa causans*, the causing cause of all things. The universe shows design. And just as a watch points to its intelligent maker, so the universe points to its Maker.<sup>14</sup> Good as this proof is, it is lacking. For Thomas applied it to the rational aspect of Creation only. If this would really be sufficient proof, then God is just a super mind, a great rational computer, a thinking machine.

To escape this tension one might embrace something like Epicureanism (which is a mixture of deism, atheism and polytheism). Epicurus taught that the gods have human form, and that they enjoy themselves free from sorrow, toil and any occupation

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<sup>14</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, Q 2, art. 3

with humankind. Their bodies are material, and the proof of their existence is that everybody has an impression of their blissful state.<sup>15</sup> This kind of materialism however reduces everything, God's wisdom, power, and love, to the physical level. It turns God into a fortuitous accumulation of atoms. His wisdom, love and pleasure are just atoms hitting upon atoms. If God is human, notwithstanding His happy life, then He is really nothing but mindless matter. The vicious circles on this side should be obvious.

Mysticists have claimed that God is mainly or ultimately a mystery. His mind is subject to, or taken up into His mysterious Being. Proof for His existence is the *mysterium tremendum* that we can experience in Creation. If we see a beautiful flower, or enjoy a magnificent view from a mountain, then our feelings

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15 Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* I 45, 46, 49; Lucretius *De Rerum Natura*.

become one with God.<sup>16</sup> However if this is true, then our feelings are mainly what we have, to become one with God. We will never be able to relate to Him fully rationally. Moreover if God is such, what are we? Also mainly an emotional mystery? To get out of this impasse we may claim that God is only a mystery. We must simply forsake reason as a cold calculating agency that spoils the mystery of it all. But does that mean then that God does not have a mind at all? But then He cannot even do something rational. Then His mysterious Being is just an emotional puppet that dances an irrational dance. One might break away from this and pose God as a spirit with great magical powers. Occultists have tried to use God as such.<sup>17</sup>

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16 Charles Poncé, *Kabbalah*, (Deventer: Uitgeverij Ankh Hermes, 1979), pp. 201 ff.

17 The so-called “Walk with God,” alias “Church of the Living Word” alias “True New Testament Church”, founded by John Robert Stevens is an example of magical

But if God is just an agency of magic, and we also, then what is the meaning of life? Power only? But we have already seen that that also leads to madness.

The vicious circles here are also plain. At both sides we end up in the same nightmare. On the one hand you have the extrinsic experiences of God, starting with reason and on the other hand the intrinsic experiences of God, starting with idealism and even mysticism.

The upward spiraling virtuous circle is strengthened by the poles of extrinsic and intrinsic experience, matter and reason, soul and spirit.

The paradoxical identities here are the same again. Rationalism and mysticism make God impersonal, and materialism and occultism make His

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use of the Bible (acc. to Kurt E. Koch *Okkultes ABC* ((Aglasterhausen: Die Bibel und Schriftenmission, 1984)), pp. 17-23).

Person totally meaningless. The hidden motivation is clear as well. We like to imagine God after our own fancy.

However God's spiritual Being, and His soul, mind and body must all be kept in equilibrium. The atheist says that God is just the Big Bang, but He is more than that.<sup>18</sup> The Creation of the material universe does indeed show incredible physical energy being formed by God. Feuerbach said that God is just a chemical projection in our mind.<sup>19</sup> But indeed He is a lot more than that. The Rationalist claims that God is one pure act(uality) of intelligence.<sup>20</sup> And indeed

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18 Cf. Jastrow, op. cit. , pp. 115-20, and Timothy Ferris, *Galaxies*, (Rexdale: John Wiley & Sons, n.d.), pp.4,5, 161, 4, 7.,

19 Hans Küng, *Does God Exist?* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1980), 200.

20 Aquinas, op. cit., I, Q, 14, art. 2.

God does not have ordered trains of thoughts. He does not think discursively (having different subjects in succession). His mind contains eternity past, the present and eternity future, in one pure mental act. But He is more.

The mysticist claims that God is the ultimate mystery.<sup>21</sup> But He is more than that. The occultist vows by spiritual power.<sup>22</sup> But God is more than that. Take them altogether and *voila* you hold a picture of God that makes a lot more sense. Practically God is the source of all the physical energy in the entire universe. Rationally all the intellectual laws are established in Him. Mystically God gives us the purest

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21 Consult a good information source on 'mysticism' and read books like by Ruusbroec or other mystics, *Neemt hier Exempel an* (Utrecht: Uitgeverij het Spectrum BV, 1973), pp. 223 ff.

22 Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1985), 47.

feelings. Spiritually God is the source of all spiritual powers, which are all subject to Him.

To try to prove God by means of one aspect of Creation causes nothing but lopsidedness. In the end you lose the very thing you started to favor so much. The beauty of the human body points to a great Artist. The Rational laws in Creation point to a great mind. The *mysterium tremendum* experienced in bright moments of emotion point to a great Mystery. The spiritual power of angels and demons, yogi and magicians, points to a great spirit. What makes the God of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas somewhat deistic is that these great rational theologians have overly accentuated God's mind. They did this after the example of Aristotle and Plato. However such a God becomes cold in His impersonal, unemotional greatness. All God's aspects must be kept in balance.

There is indeed a great mystery in all this. Anselm said, “*Deus est id quod nihil maius cogitari potest*”.<sup>23</sup> “God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived”. Such is God indeed. I would like to paraphrase on Anselm’s definition. I would like to describe God as follows. ‘He is not simply infinite. He is infinite in infinitudes! And each infinitude is infinite in details, and each detail infinite in hues, and each hue infinite in intensity, and each intensely infinite in richness, and so *ad infinitum*! However the Bible itself states that “God is Love” and “God is Light” and “God is Life!” (1 John).

### *God’s Qualities*

God’s qualities are part of His Being. They are not a possession as in the case of a man that has

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23 Wippel, op.cit. p.169.

acquired the quality of trading. So the Bible says that God is love (1 John 4.8), not that He has love. All God's qualities reflect each other. So God's glory is infinite in love, beauty, justice, goodness, and so on. His love is infinite in glory, beauty, goodness, justice, and so forth. In this way they also keep each other in perfect balance. God's qualities are seen in the diversity of His acts, His simplicity in their unity.

As to His qualities being in balance, I give only the example of His love and justice. Some deists have claimed that God is mainly love. Everything will pan out well in the end for everybody, even for the devil.<sup>24</sup>

24 Certain liberal theologians seem to be a bit deistic in their universalism (salvation of all). See for comparison: Stanley N. Gundry and Alan F. Johnson, eds., *Tensions in Contemporary Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), p. 39. This kind of universalism seems deistic, because it is based on the reasoning that God simply cannot condemn to hell (as if He is bound by some kind of determinism), or that, since Christ died for the entire world, everybody will be saved eventually. Of course this turns God in some kind of Santa

However this does damage to God's justice. For if a person absolutely rejects God, then he will have to bear the consequences of that decision. Moreover if God is mainly love, why then does He allow all the trouble in the world? Deists try to answer that question by posing God's finite power. He is just not able to help us any better. However such a God is as guilty as He is mad. To break from this vicious circle atheistic hippies have declared that "love" is God. "Let love reign supreme for it will solve all our problems."<sup>25</sup>

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Claus. This is different from Hindu universalism. For the Hindu has to pay hard for his bad *karma* in the nearly endless cycle of reincarnation.

25 Cf. J. L. Simmons and Barry Winegrad, *It's Happening*, (Santa Barbara: Marc-Laird Publications, 1967), pp. 6, 7; Reginald G. Smart and David Jackson, *The Yorkville Subculture*, (n.p.: Addiction Research Foundation, 1969), p. 30. It is true that many hippies had leanings towards pantheism, but their view of love was generally hedonistic, rather than mysticistic.

This kind of naiveté, however, ran into a wall of naked reality. And many, if not all, hippies were most disappointed in their own weakness to really love, and that always. On the other side of the balance there have been pantheists that have claimed that God is mainly justice or moral virtue. For them love was only living righteously. Tender affections were mawkish sentimentalities not to say weaknesses of the flesh that indulge in evil.<sup>26</sup> This clearly damages God's love. He created all the nerve endings in our bodies to experience sexual affections. Is it justice to say that sex is only for procreation? Such a God is as sadistic as He is schizophrenic. To break from this *circulus vitiosus* one may claim that God is only justice. Certain Buddhists frown upon love and hate as

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26 Hans Joachim Störig, *Geschiedenis van de Filosofie*, (Utrecht: Uitgeverij het Spectrum, 1979), pp.181 ff.

unwise eructations, that must totally be snuffed out. Only the self-purifying process of the wheel of incarnation must be lived for. In the end we will be totally pure, and enter Nirvana, the state of total nothingness, where we are one with Brahman, the all spirit.<sup>27</sup> Such a belief is a sure kill-all of all reasons to live for. And indeed certain gurus become so

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27 Gottfried Mai, *Buddha*, (Berneck: Schwengeler-Verlag, 1985), pp.109,10. Also here I am implying a pattern. Atheism tends to idolize the material body, so it is naturally saddled by hedonism. Hinduism and Buddhism tend to idolize the spiritual, so it is saddled by asceticism. Deism condones sinful thoughts, as reason tells us that we cannot be perfect. Mysticism, since it is usually a feeling philosophy, seeks the purity of the soul. Exceptions confirm the rule. Tantric yoga seems very hedonistic, but is really spiritistic. See e.g. Reay Tannatrill, *Sex in History*, (New York: Stein and Day, 1980), pp.223-28. The mystic pantheism of Toland and Rousset is rather hippylike, but it also seeks serenity of soul. See Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), pp. 229, 30.

incapable of living, through their altered state of consciousness, that they must be cleaned like babies, literally.<sup>28</sup> They are revered as gods nonetheless. However India is becoming increasingly aware of the trouble this sort of thing generates.<sup>29</sup> The vicious circles and their virtuous solution should be clear here, as are the paradoxical identities and hidden motivations behind these beliefs. God's Love and justice, as well as all His other qualities must be perfectly balanced. If you run away with one, you get into a nasty lopsidedness.

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28 Rabindranath R. Maharaj, *Der Tod Eines Guru*, (Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler-Verlag, 1987), p.13

29 Cf. Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation*, (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, Inc., 1970), p. 10; M.J. Akbar, *India: The Siege Within*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985), p.108.

The mystery in this is that humanly speaking love and justice do not mix. However God's love is perfectly just, and His justice is perfect love.

### *God and Creation*

Some of God's qualities are discussed here, as they must be kept in balance by His ability to act in time. So God can change His acts and attitude, even though His Being is unchangeable. He can change His emotional response towards us, even though His being is changeless. He can act in time, even though He Himself is timeless. He can be immanent in all things, even though He transcends Creation infinitely. God is able to do this because He is a divine Person. An impersonal force does not have ideas and cannot steer information. If God were a pantheistic force simply then He could never control Himself, let alone

Creation. For a force is always controlled by a higher power. For instance man has power over electricity, nuclear energy, and so on. An impersonal force is meaningless in itself. It receives its purpose from the power that controls it. If God were just a force then the future will be forever left to chance, and so there can be no hope for order, peace and perfection. Moreover if humans are persons, wouldn't God be? He would still be able to communicate with us, and certainly love us.

God is absolutely perfect, Creation was relatively perfect when God made it. The difference is that God is perfect to the infinite degree. Creation was made perfect, but there was room to grow, just as a baby could be called perfect, and at each stage afterwards in its development. God is infinite, Creation

is finite. God is unchangeable, Creation changes.<sup>30</sup>  
God is timeless, Creation is temporal.

What does it mean, that God is infinite and Creation finite? In order to understand God's greatness, we must get a grip on the meaning of infinitude. It is certainly not simply an indefinite prolongation, elaboration or extrapolation of the properties of creatures or Creation in general. Creation can be expressed in numbers. So there must be a smallest particle and a biggest star. There is no such thing as a really infinitesimal particle, or an

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<sup>30</sup> Aquinas, *op. cit.*, I, Q 9, Art. 2; Gundy *op. cit.* pp. 257,8.

infinite number of stars.<sup>31</sup> Numbers are always definite. A specific number therefore can never be infinite. There is no such thing, then, as an infinite number. God, however, cannot be given a number. His strength, beauty and other qualities transcend all numbers. Ours are finite, and measurable for God. Infinitude actually is a poor concept for God. For it denotes endlessness. But God is not like a line. Yet Paul speaks of the length, breadth, and depth of Christ's Love (Eph.3.18,19). We simply have no other way to talk about God. For we know nothing that is

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31 Einstein did not seem to be aware of this, whereas Newton and Aquinas apparently were. See Albert Einstein, *The Theory of Relativity*, (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1918), pp. 105,6; Isaac Newton, *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 586; Aquinas, op. cit. I, Q 7, Art. 2-4; Kepler and Aristotle did not believe in an infinite universe either. See J. V. Field, *Kepler's Geometrical Cosmology*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 17, 18.

infinite but the imagined idea of an endless space as in a line, for example.

The matter however is not as simple as this. For the infinite Creator can create something that is finite for Him, for He is absolutely infinite, but infinite for us! Our finite conscious minds will never totally grasp the relative infinity of Creation. Creation is relatively infinite (relatively, because related to God it is finite, but related to us it is infinite), and as such it is a worthy handiwork of the infinite Creator. God's absolute infinity transcends the relative infinity of Creation infinitely. That one infinity transcends another is known from mathematics. The set of positive integers  $\{0, 1, 2, 3, \dots, \infty\}$  is a smaller set than the one that includes both positive and negative integers  $\{\infty, \dots, -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots, \infty\}$ .

These considerations are important, for we can infer from them that creatures, even mighty angels,

will never fully understand Creation, not even if it is studied for an eternity. For the relative infinity of Creation always transcends the creature's finite mind. This also means that we, humans, transcend our conscious minds with a relative infinity. Our conscious minds will never fully come to terms with ourselves as a creature. There are always deeper things to probe after. Then our mind will grow for all eternity, without reaching a point at which it can say, "Now I understand Creation and myself fully." And of course we will never be able to say that of the Almighty. Then eternity will never be boring, as we will never run out of material to praise God Himself for Himself and for His works.

That Creation is relatively infinite can even be seen in an irrational number such as  $\sqrt{18}$ . Your mind can never hope to grasp an irrational number fully, yet God can! I personally wouldn't call such numbers

“irrational”, they are suprarational. For who can grasp their non terminating nonperiodic decimals and work with them perfectly!

The Bible teaches that God is changeless. Mal. 3.6 says, “....I change not....”, James 1.17, “....with Whom there is no change or shadow of turning....”, Hebr. 13.8, “.... Christ is yesterday and today the same, and forever.....”. Philosophically this makes sense as Thomas Aquinas adequately explained.<sup>32</sup> According to him God is pure actuality. Now anything that changes passes from a potential state (in which change is possible) to a state of actuality (in which the change has been actualized). However in God there can be no potential state, for then He could not be fully God. Moreover anything that changes consists of

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<sup>32</sup> Aquinas. op.,cit, I, O 9, art.2; Gundry, op.,cit.,pp.257,8.

something that changes and something that does not. The latter thing guarantees the continuation of the former, else there is no question of change but of annihilation and recreation. However God is not a composite being, as if He were the sum of His parts like a car. He is absolutely simple. Also anything that changes takes on something new. However God is absolutely perfect. For these reasons God is absolutely immutable. From this follows also that God is timeless. For anything that changes goes through a series of temporal states. For time is a concomitant of Creation. God created time. Therefore He is timeless, or eternal. This is the meaning of Gen. 21.33, "...eternal God...", and Ps. 90.2, "...from eternity to eternity Thou art God."

However the qualities of God's Being must be kept in balance by His ability to change His acts, and to do them in time. It is not God's mood that changes,

as if God has moods like we do, but He can change His relation, or attitude to us. So it says in Gen. 6.6, “And YHWH regretted that He had made man upon the earth, and it grieved Him at heart.” What we have here is a metaphor to denote a shift in a relation between God and man. For God, who is omniscient, foreknew this anyway. So He did not regret as having an afterthought.

God then is pure actuality living in a timeless, eternal now. All things of the past, present and future are fully transparent for Him. Yet God is capable of relative, changeable and finite acts in time. So the Creation of the garden of Eden is an act of a relative infinity of love, in comparison with the absolutely infinite love manifested on the cross. God’s acts can change, for the time of grace is different from the time of Moses’ law and the new heaven and earth of Revelation is different from the present. God’s acts

are usually, relatively infinite, whereas He is invariably absolutely infinite. These two sides of the truth must be kept in balance. Let us see what happens when people start tampering with them. And they do that, as said before, because of a false feeling of tension, which true faith does not feel. It is because the proud mind wants to force an explanation that rationalizes the mystery of God, and His works away.

So in the deism of Isaac Newton time and space are absolute. The universe is some kind of absolute mechanism that does not deviate from its course fixed by God. The result of such a belief is that everything in the universe is considered to be determined by absolute laws. Miracles and indeed any measure of freedom are impossible here.<sup>33</sup> It is a mark of deism to overly accentuate the rational character of the

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32 Frank E. Manuel, *The Religion of Isaac Newton*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 66.

universe, to the point of making it as absolute as God. However deism is not just Isaac Newton's unitarian rationalism, but deism is really any kind of overaccentuation of matter, also Einstein's. So the notion of substance in Roman Catholic Scholasticism could perhaps be called a form of deism, for it seems to accord too much independence to matter.

At any rate modern science, even though it still bestows a certain deistic independence on the universe, has unnerved the mechanistic view of Newton. Einstein's relativity theory and modern physics teach differently. So modern physics has shown that the life of radium atoms cannot be explained by any known physical mechanism, electricity, magnetism or any of the other forces. There is no explanation why one radium atom lives

longer than the other.<sup>34</sup> Then, black holes (stars that cave in under their own gravity, and become so dense that not even light can escape) present a horizon event where the laws of time and matter seem to end.<sup>35</sup>

If God really created the world as an absolute mechanism then the conclusion is inescapable that humans are just machines determined by its fixed laws. To escape this tension one might claim that the universe is eternal. However if matter is eternal, and God does not exist, then we land from the frying pan into the fire. Our emotions would be nothing but nonsensical chemical reactions.

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33 Alexander Seibel, *Relativitätstheorie und Bibel* (Wuppertal: Verlag und Schriftenmission der Evangelischen Gesellschaft, 1985). Pp 7 ff.

34 A.E. Wilder-Smith, *A Basis for a New Biology* (Ulm: J. Ebner, 1976) pp. 142 ff.

Where deism elevates the universe, there pantheism degrades God. So at the other side of the scales there is panentheism (everything is in God). Panentheism is really a form of relativistic pantheism (God as the principle power that penetrates the relative universe). According to this philosophy God is bipolar. One side of Him is actual, eternal, changeless, and absolute, the other side is potential, temporal, changeable, and relative.<sup>35 36</sup> However this would make God and Creation look like siamese twins. God however is absolutely separate from Creation. Creation is fully dependent on God, not one with Him, or one side of Him. If God were bipolar then one side of His Being would be creaturely. But if God is not infinite, perfect and so on, but partially finite,

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas *op. cit.*

<sup>36</sup> Gundry, *op. Cit.*, p:279,80

imperfect, changeable, subject to time, and not at all omnipotent, then how could He be fully in control? Such a God is tied down with one hand behind His back. Moreover the idea of a bipolar God both immutable and mutable, defies all logic. It is nonsense, and irrational emotionalism. For how could  $A=1$  be simultaneously  $A \neq 1$ ? Panentheists scornfully label the God of traditional monotheism as static, and therefore unable to interact with Creation, or unable to create in the first place. However God is not static, but dynamic. Panentheism turns Him into a finite, imperfect, uncompleted, shackled cripple. However who but a totally, yes absolutely free Being can hold any hope for us?

To escape this tension one might conclude that God is simply the same as the world. We have already seen into what kind of a vortex this leads us. For He would be part of evil. One may as well

become a polytheist. Indeed panentheism also makes God part of evil, for an imperfect God cannot create a perfect world, not even a relatively perfect world.

Also here, on both sides of the scales, we are led into the same convergence of madness. The vicious circles are obvious, as well as their virtuous solution. The more we understand, the greater the harmony between God's absolute Being and His relative acts in time.

On the extrinsic side of deism and atheism (rationalism and materialism), Creation is lifted up toward God. On the intrinsic side of pantheism and polytheism (mysticism and occultism) God is dragged down. The paradoxical identity of both sides is that Creation is deified; in the first case by making the world like God, in the second case by making God like the world.

It should be clear then that the idea of God's absoluteness be maintained, as well as the notion of His acting in time. He that created all things, even time, can communicate with temporal beings. For if we start tinkering with God or with Creation then we will end up losing both. We must remain satisfied that this is simply too great a mystery to fathom.

Let us now discuss briefly God's omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. These three must be balanced by His transcendence and immanence (the former of which is too much stressed in deism, the latter in pantheism). The following trick question seems to refute these divine qualities. "Can God make a stone so big that He cannot lift it up anymore!?" Whether you answer in the affirmative or in the negative, in both cases it seems that God is not omnipotent. Yet the right answer is -----no! God who has created the entire universe with all its

gravitational harmony, within and between the galaxies, cannot make a stone so big that He is unable to lift it up! It is because all His powers are infinite. The power to create is absolutely infinite, as well as the power to move. Thus no matter how great the stone or planet, God can always move it. This question then is unmasked by seeing that all God's powers are equally infinite. The one is not greater than the other. It is a pity to see unbelievers use such sophistry to refute God, who with one word could fill the entire infinity of space with solid matter! Then indeed no movement would be possible anymore, only materially speaking. But then, God's omnipotence does not depend on such a hypothetical case.

The reason that God's powers of performing, knowing and presence are balanced by His transcendence and immanence, is the same as the

balance of His absolute Being, divine qualities and His usually relative, finite, and changeable acts. If you overly accentuate God's transcendence, as in deism, then God cannot be perfectly immanent. In pantheism it is the other way around. In both cases His omnipotence is belittled.

God's omnipotence is also balanced by the following pair. God can do everything that is like Him, and nothing that is unlike Him. So there are deists that define God's omnipotence as His capability to do anything that is within the limits of His power. But His power is limited.<sup>37</sup> However such a God is an irresponsible daredevil, a mad gambler that hopes the throw of his dice will break the jackpot. To escape this dilemma others have defined God's omnipotence as

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37 J.A.Leo Lemay, ed., *Deism, Masonry, and the Enlightenment* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), 100.

the power to do anything He wants, and to want only what He is capable of.<sup>38</sup> But in that case God is just a human. The vicious circles on this side are obvious. They all turn around God's being capable of all that is like him. The lack lies in *who* God is, and *what* is like Him.

On the other side of the balance there is the pantheistic notion that God is capable of all things that are absolutely possible,<sup>39</sup> However sin is also absolutely possible. But if God is capable of sin, then

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38 H. van Praag, *Paranormaal Bewustzijn*, (Amsterdam: H. Meulenhoff, 1979), 31. In the same passage Praag quotes Rousseau. "L'Homme vraiment libre ne veut ce qu'il peut et peut tout ce qu'il veut." According to this definition God is but an ideal human.

39 Cf. A. Farges and D. Barbedette, *Cours de Philosophie Scolastique* (Paris: Berche et Tralin, 1920) 348,9. The monotheist writers of this course did not realize that their definition of God's omnipotence implied pantheism.

He is schizophrenic. Certain mysticists actually believed that God even created sin in order to purify their souls or spirits; or at least this is what their belief implies, for God sent their spirits into the sinful material world in order to long back all the more for the heavenly bliss.<sup>40</sup> At any rate there have been sects that believed that God created both good and sin. This is really pantheism.<sup>41</sup> Worse is the definition that omnipotence is the capacity to make absolutely all things possible. It would not only make sin possible in God, but also it would mean that God could create beings that are clones of Himself. Certain gnostics more or less believed this. This clearly is a form of polytheism.

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<sup>40</sup>Cf. Augustus, *De Anima et eius Origine*, Lib. III (Parisiis: Apud Paul Mellier, Bibliopolan, 1842), IX-XI, p.351,2

<sup>41</sup> Quispel, op.cit., p.18

The best definition therefore is that God is capable of everything that is like Him, and of nothing that is unlike Him. What is like Him includes all His divine qualities, what is unlike Him includes anything that is sinful.

As to God's omniscience and omnipresence, they must be, as said, balanced by His transcendence and immanence. In certain forms of deism God is so transcendent that He does not know, or care about tiny humans on planet earth.<sup>42</sup> In certain types of pantheism God is so immanent that He knows everything that is going on, but He cannot transcend infinitely above it. So He cannot freely consider all future possibilities, let alone steer them.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Cf. Epicureanism.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. forms of absolutistic monistic pantheism.

In some forms of deism God only wants to know what He can know, and He can only know what He wants to know.<sup>44</sup> You and I are types of this kind of God! In certain types of polytheism, as well as certain types of pantheism, God, or the gods know the “mysterious” behind-the-scenes link between good and evil. Good and evil here are dualistic principles part of God’s or the gods’ nature.<sup>45</sup>

There is a great mystery in all this. For if God knows all things, then one might conclude that all eternity has been determined. However the Bible makes clear that humans and angels have their own responsibility, which is really fully their own. Therefore

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<sup>44</sup>Praag, op. cit., p. 31

<sup>45</sup>See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 228 and passim. The pattern implies here that in monism God knows evil “so well” that He is in a hidden harmony with it. This of course would taint Him.

God does not determine our course as if we were robots. God's omniscience does not derive from determinism, but from His spiritual Being that lives in a timeless now. He does not just foreknow all things. He really knows them as it were at a single glance. God's eternal now is of a spiritual nature. This is all a great mystery indeed!

Let us now take a closer look at God's transcendence and immanence. In deism God is mainly transcendent, that is, He is in His own place.<sup>46</sup> Jehovah's witnesses believe this also, by the way.<sup>47</sup> However if God is mainly or only transcendent then how can He hear our prayers or read our thoughts? Such a God is clearly limited in His power. In atheism

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<sup>46</sup> Cicero, op. Cit., I 48,6,49.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. *Reasoning from the Scriptures* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1985), pp. 161ff.

god is nowhere, or “God” is simply the physico-mathematical law that explains all other laws.

In pantheism God is in all things, or is all things. This clearly makes Him schizophrenic. For He would also be in, or be part of somebody’s fatal cancer. In polytheism there is not one God, but two, three or many, who are everywhere.

The truth however, is that God is in all things by His power, in that all things are subject to it; by His presence in that all things are transparent for Him; and by His divine Being in that all the things are upheld by Him constantly. (See respectively Hebr.2.8, 4.13, 1.3). This is God’s immanence. His transcendence means that He thrones infinitely above Creation. If these two sides are not held in perfect balance, then nothing makes sense. The two sides are not complementary, that would make God a dualism; they are two sides of the same Being, and

that makes Him a duality. It is a mystery faith is glad to be content with!

For your interest and information I would like to add a few things to this section on God and Creation. Certain fantasists have played with the idea of going back in time. Could God undo the past? Since He is omnipotent I suppose He could. The universe lives by His grace, and therefore He could simply annihilate all things or undo them partially. In the Bible even a case is recorded of the sun going backwards. However even though time and space are relative things, the time order has an absolute character, because the order of temporal events is subject to God's will, which is absolute. Clearly God cannot undo Himself, He would make a mockery both of Himself and of us. This does not make the universe absolute, as in deism, but the relative universe is upheld by an absolute Being. Perhaps one could say that the

universe is indirectly absolute. Therefore the idea of a time machine is the height of folly. It is an insult to both God and man. For the Work of Christ on the Cross is an absolute event, it can never be undone. The idea of a time machine would contradict that, at least in part.

John Kepler, the well known scientist, claimed that geometry is eternal, that it existed from all eternity, before Creation, in God's mind.<sup>48</sup> In this way one could idolize mathematics, logic, language, ethics and so on. For instance one could say:

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48 Johannes Kepler, *Weltharmonie* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1982 ), p. 98, 214, 289. Obviously geometry was idolized from times immemorial. The philosopher Elias reports (In *Arestotelis Categorias Commentaria*, 118.18) that the following warning was affixed on Plato's house, "Let nobody ignorant of geometry enter". There is a well known Platonic saying that runs, "God is always applying geometry;" see Kepler, op.cit.p.385.

“Unlike matter the laws of mathematics were never created. They are part of God’s mind and He uses them to regulate the universe, and indeed used them to create it. Mathematics therefore is divine. Although we cannot say that God is mathematics, as Scripture says that He is love, we might say, with all caution and reverence, that mathematics is part of God. For  $1+1+1=3$  *must* have been true from all eternity not just since Creation. Mathematic in eternity past was one of the basic carriers of God’s thoughts. On them was drawn up that grand edition-----the universe!”

It is true that all things, and indeed all future eternity, has been in God’s mind from all eternity. Humanly speaking this is foreknowledge (A poor concept as I explained already). Thus also mathematics has been in God’s mind from all eternity.

However if mathematics (or geometry or any other thing ), is part of God's eternal mind, then God does not transcend mathematics. Math, however is part of Creation. It could be said, perhaps, to transcend matter, which it seems to govern. If math is part of God, then God becomes again the sum of His qualities. If math is divine, like God's love, then God *is* math. But this is all madness.

The hidden motivation behind all this is that humans want to have something as tangible as possible in order to worship it. If geometry is eternal and divine then John Kepler can lay his hands on it, cherish and hold it. However the divine is infinitely transcendent above all things.

The desire to worship some things tangible or intangible, is really the desire to worship oneself. For both matter and abstract things are part of ourselves. John Kepler unconsciously wanted to feel divine. This

is behind all the corrupted beliefs. Newton's absolute universe makes him as rational as God. Marx's materialism makes him as free as God. Plato's pantheism makes him as mysterious as God. And the occultist's polytheism makes him as magical as the gods. What a tragic parody, what a melodramatic play, and also what a silly comedy we humans stage in this sublunar vale of tears! Knowledge leads to sorrow indeed.....

Aristotle, the well known Greek philosopher, thought that matter is eternal.<sup>49</sup> This kind of dualism however clearly is God dishonoring. Only God is eternal. How could something impersonal and lifeless as matter be eternal? Moreover if this were true then God is not uniquely God, that is existing in solitary greatness. Matter would be an equal principle, divine

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See Aristotle, *Physics*, 192a, 252b; *On the Heavens*, I 10-12.

and self-existing. This is really *ditheism*. If there are two Gods from all eternity, fully existing in themselves, then how can there ever be full harmony in the universe? Because of this belief, moreover, ancient philosophers came to regard matter as something degrading and worthless, something evil.<sup>50</sup> “*Soma sema*,” they said, “The body is a tomb.”<sup>51</sup> However matter is a glorious Creation of God.

Tertullian, one of the Church’s first great thinkers, thought that God is a form of very fine matter, as already mentioned. He adopted his view from the Stoic pantheists. However how can matter create more matter? Matter is something that “simply” is

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51 Russell, *The Devil*, op.cit.pp.147ff; Plotinus, *Enneads*, I 8 (chps.1-5); II 4 ( ch.16).

51 Russell, *The Devil*, op.cit.,p.235. Cf. David B. Claus, *Toward the soul* ( New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 112,18.

there, it cannot produce more matter. For matter in itself has no life.

What about pantheists that believed that matter is one of the lowest emanations of God, reason, the *logos*, being the highest?<sup>52</sup> Just like a spider produces a web, so God produced the world. This means that the world was hidden in God. Matter however is something visible, it cannot at all exist in an invisible state. If the universe is an evolution, not a Creation, then it somehow existed in God as part of Him. This again makes God the sum of His parts, and it implies that the universe is divine. We have already seen that this makes God the author of sin.

There are further many other forms of deism, pantheism, atheism and polytheism, as well as

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52 Russell, *The Devil*, op. Cit., 164,5; Plotinus, *Enneads*, I8 (ch. 7,17-23). Of course the idea that matter is the cause of moral evil is a copout and convenient scapegoat for the mind of human sinfulness.

dualistic cross philosophies of these. Scholars have come up with terms like acosmism (matter is an illusion, only spiritual ideas exist), absolutistic pantheism (the world is absolute, God relative) relativistic pantheism (vice versa), immanentistic and hylozoistic pantheism. But all these scholarly analyses go beyond the scope of this book. The most important thing is that we have caught the gist and marrow of these things from their theological perspective.

### *Good and Evil*

The question of good and evil is intimately linked with God's and man's nature, as is to be expected. We have seen that God is a spirit who has a spiritual soul, mind, and body. Man is a living soul that has a

spirit, mind and body, but the body is material. From these come four aspects.<sup>53</sup>

The mystic says, "God is good because He truly loves us. Only His love is far higher than ours." However this kind of emotionalism is bound to run dry. We cannot be high on God all the time as if He were dope. Our spirits must lift us up regularly and our mind must give us reason. If we try to live on emotions only then we will soon find out that we lose heart. For what will we say if sorrow upon sorrow hits us. That God has lost His love? To escape from such an impasse one might embrace fideism (spiritual faith only). However fideism by itself is a dry, emotionless,

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53 Take note that mysticism is almost always pantheistic (see Thomas McFarland, *Coleridge and the pantheist Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 130. So materialism tends to be atheistic (cf. S. Paul Schilling, *God in an Age of Atheism* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1969). So rationalism tends to be deistic, and occultism polytheistic.

impractical, though suprarational attitude towards God. To withdraw into an ivory tower of adamant faith is escapism. Our bodies, minds and emotional souls must participate in the flights of the spirit. If we do not see a practical purpose, or rational explanation, we must still believe though that God does. Paul says that, "...all things combine to work for the good of those that love God (Rom.8:28) ..." This is divine purpose in the practice of our daily lives. To say in a fideistic manner that God simply is good, no matter what He allows or does, is bound to let our heads bang into a wall of concrete reality.

On the other side of the balance there is the rational attitude that God is good because He has a rational reason for everything. However if we bank on rationalism too much then we will soon run out of reasons to believe in God's goodness. Our minds cannot grasp everything, not by far. If we demand

complete rational understanding, we are really trying to reduce God's mind to ours. To escape the tension of rationalism one might embrace some kind of pragmatism. "God is good because everything serves a practical (material) purpose." Now pragmatism is very practical, but to try to find it in every event is also an impossibility. If you make yourself too dependent on material practicality, then you are really trying to make God the slave of your pleasures. However the Bible says, "As heaven is higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts (Is. 55.9). "

Therefore we must combine material practicality, reason, emotion and spiritual strength in order to lay a good foundation for our faith. All four together can help us to cling to God. If we rely on reason only we will end up concluding with the deists that God just is not able to help us any better, or that He simply does not

care about us. For if He were almighty He would not allow anything to go wrong. However we have already judged that such a God is a mad genius. If He is almighty but does not care about us, that makes even less sense. For what kind of a God is it that first creates us only to subsequently abandon us? Both forms of deism really imply that God is guilty, one way or another. But it is clear that if we are at the mercy of a psychopathic God that there is no hope for us at all. We had better become atheists then. However then we land in the following vicious vortex. For if there is no God, then the world was made by chance. But chance will destroy us in the end again. Atheism offers

even less hope.<sup>54</sup> Whereas deism is a break away from the truth, atheism is a triple break; agnosticism and materialism being a double break. Whereas the deist more or less still believes that good and evil are absolute things,<sup>55</sup> the atheist considers them relative.<sup>56</sup> Good is simply that which serves practical purposes.

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54 Patrick Masterson, *Atheism and Alienation: A Study of the Philosophical Sources of Contemporary Atheism* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971), 154. Masterson writes, “What atheism requires of a man today is that he consciously live out a fully and exclusively human life without an ultimate hope.”

55 Cf. Lemay, op. cit., pp.37 ff.

56 Bertrand Russell, *Why I am Not a Christian* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1964), p. 49 and passim. Russell clearly gives the impression of an ethical relativist. Cf. Spinoza’s claim that before God created, He was neither good nor evil. His goodness is relative to Creation. Edwin Curley, ed. and transl., *The Collected Work of Spinoza* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 314 (I/248).

In nihilism there is even no difference between good and evil.<sup>57</sup> And in some forms of existentialism good and evil are ignored or declared non-existent.<sup>58</sup> Many atheists reason that evil does not exist in us, but it is the system that is rotten.<sup>59</sup> However if we are so

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57 Cf. Ernst Benz, *Westlicher und Östlicher Nihilismus* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk G.M.B.H.,(no date)), 31,2. According to Nietzsche (Neske: Verlag Günther, 1961), pp.272 ff. The Übermensch, or “superman”, in his will to power, is allowed to set morality aside. Cf. Ofelia Schutte, *Beyond Nihilism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp.117 ff. See also Karl Jaspers, *Nietzsche*, (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1969), pp.139 ff. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, I,II,LVI,8,9

58 Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 123; Vincent P. Miceli, S.J., *The God's of Atheism* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1971), 224

59 This can be inferred from reading between the lines in sociology books. Cf. Peter L. Berger, *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963), chps. 5,7; Howard M. Shapiro and Robert Gliner, eds., *Human Perspectives:*

good, why then did we create a rotten system? If we are innocent, then our forefathers are sinful who made the system. But if they were sinful, why aren't we? Clearly this is a contradiction in terms.

On the intrinsic side of the scales a similar glide into despair takes place. If we overly accentuate the mysterious and emotional side of God's love, we are likely to wind up saying with pantheists that there is some kind of hidden, mysterious link between good and evil, or good and sin.<sup>60</sup> For clearly if the world

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*Introductory Readings for Sociology* (New York: The Free Press, 1972), 277. This is also apparent in the works of the father of sociology. See Auguste Comte *Cours de Philosophie Positive, systeme de Politique Positive* (Paris: Éditions Authropos Paris, 1970), vols. IV-X; cf. vol. IX, pp. 459 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Troy Wilson Organ, *Hinduism: Its Historical Development* (Woodbury: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1974), pp. 108 ff. In Hinduism Brahman is all things-- --gods, matter, spirit, good and evil. All contradictions are incorporated in him. However he is not worshiped for he is totally unknowable. According to Alan Watts good and evil are only conceptual distinctions. They merit no real status. This is mysticism which reduced the spiritual ideas

emanated out of God, rather than was created by Him, then we have inherited the problem of evil from Him. God and evil ultimately must form a secret ununderstandable harmony in Him. Somehow evil, yes sin, must be necessary, and somehow God knows how it all adds up in Himself. However if this is true then it must be argued that God is schizophrenic. There is no hope in an equivocal and labile madman. We cannot expect any kind of stability from a dualistic God. This kind of pantheism is emotional escapism, childish naivete. God cannot be partially evil, for good and evil are absolute things, infinitely more irreconcilable than fire and water. To escape from this tension one might embrace the following kind of spiritism. There have been polytheists that have claimed that good and evil are just human concepts, and ignorant at that. Good and evil are chimerical appearances, illusions really, caused by the mirror

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of good and evil to the level of the intellect, claiming that (mystical) truth goes beyond it. See David K. Clark, *The Pantheism of Alan Watts* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978) , 25. See also Russell, *The Devil*, op. cit., pp.145,161,8; 177, 228

play of empty phenomena. God or the gods are neutral, they are altogether beyond good and evil.<sup>61</sup> But if this is really true then it just does not make any difference whether somebody kills his wife, or honors her. Here we can see that philosophy is truly *ancilla theologiae*, the handmaid of theology. Logic, a philosophical discipline, clearly shows us that if  $a=1$  then  $a \neq 2$ . If God is good than He cannot be evil. If I am falling from a roof, I cannot at the same time be going upwards. Without clear thinking we cannot distinguish between God and Satan, good and evil. Eastern religions that believe in the emptying of the mind, have very poor logical thinking indeed.

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61 Cf. Russell, *The Devil*, op. cit. p. 169. As always I am implying patterns. Deism and atheism take away from the balanced truth, and pantheism and polytheism exaggerate it. The former relativize good and evil explicitly, the latter implicitly. In deistic rationalism God is not omnipotent or omniscient, but in pantheism He is so mysterious so as to "know" both good and evil. In atheism God is non-existent, and in certain forms of polytheism He thrones beyond good and evil. This pattern of deistic and atheistic reductionism (man's extrinsic side), and pantheistic and polytheistic inflationarism (man's intrinsic side), will be unmasked throughout this book.

For your information we will discuss in short Manichaeism and Zoroastrianism.<sup>62</sup> Followers of these religions believed in a dualism of matter and spirit, equated with evil and good respectively. For them good and evil exist from all eternity. One day the good God will vanquish the evil one. But if these two uncreated gods have co-existed already an eternity past, then what hope do we have that the good one will win out in the future (eternity)? Clearly the good one must be the stronger for there is more good in nature than evil, for else they would cancel each other out. But if the good god is so mighty than why hasn't he overcome yet? What guarantee do we have that he will overcome? And even if he turns out the conqueror, then evil can crop up again any time. For how could one eternal god destroy another one completely? Or how could he hold him in prison for ever? Also if they are already enemies for an eternity the good one will never be able to convert the baddie into a goodie. It is

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<sup>62</sup> ( Consult a good encyclopaedia under these headings)

evident that these religions hold out little hope for us, if any.

Another view is the following. There are certain theologians that claim that God and Satan are two figures of the same reality.<sup>63</sup> God “plays the devil”, as it were, only in order to test us to see whether we really will adhere to the good. This kind of dualism is a mix-up of pantheism and monotheism, whether these divines proclaim themselves as monotheists or not. Is it justice for God to send a family into the gaz chambers of Auschwitz just to see whether they will cleave to Him? What kind of a mephitic actor is this? What kind of a God is it that does not shrink from posing as Mephistopheles to a degree that shatters all moral equilibrium?

But the Bible declares soberly, “ Let nobody that is being tempted say, ‘I am tempted by God?’ for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one. But everybody is tempted being lured out and baited by his own desire. Then desire, having

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<sup>63</sup> Cf. Praag, *op. cit.*, p. 144

conceived, brings forth sin, and sin having been completed fully, produces death (James 1.13-15).”

Further there is the gnostic view that finiteness implies sinfulness. God gave us finite bodies to teach our eternal spirits how good it is to be fully one with Him.<sup>64</sup> Clearly this kind of theory makes God the author of sin. We are hardly, if at all, responsible for our actions in this case.

Let us now see how God’s all-goodness and all-powerfulness must be kept in balance, in our minds and hearts. Also all His other qualities play a role here. For if God is not infinite in all of them (omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent and so on), then He is unable to oversee and control all the consequences of His acts. That means that something could go wrong, yes, even is bound to go wrong. That would make Him responsible for the ensuing evils. God’s goodness and allness go together, for if He is limited He is not able

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64 Cf. James M. Edie, James P. Scanlan, Mary-Barbara Zeldin, cds., *Russian Philosophy* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), Vol. III, pp. 81 ff. Obviously Soloviev’s philosophy and religion go back to ancient gnosticism.

to be all-good. In that case He must commit irresponsible acts. And if He is not all-good, then he will produce omnipotent evil. Clearly the bungling god of deism is a travesty, and the halfhearted god of pantheism is psychotic. The big bang god of atheistic materialism, and the neutral god(s) of occultistic polytheism are not at all good and powerful. The one is nothing but a supreme material law, the other nothing but the “non-existent” state of Nirwana.

Whereas deism holds to God’s goodness and pantheism claims that in God good and evil are a mysterious *ensemble*, both are identical in that they connive at evil. One simply cannot be perfect, therefore we must “just” make the best of it. Christ however said, “Be perfect as your Father is perfect Who is in heaven (Mt. 5.48).” Also we are clearly not fully responsible under these two corrupted set-ups. In atheistic existentialism and nihilism and polytheistic occultism, things are worse. They are identical in their indifference towards good and evil. The former says they are totally relative or even non-existent, the latter that they are but the illusive intimidations of “maya”,

the illusion of the material world, consisting of fleeting, temporal images. Both converge into the same pandemonium.

The hidden motivation behind all these foul-ups is the desire to replace the real God with an idol, and to put the blame directly, or indirectly, upon Him; when we cannot enjoy our own god as well as we would like.

As said in the beginning, the rationalist idolizes reason, the materialist pleasure, the mystic emotion and the occultist the power of his spirit. All these idolaters implicate God in, if not equate Him, with the problem of evil. However everybody, in his heart, is aware that good is good and bad is bad. Good is not just better than bad. Even Satanists distinguish between good and evil, only they try to reverse them. God does not will sin. He only wills the possibility of sin. He has to do this apparently or else we would be pushbutton do-gooders. We would be robots, rather than responsible, self-motivated beings. The sin of idolatry is that we ourselves try to play God. But our tiny weeny ways only make us ridiculous. We only confirm God in them, but in a negative way. Therefore

we must honor God in a positive way, hail Him as our Creator and pray for His help.

“But,” somebody will say, “if God is good, why then are we inclined to commit evil?” Apparently He did not create us well. “ However that leads us again to either a mad genius that has botched us up, or to a treacherous two-faced hypocrite, or worse. Therefore there is only one solution to the problem of evil. We *must* face the fact that we, humans, are fully responsible. For if God is to blame, then there clearly can be no hope at all. This universe will end in total disaster, or at best remain riddled with rottenness. If God is not perfectly good, then certainly I do not have to be. Or do you think that you can outdo your Maker?

It has been argued that a governor, who has it in his power to stop a conspiracy, has the responsibility to do this. Therefore an omnipotent God is accountable, just like a human. Since He does not, then He cannot be good in our sense of the word.<sup>65</sup> But this is nothing but defiance. If God is not good in our language, then He isn't good in any. *God is love!*

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<sup>65</sup> Russell, *Satan*, op: cit., pp. 226 ff.

But when you preach this there are always people that start objecting. “Why are there wars, murders, famines, earthquakes, psychotic diseases!? If God is so loving and sympathetic, why does He allow so much sorrow?” There is only one viable conclusion. We have all brought it down upon ourselves. Wars, dirty politics, and other crimes are clearly perpetrated by *homo sapiens*. If you try to excuse the criminals, and we are all that in major or minor ways, with psychological reasons to the effect of us having been made the way we are, and so on, where then do you end up? Back in the garden of Eden, where our first parents chose Satan as their “liberator”. Ever since He is the god of this world.<sup>66</sup> What other conclusion is there? Do you want the god of deism, pantheism, or dualism? For sure I want the God of the Bible. He is stable, cannot change into evil, for He is immutable. He is omnipotent, and so on. That is the God that can come to our aid.

“But why hasn’t He helped us, and solved all our problems yet? The world bathes in blood already for

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<sup>66</sup> 2 Cor. 4:4

millennia!“ Let me tell you why. Because we keep ignoring him, that’s why. God does not want to be taken for granted. If the entire world would go on its knees, and beseech God en masse for mercy upon our stubborn sins, then, I tell you, he would rend the heavens immediately and pour out blessings!

It was Dostoevsky’s problem that innocent children had to suffer.<sup>67</sup> He could not see God’s righteousness in that. And of course nobody can. God is not righteous because little girls are raped, but because He will punish the men that do it. And He will wipe the tears away, one day, off of all those that have come to Him for comfort. God allows evil to push our nose into the excrements that we leave behind us everywhere. But we seem to be puppies that just refuse to become housebroken. Hegel, the well known philosopher, said that “History teaches us that man

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<sup>67</sup> René Wellek, ed. *Dostoevsky* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice- Hall, Inc. 1962), 139, 40. Cf. Nelly, a little girl in the novel *The Humiliated and Wronged*, is ill treated by a drunken woman and about to be sold to a merchant in shady love. See Mochulsky, op. cit., p. 202

does not learn from history.”<sup>68</sup> “But why does God allow *all* kinds of evil?” My answer is that God cannot allow any kind of evil. But He suffers us for a time. Where would God have to draw the line anyway? At theft and murder? Or already at the thought of theft and murder? But the wish is the father of the act. We must clean house in our own hearts. That is where all the trouble starts. But rest in peace, God will not allow this world to go on for ever in its God ignoring, defying and self-congratulating sideshows. For now God has given the earth to us. If we want to turn it into a hell, that is our business. But He will not suffer our games forever!

One more thing to conclude the subject of good and evil. The Bible states the following: 'Forming light and creating darkness, making peace and creating evil; I the Lord do all these things.' Before I enter upon

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68 G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History* ( New York: P.F. Collier and Son, 1900), 49. The passage in the original runs as follows.”Was die Erfahrung aber und die Geschichte lehren, ist dieses, das Völker und Regierungen niemals etwas aus der Geschichte gelernt.”.

this most difficult subject I want to affirm that God in Christ Jesus is light and life and love and the way (the only way) and the truth. Christ is the morning star that appears when all other stars fade. Therefore He is the only superstar and nobody can come to God the Father but through Him. Why then does it say here that God creates (actually IS in the process of creating [the participle is used]) evil, as if He might be the author of sin? Horrible thought. But it does not say that, most blissfully. It implies that He is the author and source of evil, but not the author of sin. We humans and angels turn evil into sin and so miss the intended goal of our existence. How great then is God's grace and Christ's Love, that Christ was made SIN for us (2 Cor. 5.21), almost as if He were the cause of our sin, yes of our sinful nature, of our original sin!! Is it not because of this that Christ stated that He had to be lifted up like the serpent in the desert (John 3.14). Thus we will be free for ever...

Solomon stated that God decided to dwell in darkness, but it also says that the darkness is light to God. And so, even in the worst evil, God sees

something of His own light. This seems to imply that humans and angels are incapable of perverting themselves to such a degree as to drain out anything good (however as far as the old nature, the old Adam, is concerned, we are 100% corrupted; that is why one has to be born again: the old nature cannot be fixed). Remember that it says 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.' It does not say that it is the tree only of evil. However the point is that Adam and Eve wanted to decide and determine themselves what is good and what is evil, thus making themselves independent of God. What makes it complicated is that the word for 'evil' is also used for what is sinful, as well as for calamity--as in the case of Job. But notice that He is creating evil, not making or doing! The knowledge of evil is infused by the conscience, and thus looking at it with the mind, I am aware of the consequence, viz. of sin. Adam and Eve, before the Fall, were innocent; they did what is good naturally and were free of sin. After the Fall we have landed in a grey and muddy pit, out of which God wants to raise us through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit. Hallelujah! Let it be very

clear however that God does not tempt anyone, let alone seduce. We are in the first place tempted by our own desire.

Having said this I go out of my way to expressly state that I am not advocating some kind of pantheistic notion of good and evil as being two sides of the same coin, as if the divinity is at odds with itself and contradicting itself. It cannot be said strongly enough that the godhead is absolutely indivisible. 'Hear Israel, I am ONE.' Even though one might sum up in eternity an infinite array of characteristics of the godhead, at the same time it must be affirmed that the divinity is absolute simplicity. Nor do I propagate the notion of evil being the absence of good (*privatio boni*), according to Scholasticism. Sin, in the end, is the absolute godhating rebellion against anything good in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Bible shows that this is the end of human history as far as sin is concerned.

In Hebrews 1.1 it says that God has finally spoken through the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus, Who is the effulgence of His glory and the express image of His substance. Both in the O.T. and the N.T. there

was a progressive Revelation taking place. This seems to coincide with God's 'forming light and creating darkness, making peace and creating evil.' Catholic theologians will scoff at me for believing that matter, yes the entire planet earth, and, yes, even the heavens became tainted by the respective falls of the devil and of Adam. But why does Peter state, then, that all the elements will burn up melting and that the earth and all its (evil) works will be found out? Why, actually, will God create a new heaven and earth, if the old one is not so damaged and tainted that it will be rolled up like a mantle? That gnostic sects with their so-called knowledge or science, against which the apostle Paul warns, like the one of the Manichees, turn this truth into something desperately foolish and even sinful (as the Bible itself states that there were those that perverted the Scriptures), that does NOT mean that sin and evil are limited to the will. Also our intellect and even our very bodies are subject to a broken and rebellious world. (But glory be to God that Christ has triumphed over Satan and sin and even

death [in principle, as it is the last enemy to be made subject to Christ]).

Satan, as the highest angel, as the covering cherub, was the ultimate show piece of God's Creation, according to the relevant Scriptures in Ezechiel 28 and Isaiah 14. God even spurs the writer to say that one must take up a dirge for him! After all he was God's most original Creation... Further, by the way, the Bible states clearly that the lake of fire (the second death as the ultimate hell) was made for the devil and his angels (those that followed him in his rebellion). Thus, eternal hell was made after Satan's fall. And he desires to drag as many people along with him as possible.

And here we tread on occult and perhaps even holy ground. Satan turned evil into sin. He is called by the Lord the murderer of humans and the liar from the beginning (from his fall) and the father of a liar. The Lord also states that he saw Satan fall to earth as a flash of lightning. As He that is creating evil, He tested the devil who subsequently fell in hubris and then turned his pride into full-blown sin. Satan did not guard

his heart. He looked at his own greatness instead of the infinite greatness of God. And so evil became angelic sin and sinfulness. Satan was 999 along with all the angels (do not ask me how he could be the highest form of 999; what counts is that angels are 999 by their unfallen nature, just as those born of Christ through the Holy Spirit are 888 as to their new nature, Adam being 777 before the Fall: it is a question of character). He did not have a disadvantage over against the elected and holy angels. He could have stood firm and triumphant. Did God seduce him then? No, He tested him, just as He tests all angels and all of us. As I said, here we tread on occult and even holy ground as far as Satan and God are concerned. The above Scripture in which the Lord Himself calls Himself the One in process of creating evil and darkness, is further best left alone, I think. One could involve yet the vision of the prophet Michah in this and the first two chapters of the book of Job, but the hidden things, as it is also written, belong to God! Yet it is obvious from the Bible that Satan threw the glove before the holy countenance of the

Lord and the Lord in His wisdom took up the challenge. And to his chagrin the devil finds out that time and time again it all works out for the best of those that love God. All *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*. The devil cannot do anything against the express will of the Almighty. Augustine posed that fallen angels are set in their will. That must mean as much that they have no freedom or liberty left (ultimately). But the Bible teaches that humans also are bent on evil and sin, since the fall of Adam, through whom sin came into the world. Note, sin and transgression (not evil!) came into the world through Adam. Sin is lawlessness, according to the apostle John.

Evil, in the above verse (Isaiah 45. 7), seems to be some kind of possibility to allow sin. *Evil is God's test of our love and we turn evil into sin*. If one watches evil too much, one can become mesmerized and turn it into sin. If one thinks, however, that if one occupies oneself only with good one will win out, then one is bound to become naive. The Bible itself is full of evil examples that serve as warnings. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to take every thought captive into

obedience to Christ and to break down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

*Reason to the Rhyme?*

Some hapless soul once exclaimed, "Is there reason to the rhyme?"<sup>69</sup> Meaning whether life makes sense at all. We have seen already that the rationalist seeks the meaning of life in that the universe is a rational whole, in which everything functions according to an intelligent design.<sup>70</sup> The materialist seeks his meaningfulness in pleasure, possessions, success, and anything that has to do with matter.<sup>71</sup> The

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<sup>69</sup> Obviously the expression goes back to old sayings like: "Neither rhyme nor reason." Cf. "All this rhyme is not without some reason (Morris Diary 2.584), Bartlett Jere Whiting, *Early American Proverbs and proverbial Phrases* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 362.

<sup>70</sup> The comparison of the universe with a watch or clockwork is a well-known representation, and goes back to antiquity. See Stanley L. Jaki, *The road of Science and the Ways to God* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 30,91,342

<sup>71</sup> Cf. For instance Dr. Joyce Brothers, *How to Get Whatever You Want Out of Life* (New York: Ballantine

atheistic neo-positivist says that the great and ancient philosophical questions of where do we come from, where do we go, what is the meaning of life, are meaningless. We must simply concentrate on the facts.<sup>72</sup> I suspect that in their own lives these people are existentialists that seek sense in their own so-called objectivity. The mysticist proclaims with fervour that the deeper meaning of all things lies in the all-pervading mystery of God. Our emotions then must derive their value from an encounter with this *mysterium tremendum*.<sup>73</sup> The polytheistic occultist

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Books, 1980).

<sup>72</sup> See e.g. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (New York: Mac Millan, Inc. 1978), under Neopositivism, (vol. 17,p.445). See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractacus logico- phylosophicus* ( Frankfurt am Main: Suhr-Kamp Verlag , 1963), 7,11,114,5. For a defense of Christianity against positivism, cf. Kenneth H. Klein, *Positivism and Christianity* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974).

<sup>73</sup> Meister Eckhart, the German mysticist, said:”When I stood in the Principle, the ground of the Godhead, no one asked me where I was going or what I was doing: there was no one to ask me..... When I go back into the Principle, the ground of Godhead, no one will ask me whence I came or whither I went. There no one misses me, there God-as-other passes away.” C.F. Kelly, *Meister Eckhart on Divine Knowledge* (New Haven: Yale

tells us that reality has no one coherent meaning. It is controlled by a plurality of spiritual powers. Our sense of life derives from interacting with these, and from deriving strength from their magic.<sup>74</sup> Now all these people are like some kind of schizophrenic that simply denies he has two arms and two legs. Instead of using all four he tries to use only one.

So the universe with all its forms of life is reduced by the rationalist to a cold mechanism left to its own devices. Ultimately deism is meaningless. Only a direct and continual relationship of all creatures with God, and a constant dependence of all things on God can give eternal meaning to life. If God has no direct and total interest in His Creation, then there is no hope or meaning. (And this theology cannot give this. We must long for the *theos* of theology and only the Revelation of the Bible can answer our hearts desire). In atheism there is no meaning to life either. Pleasure, success, and possessions must fill the heart of the

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University Press, 1977), VIII; cf.p. 68

74 Christian Jacq, *Egyptian Magic* (Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1985), *passim*.

materialistic atheist, for he has no hope beyond the grave. *Carpe diem* is his motto. But if your life ends in death, then tell me, dear reader, what the meaning of matter is! If it is all over then, and if there is no eternal purpose and everlasting life, then it makes no difference whether I curse or bless you, kiss you with the kiss of life or the kiss of death. Ultimately everything is not just relative, but absolutely nonsensical. But thanks to God ultimate meaning is found in Him, He converts His absolute meaningfulness, and bestows it as derived meaningfulness upon us. For the atheist there is no method to the madness, his own madness. Life is a concatenation of random effects.

The mysticist asserts that life is elevated to the level of divinity. This view robs both God and Creation of all meaning. For if everything is divine then really nothing is divine. Is cancer divine? Is a stone divine? To be divine means to be absolutely the greatest, absolutely unique, holy, infinite. Only One is such. Pantheists cling to the vain hope that if you fully believe in the divinity of all things, particularly of

yourself, then you will be lifted up out of the misery of doubt, sorrow and pain. The God of pantheism is an idea emptied of essential meaning, and only retained in name in order to hold out some meaning for the poor pantheist. The occultist has nothing substantial to offer either. The world of matter is an illusion that must be despised. Magical communion with the gods must give us a sense of belonging. But if power is what life is about then we will never be satisfied. All these views spell chaos and confusion.

Though deism and pantheism are mutually opposite in their outward appearance, at the root they are identical. In both corruptions God is only maintained as an empty concept divided of personal love and meaning. In the one His Being is diminished to the status of an absentee landlord,<sup>75</sup> in the other to an impersonal force that is diffused in all things. Nothing in these views gives lasting sense. Also the mutually opposites of atheism and polytheism have a

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<sup>75</sup> The reader should be aware that this is only one form of deism, how I handle the term deism will gradually become clearer.

paradoxical identity. Both feel totally controlled, the one by the determinism of matter,<sup>76</sup> the other by the determinism of the karma of the gods.<sup>77</sup> Only in a few moments of enthusiasm they feel free in these things.

The hidden motivation behind all these attitudes is that we are all sinners that prefer spiritual death, emotional vanity, rational nonsense and material slavery over the one God that can really fulfill our lives. Existentialists deeply felt the meaninglessness of life. But they did not see, did not want to see, that we make life suck, because we stubbornly reject God in every second of our lives. But only God can give us life, and that to the full. In Him the world of material pleasures, rational theories, emotional values and

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76 Cf. The descriptions of biological determinism in : R.C. Lewontin, Steven Rose and Leon J. Kamin, *Not in Our Genes* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp 6,10

77 Cf. Ronald W. Neufeldt, *Karma and Rebirth: Post Classical Developments* ( Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986, 112,208,282; James Paul McDermott, *Development in the early Buddhist Concept of Karma* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt., Ltd., 1984), p. 80

spiritual ideas makes perfect sense. This was also Solomon's lesson in the book of Ecclesiastes. If you have regard only for things *under* the sun, you will not attain to lasting satisfaction.

All things have divine meaning in their Creator. From Him they obtain their meaningfulness. In themselves they are not divine, but in God. This is the difference between pantheism and monotheism. Even sorrow and pain are meaningful, because God allows them for a reason. The best example is the human being, who is created in God's image. In ourselves we are not divine, but our existence has divine meaning because God loves us with divine love. This is true for all things. In God all things will turn out to be eternal. Thus everything has transcendent meaning. Nothing is confined to itself, but everything is interrelated and held up by God. If it were not so, everything would be meaningless. Only divine sense makes real sense. Anything short of that is bound to run aground in a morass of existential quicksand. In God all things are headed up, and therefore they have divine reason, value, spiritual meaning and material existence.

Our spiritual ideas, psychical feelings, rational theories and practical deeds receive their life and meaning from our relation to God. What is truly done out of love for God is good, what not is bad. Just because everything is related to God our lives are so important. Deeds, theories, feelings and spiritual ideas are so valuable because they must be worthy of God, Who is the infinite in infinitudes. This means that we must be morally one with God. Our deeds must be one with His, so our thoughts, feelings and ideas. Thus our beings, though they can never be divine in themselves, participate, indirectly, through meaningful love, in God's divinity; because they must be reflections of His Person. We must mirror God. Can anything be more beautiful, more mysterious, more rational, more pleasurable, more ideal!

### *Satanism*

Does there exist an evil master mind, a person that is absolutely wicked in his heart. Or is Satan just a fairy tale? Let us see what the various contaminated

beliefs have to say. In deism only God exists.<sup>78</sup> Satan is just a personification of the force of evil, chaos, death and psychological darkness, which is due to God's imperfections. In atheism neither God nor Satan exists. They are both personified myths, believed in by the ignorant, the superstitious, to explain their own struggle with life.<sup>79</sup> In pantheism God is the good force that upholds the universe. Satan is God's mysterious dark side.<sup>80</sup> In gnostic polytheism Satan is the god of the Old Testament, the creator of evil matter. The God of the New Testament is the true God, the Father of our spirits. This of course is dualism.<sup>81</sup> In other forms of polytheism, such as Hinduism, Shiva is the

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78 This may be inferred from John F. Hurst, *History of Rationalism* (New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1865) p 25, 6; pp. 112 ff.

79 Cf. Schilling, op. cit., p. 68, 73.

80 Cf. The mysticism of Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) in, Georgia Harkness, *Mysticism, its Meaning and Message* (Dashville, Abingdon Press, 1973), 130.

81 Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 123,4

god of destruction.<sup>82</sup> But ultimately the gods are beyond good and evil. Though there may not be many people that call themselves Satanists, the spirit of Satanism is alive and well. “Do your own thing!” “All that thou wilt, shall be whole thy law.”

The tensions and vicious circles are clear here, as well as the identities of these faiths. In deism and pantheism evil is an impersonal force. In atheism and polytheism evil is so relative that it practically is non-existent. The hidden motivation behind all these persuasions is that we just refuse to take the problem of evil seriously enough. Because if we did, we would feel so little, so humbled, yes, so spoken to in our consciences. But an enemy that is not known is far more dangerous than one that we are aware of! Satan

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82 Wulf Metz, transl. *Handbuch Weltregionen* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus verlag, 1983), 186. The pattern that exists here is the following: in monotheism God and Satan are distinct persons. In deism God is an impersonal transcendent rational force and Satan an impersonal personification, the skeleton in God’s closet. In pantheism God is an impersonal force and Satan his impersonal dark side. In both atheism and polytheism God and Satan do not really exist.

does exist! And He is alive both on our planet and in heaven, where God still allows Him.<sup>83</sup>

It should be clear that there is a devil from whom sin originates. For else God is to blame. That would make God a weird multiple personality. It is self-evident that with such a God at the helm we will forever be the plaything of madness, unless we can force Him from His throne, or cure His eternal illness. But you feel that that is an impossibility. And even if we could, there would be no hope any way. For all of His creatures would be no better than Him, their Maker.

God's greatness is shown in the fact that He allows Satan to play his game without having His plans ruined in any way. No matter how powerful Satan is (and that power he has received as the highest and most imposing angel, but he fell and now abuses his position) God is infinitely more powerful. If God were forced to finish Satan off, this would show that He is really limited in power. God does not crush Satan, but answers his challenge. To end his game would show

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<sup>83</sup> See Job chaps. 1,2.

superior strength but not necessarily full justice. God allows the evil in Satan's heart to run its full course. This seems to be the meaning of Ez. 28.18 "...therefore I will cause a fire to come forth from within you; it will devour you..." Sin is like a fire and God has a lesson to teach to Satan, as well as to us. God allows sin to climax to the full, until it becomes clear that He alone is God, holy, just and infinite in wisdom and love. We will have to learn to the full what it means to reject God. In so far as we reject Him, we really opt for Satan.

It is not so that God struggles with Satan. It is entirely beneath Him. It is the devil that keeps trying to struggle with God. He must be drunk with pride, and filled with intense hatred. Of course the majority of angels did not fall, and they keep Satan's fallen angels, the demons, in check.<sup>84</sup>

In the end Satan's fall is a mystery. In fact the Bible uses the phrase "the mystery of iniquity (2 Thess. 2.7)." For how could a good creature as Satan was, actually the top stone of heaven, become

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<sup>84</sup> See Rev. 12:4

capable of sin? It is a mystery indeed, but not in the sense of pantheism. Pantheism, as well as all other philosophical theologies, have no hope for us. I repeat it again. If God is schizophrenic, then an eternal woe is ours. Satan's fall must have to do with the fact of free will and the fact that angels (and humans) must forever humble themselves under the power of an infinitely mighty God. The fact that we cannot be as glorious hurts our pride. Yet this hurt of pride is already a result of sin. How did this sin arise? All we know is that pride was Satan's first sin. As it stands written:

“How you have fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the mourning! You have been cut down to the earth, subduer of the nations! You said in your heart, ‘I will lift up my throne above the stars of God. I will sit upon the mountain of the congregation in the parts of the North. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most High.’ However you will be brought down to hell, to the lowest regions of the pit (Is. 14:12-15).”

And,

“Son of man, take up a mourning song about the King...Thus sayeth the Lord YHWH. ‘You seal the top measure, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden, the garden of God. You were covered with every precious stone, sardius, topaz...and gold. The work of tambourines and flutes was in you. The day you were created, they were prepared. You were an anointed cherub, a covering one. This is what I made you. You were on the holy mountain of God; among the fiery stones you have walked. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, until wickedness was found in you. Through the multitude of your trading you have been filled with violence inside, and you have sinned. Therefore I will throw you down from God’s mountain as an unholy thing. And I will destroy you, covering cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart exalted itself because of your beauty. You spoiled your wisdom on

account of your splendor. I will throw you to the earth. I will put you down in the sight of kings, that they may behold you. Because of your numerous evils, and by means of the wickedness of your trading you have defiled your sanctuary. Therefore I will cause a fire to come forth from within you; it will devour you, and I will turn you into ashes on earth before the eyes of all that look on. All those that know you among the nations will be astonished because of you. You will be a terrible sight, and then you will be no more for ever. (Ez. 28.12-19).”

In this very mysterious passage we can read that Satan was created the highest angel, but he corrupted himself through pride. I translated “your heart exalted itself,” whereas the King James has “was exalted,” which obscures the point. The literal translation is “was high“. But the word is used also for lifting oneself in pride. Christ calls Satan the liar and murderer from the beginning, that is in the garden of Eden (John 8.44), or

perhaps the beginning of his own fall. Satan's sin is in everyone of us--pride. We do not want to acknowledge God, because, like Satan, we are jealous.

Many a mocker has made light of Satan. Such people are also likely to mock God. However never speak in a derisive way about Satan. After all he is still the most powerful spirit below God.

Feuerbach said something like that man alone is his own God. Such a view lands us into a maze of problems. Why is there anything at all? What is the origin and future of life? What is the meaning of life? How must we live? What is the point of suffering, love and joy? What can we hope for if everything ends in death? The vicious circle you are caught in is as follows. I am all there is. Life is meaningless. I try harder to find ultimate meaning in myself. Life seems worse the harder I try.

The feeling that so much is absurd and meaningless just shows our need of God. God is not a crutch for the weak, He is our all! If we really had evolved from the apes, we would never think about the meaning of life. If chance were our origin, our minds

would regard the universe in a random way. Existentialists feel total responsibility (or no one at all) in total aloneness.<sup>85</sup> This is due to their playing God. We are to trust and build further on the foundations others have laid. Other people have had many experiences that we can learn from. The idea that one has to go it alone is due to nothing but our refusal to acknowledge God. The result is that everything is considered absurd. But what is more absurd than that!

This absurdity was keenly felt by Camus, the existentialist writer.<sup>86</sup> In his books also clear hatred of God surfaces.<sup>87</sup> It is there that atheism pulls off its mask. Communism in Russia also showed this when

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85 Thomas R. Flynn, *Sartre and Marxist Existentialism: The Test Case of Collective Responsibility* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 34, 5, and passim

86 Heinz Böhm, *Die Generation der Hoffnungslosen* (Neuhausen- Stuttgart: Häussler- Verlag , 1977), 38. See Albert Camus, *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1942), passim.

87 Böhm, op. Cit., p.48,9. See Albert Camus, *L'Homme Révolté* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1951), 51 and passim.

they shot at pictures of Christ.<sup>88</sup> This was not just hatred of the so-called bourgeois establishment. A lot more is happening here. It is hatred against God, Who is blamed for all the misery in the world. Instead of blaming ourselves, as we should, we project our own sinfulness upon God. How ironic that Feuerbach called God a projection. Camus, and people like him, indeed fancied a God that was the projection of their own unconscious problems!

L'Abime apelle l'abime, the Frenchman says. Evil breeds more evil. To escape the vicious circle of atheism and materialism some people fall into Satanism. This is a spontaneous jump, a fourth breakaway from the truth. Satanism can temporarily

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88 Richard Wurmbrand, *Was Karl Marx een Satanist?* (n.p.: Stichting "De Ondergrondse Kerk", 1975). In the third, enlarged, edition Wurmbrand gives much evidence for the secret connection between Satanism and hardcore revolutionary communism. Christians were forced to curse God, and attend a kind of black mass. They were told, when tortured, that they, the communists, wanted them to die without the crown of a martyr. To this end they were forced, under torture, to curse God, and thus go to hell. (p.30). In the same booklet Wurmbrand cites poems and other material of the Marx family that clearly points to a form of (quasi) Satanism.

solve the problem of evil, pain and frustration in that it blames everything upon God. Satan is hailed as the king of kings and lord of lords. As their liberator he will give them power over life and other people. Satanism however still operates with the four great corruptions of deism, pantheism, atheism and polytheism, mostly though within hedonism (pleasure is the highest good of life) of atheism and the occultism (magical power as the highest aim of life) of polytheism. As such it is not a complete religion of its own. This shows that the most extreme excesses of atheism and polytheism converge into Satanism. Yet Satanism is a philosophy all by itself in its consequent hatred of God and worship of Satan.

Satanism is at the very bottom of the barrel. It is the nadir of depravity, the absolute zero point of temperature, when the sheer coldness makes things to fall apart as if no material energy anymore is left to keep them together. Yet some people opt for it, both as a religious outlook and as a life style. They despise deists and pantheists and look down upon atheists and polytheists. Christians they hate.

Satanists are very conscious that the I-am-a-good-boy attitude of do-gooders is false and even despicable. However they see this from the viewpoint of those that love sin. They have come to see very well that deep in our hearts we all have the tendency to love sin. And indeed since the fall we are all children of Satan. We are born Satanists in a way, and naturally become haters of God. In principle we are no better than Hitler, yes, than our natural father—Satan! Christ said:

“You do the works of your fathers.

Your father is the devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and did not remain standing in the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar and the father of him (John 8. 41-44).”

Voluntarily, though not consciously, everybody serves Satan, the god of this world (2 Cor. 4.4). Satanists however do it consciously, and therefore

they sneer at others that have not discovered their true identity.

Therefore to become a Satanist is to become conscious of the deepest stirrings of one's heart. This is at first experienced as a very liberating and exciting happening. Some people, it seems, at the moment they become Satanists feel a great, almost electrical, fascination. They discover their real selves!<sup>89</sup> But at such a moment the fire of sin really consumes them, and eats away at them with terrible speed; until everything, one day, turns colder than ice. If they have not committed suicide before that.

Satanists are no doubt the most pitiful wretches on earth. They think they come close to him, or even one with him. But all Satan wants is to degrade, use and abuse them. It is impossible to become really a close friend of Satan. For he plays his own hidden game. Satan hates humans, period; also the Satanists. Because we all have been created in God's image. Satan hates God and wants to undo His works.

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. Mike *Warnke*, *The Satan Seller* (South Plainfield: Bridge Publishing, Inc., 1972), 42,3

Most of all he wants to drag human souls with him into hell. God said, "...cursed are you .... you will go on your belly and eat dust, all the days of your life (Gen. 3. 14)," Humans are the dust of the ground, mortal clay. Satan wants us to serve him, and reject God. That is Satan's life, that is his business, that is his food!

One must not think that Satanists are recruited only in the materialistic West. In Nigeria there is a snake cult. To become a member one must sell one's soul to Satan. Then one really gets magical power over say the cobra.<sup>90</sup> This, I say it again, shows that atheistic materialism, and polytheistic occultism converge into the same ultimate extreme. The extrinsic and intrinsic lines of respectively rationalism / materialism / atheism and mysticism / pantheism occultism make mutually opposite loops, only to come together in this extreme of extremes.

What do Satanists do? In their black mass, a parody of the Catholic mass, they drink consecrated water, stolen from a church, mixed with their own

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<sup>90</sup> Koch,op.cit.,p.526

blood and urine. If you are what you drink, then this shows what they are. They often stage orgies, or simply magical rituals.<sup>91</sup> (By the way, the difference between Satanists and “normal” witches is that the latter are only polytheistic occultists and sometimes also pantheistic mysticists. But often they go together hand in hand). They like to mock the Bible and Christians in various ways, such as by burning Bibles, or reading them backwards. They are also known to send women at successful Christians to seduce them.

Some embrace a milder kind of Satanism. They simply view Satan as their liberator from the God of the Bible. With a bit of sex, and some magic, or even not, they are content.

They are would-be intellectuals for whom Lucifer is nothing but the spiritual perfection within. He is the way to become one with God, Who knows the difference between good and evil. That is why Adam

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91 Idem. p.525 Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground* (Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 1988), p.86,8 and passim.

did well to transgress. But this is pantheism or dualism.<sup>92</sup>

However hard core Satanism is a grand delusion of some kind of occultistic polytheism. The delusion is that Satanists are led to believe that they can control the gods, the spiritual powers, which are nothing but fallen angels, followers of Satan—demons; whereas it is really the demons that control them more and more. Satan and his demons play a game with them that ends in eternal hell, where they will be punished eternally and will not reign with Satan; who will be punished himself in the lake of fire..

The Satanist is only interested in his or her own power. There is no love but the false affection for those that are helpers and implements on the road to the fulfilment of their power drive.<sup>93</sup>

Hard core Satanists cannot and will not love, because love is despised as a weak sentimentality,

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92 Mormon veneration for Satan seems to go back to Masonry. See Ed Decker and Dave Hunt, *The God Makers*.(Eugene: Harvest House publishers, 1984), pp.128.

<sup>93</sup> Warnke, op.cit.,p.95

yes, as something evil. They can only “love” their own kind. They are “happy” as long as they can consummate each other’s madness. But when something goes wrong, they are ready to tear each other apart.

What kind of a world results if many people become Satanists? Does Satan give peace? No, he gives hatred, sin, and chaos. Satanism turns everything into a mess. Imagine a world where people try to get their desires fulfilled by spells, potions, hexes, thefts, crimes and other sins. Imagine a world where people do not believe in working their way up to secure a living. Imagine a world where one’s own interest come first. “Do what thou wilt, shall be thy whole law,” Aleister Crowley said.<sup>94</sup> This is the world of hard core Satanism.

Certain Satanists have breeders, women that give birth to unregistered babies. They are sacrificed as if they were Christ, or just to please Satan, the murderer

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<sup>94</sup> Martin Ebon, ed., *The World’s Weirdest Cults* (Scarborough: New American Library of Canada, Ltd., 1979), 154.

from the beginning.<sup>95</sup> People of all walks of life are involved, from psychotics to politicians and religious minds. The greater the evil they can think up, the more they like it. You may not believe this and indeed there is much paranoia, but too many Satanists (and their victims) have reported it after they had enough. And even if the writers have far exaggerated their fears, these things live deep in our hearts and certainly are borne out from time immemorial in all kinds of cultures.

To the Satanists God is evil, because though He is able to give us all things, He demands that we live according to what they consider as strict laws. He turns us into slaves. I say it again, the hatred we project on God, is the hatred we should feel for ourselves. That would be the first step to learn to love both God and ourselves. But Satanists turn to Satan as a last desperate effort to fulfill their desire to play God themselves. What insanity! If God is evil, is Satan good then, automatically? If God is schizophrenic, did

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<sup>95</sup> Stratford, op.cit., p.93,5.

He make Satan any better? Satanists are religious desperados.

One may wonder why God allows this evil for evil's sake. It is, I am sure, that humanity may learn something about itself. When we reject God anything is possible! May God help us! To sum up. Faith and reason, theology and philosophy, combine to show that God must be absolutely good and holy. Therefore there is only one conclusion. Satan is ultimately to blame for sin. However man is fully responsible for sin also. For to commit sin is to please Satan. Therefore do-gooders are not as despicable as Satanists think. Despite all our hypocrisy (and who is without it?) we must seek to do good.

### *Religions of the World*

As said before, all the religions of the earth can be divided into an order of eight. First comes monotheism with its various aspects, from which come deism, agnostic materialism and atheism on the left. And mysticism, pantheism and polytheism on the right and

Satanism as the extreme at the bottom. In this book I tend to leave agnostic materialism and mysticism out, as they were incorporated into my theological ethics at a later time. Or I more or less equate them with atheism and pantheism respectively; which they borrow from. Let us now take a closer look at these. We have seen that the four main aspects of God, and man, are His spiritual power, His emotional soul, rational mind and material body. This is not to say that God, or man, is the sum of his parts, nor more than the sum of His parts. For God has no different parts at all. His different qualities are not like parts. They are different aspects of His absolute simplicity. The above four aspects seem to be the most important divine qualities of the deity, and the most important of the human being. It must be realized that I define deism and pantheism, and also atheism and polytheism, in a wide and special way. To me all theories that overly accentuate reason are deistic, and all philosophies that overly accentuate feeling are pantheistic or mysticistic. Most forms of materialism are atheistic, and most varieties of occultism are polytheistic.

In rationalism God's and man's reason is overly accentuated. This is deism. Even Thomas Aquinas' monotheism I consider deistic, because God, in His pure intellectual actuality, is too transcendent to interact with an individual on an emotional basis.<sup>97</sup> In rationalism the emotional soul and the spirit with its high ideas and powers are seen as phenomena of reason. In other words, they are neglected, and their essential reality denied. I have already tried to show that once you stress one side of the truth too much, that an inherent tension results. I believe that the inner tension of scholastic rationalism is partly to blame for the worse kind of deism that resulted. People ran away with reason. The point is if you try to explain God's emotional soul and spirit with its spiritual powers by means of His pure intellect, then you are reducing God to reason. This is idolatry. It is true that God has infinite reason, but He also has an emotional soul.

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<sup>97</sup> This can be inferred from Thomas' overemphasis of the infinite greatness of God's pure actuality. However God can and does also act within the limits of human potentiality, so as to have contact with individuals.

This is a different aspect of Him. Yet all God's aspects, and qualities are one in the pure, dynamic state of actuality of His simplicity, His deity. Scholasticism, as well as Aristotelianism, on which it banked, diminishes God to a cold, mechanism, or worse.

The worst tension in scholastic rationalism is that it makes God's emotion and spiritual power secondary to His reason. So it seems to me. But there is nothing secondary in God. All His aspects and qualities are infinitely divine. To escape this tension one might become a unitarian, one who denies the Trinity. This is a worse form of rationalism, which cannot accept the suprarational mystery of the Trinity. What we have here is the desire to reduce God as much as possible to the confines of human reason. But the tension can never be relieved enough then. In fact it grows worse. So Edward Herbert and Lord Cherbury believed that God does not need special Revelation to make Himself known. Rational religion is sufficient. But why then is there Revelation at all? Just to vouchsafe Creation. And so John Toland concluded that

Christianity introduces nothing new. Revelation is superfluous. The gospels present nothing that transcends reason.

Mystical events are merely symbolical.<sup>96</sup> Worse forms of deism ensued that bit by bit denied the various truths of Revelation. Until you land at a concept of God that makes Him a burlesque. It must be realized that these are all subdivisions of deism, which result out of each other, because of the inner tensions that grow worse and worse. To escape this mess many broke with God practically altogether. Whereas all forms of deism are the first illogical break with the truth, atheism is a triple break after agnostic materialism, the second break. For in atheism the existence of the soul and spirit is simply denied. The mind becomes a slave of the hedonistic drive for material goods and pleasures afforded by them. In materialism the body is idolized. It is agnosticism, which denies the possibility of knowing God. This is not deism, for all deists believe in God, agnostics do

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<sup>96</sup> See a good information source on deism, or Hurst, *op.cit.*, *passim*

not. They are atheist in practice. Perhaps it would be better to call agnosticism a form of dualism. For with one leg the agnostic stands in deism, but with the other one he stands in atheism. The inner tension of agnosticism is obvious. For if God is unknowable then it is either because He is altogether too transcendent to be known or too unloving to make Himself known. But such a God is either altogether too impractical, or too guilty to be believable.

To escape this tension one could embrace a form of atheism, namely the denial of the possibility of God's existence. The inner tension of this position is a social one. For if God absolutely does not exist, then all those that believe in higher powers deceive the masses. Thus one lands in a worse kind of atheism still, and one becomes a militant atheist. "Religion is the opium of the masses."<sup>98</sup> Such people politically demand the rejection of any believe in God or the gods.

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98 Hans Schwarz, *The Search for God* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979), 26

Again I have been concise, for there are many more subdivisions of atheism, which are subdivisions within subdivisions, or varieties within subdivisions. We could talk about Freud's father figure, the crutch of the impotent.<sup>99</sup> However Freud had an Oedipus complex bigger than the universe, for it made him deny the God that created the universe. We could talk about Nietzsche's nihilism. His Uebermensch is the human embodiment of God, some kind of rudimentary sentimental longing for the divine. Then there is Sartre's existentialism, which made him incapable of action, some kind of aboulia.<sup>100</sup> And when he did make up his mind, many existentialists realized he wasn't true to what he believed in, whatever that was.<sup>101</sup>

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99 Cf. James Strachery, ed., *Sigmund Freud* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1964), 83,4; 88; 90,1; 133,4; 136

100 Cf. Ronald Hayman, *Sartre* (New York: Simon and Schuster; 1987), 303

101 Cf. Hazel E. Barnes, *Sartre* (New York: J.B.Lippincott Company, 1973), 186.

All these subdivisions arise because if not all the various aspects of the truth are maintained in equilibrium, then you fall into a vicious vortex that pulls the truth apart bit by bit, until it is scattered into so many shreds that nobody can feel the unity of reality anymore.

On the other side of the seesaw of human religions a similar thing happens. Again we will be brief. So one could start out with a so-called monotheistic mysticism. The mystic idolizes God's nearness, or immanence. However if this is not balanced both in theory and in practice by God's transcendence and pure intellect a lopsidedness results, which is the opposite of Scholasticism. Whereas the latter's God tends to be remote and cold, the former's God tends to be an irrational bit of sentimentality. A God that is near in emotional practice, but rational in transcendence does not know how to make His reason immanent. To escape this tension one could break with monotheism altogether and state, pantheistically, that the world exists in God. But if the world exist within God, what then is the

difference between the two? Are they both divine, or is God only? They both must be, for to exist within must imply to be the part of. But what then is the difference between good and evil? It is an unresolvable mystery. But if the world is part of God then it must be like Him. But what in the world is the difference? Is God absolute, and the world relative? But then they cannot be part of each other, for the two are mutually exclusive. A worse form of pantheism is born: God is identical with the world. But are they both absolute, or both relative? If they are both relative, the world cannot be perfect, neither can God be. But if the world cannot be perfect, then there is no hope. Rather let us believe that the world contains God, who is diffused through it as the light of the sun enlightens the universe. The world is absolute, and God is relative. But, again, what about good and evil? The world does not seem perfect at all. Is God to blame for that? To escape this mess one could embrace a view like the one found in Babylon. The gods are so many manifestations of the one all pervading God,

Marduk.<sup>102</sup> This is, like agnosticism, a dualism of both pantheism and polytheism. God or the gods are beyond good and evil, and matter is an illusory phenomenon. But if there is only one real God, why are His manifestations in disharmony? Or is the disharmony an illusion? It seems, however that the harmony is an illusion. So let us believe that the gods are independent from each other, with one God in control, as supervisor. So Zeus, or Jupiter (from Zeus pater, which means God the father; the word 'divine' is etymologically related to Zeus, of which the genitive case is *divos* or *diwos*) is the supreme God. In Hinduism Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are the presiding threesome. This is called henotheism (from *hen* "one", and *theos* "God"). However in a lot of cases the fancied führer of the gods seems just a figure head. The ultimate conclusion is that there is no supreme

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102 See a good information source under this heading, or the Britannica, 1959, vol.17, pp, 190,1 His is a dualism of rationalism and mysticism. Good and evil are ultimately illusory. Is that blessedness? If we are neither good nor evil, then we are nothing. At least a worm is something.

god. The universe, which is basically, spiritual, is ruled by a bunch of arbitrary and conflicting divinities, that control the illusory forces of *Maya*. In this kind of world everything is bound to be a mess.

Again I have been terse and simple. But what is the point of further inquiry? We could study Hegel's pantheistic absolute idealism, which is a mix-up with monotheism. But Hegel did not learn from his own apophthegm, "History teaches us that man does not learn from history." Christ for Hegel was simply a man who showed that the divine lives in all of us, by rising above the conflicts of good and evil, to attain the infinite that embraces our finite beings.<sup>103</sup> My judgement? Blandiloquence! Lies covered up by species arguments, that are only believable because somehow they are connected to different aspects of the truth. What about Spinoza (the "greatest" pantheist, and a Dutch Jew) and his blessed union

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103 Cf. Hegel's essay "*The Life of Jesus in G.W.F. Hegel, Three Essays* (Notre Dame : University of Notre Dame Press, 1984) pp. 104 ff.

with nature, that is God?<sup>104</sup> His is a dualism of rationalism and mysticism. Good and evil are ultimately illusory. Is that blessedness? If we are neither good nor evil, then we are nothing. At least a worm is something. My comment? Grandiloquence! Spinoza knew how to foist off his unconscious lies by means of highly technical mirror play. Through great hability and sleight of “hand” he fooled both himself and his followers. Paul said not for nothing of certain people, “....always learning but never being able to arrive at the knowledge of the truth ( 2 Tim. 3.7).” But let us leave the erudite treatises up to intellectual workaholics that have more brain than brawn. The point I am trying to drive home is that if you do not balance the delicate scales of truth, then you fall into a downward pulling eddy. This vicious whirlpool arises because all the various aspects of the truth are smashed out of equilibrium, like when y;u upset the

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104 Cf. Curley, ed., op.cit., letter 18, p: 355,6. One can see on what dangerous ground this pantheist was as to the concepts of good and evil. On p. 636 the editor rightly compares Spinoza with Nietzsche in saying his philosophy is, in some sense, beyond good and evil.

watertable. Dangerous cascades, streams, and spins come from that. It may take centuries for a society to be pulled down to the very bottom. But that is because the presence of truth gives them the strength to resist this horrible sucking power of evil. But with every new gasp for breath the boa constrictor tightens his grip—Satan.

Let us now examine just a little more closely the mutual opposites, as well as the undercurrent identities of the various religions. In some forms of deism evil is due to God's imperfections. In pantheism evil is a mysterious side of God. In the former God becomes impersonal because of His aloofness, in the latter because of His exaggerated immanence. Both religions do not want to face up to the fact that God is constituted guilty if this is true. The problem is not solved by declaring that good and evil are relative (some forms of deism), or illusory (some forms of pantheism). For they simply cannot be just appearances of the same thing. Appearances, at least these, go to the heart of the matter. In deism reason is stressed too much, and the soul and the spirit are

neglected. In pantheism the soul with its feelings (particularly mystic emotions) is stressed too much. The mind and the body are looked down upon. In atheism the body with its pleasures tends to be idolized. Or, by an about face, the athlete and bodybuilder is adored. The immortal soul and spirit are denied as illusions. In polytheism the spirit with its power tends to be idolized. Eastern fighting sports hail down from that. The mind and body are declared illusory phenomena. Atheism turns the mind into the slave of materialism. In polytheism the soul with its emotions is enslaved for the sake of the spirit's occultistic powers. In atheistic hedonism (philosophy of pleasure as the highest good of life) mind altering drugs are abused. In polytheism mind altering techniques such as T.M. and yoga are abused. In both cases similar changes in the state of consciousness are reached. Psychedelic colours, music, peaceful feelings, but also very bad trips occur in both cases.<sup>105</sup>

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105 See Randall N. Baer, *Inside the New Age Nightmare* (Lafayette: Huntington House, Inc., 1989), 55

People on powerful drugs have had encounters with spirits that taught them astrology and Hinduism.<sup>106</sup> Others became obsessed or even possessed by demons, who made them commit the worst crimes. Powerful yoga techniques can produce the same results.<sup>107</sup> In atheism the world is a complex maze of random forces and chemical reactions that have a semblance of sequence. So the world of the polytheist is a confused maze of spirits corresponding to the many forces of nature and the moods of the mind. As in ancient times people worshiped the gods, so modern man worships the forces of nature, the workings of social forces, the makings of technology, and so on. In times of yore people were mainly polytheists, today materialists are at least atheists in practice. In fact the occultists seem more honorable than the materialists. For they believe in higher powers behind the phenomena of nature. The atheists are left with the phenomena only. Modern man seems to feel

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106 Dave Hunt, *The Cult Explosion* (Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 1980) 26.7

107 Idem. p.30,1

just as oppressed by the arbitrary determinism of matter as ancient man by the madness of the gods.

Consequently man is as desperate as then to be free from fate.<sup>108</sup> And we fail as much. The vicious circles of atheism and polytheism could be described as follows. The more seriously the (semi)polytheist takes astrology the worse he gets cooped up in it. It starts determining every aspect of his life. Some people do not dare to leave their house before the stars show them that no accident will befall them. In this way they lose their freedom completely. So the atheist may get caught up in a vicious circle of amassing wealth, or in the pleasure of sex. In the end we become totally bound to servitude. The reason we cannot break free is that our idols are the means that help us to play God. And that is the last thing we want to give up.

An interesting phenomenon that I would like to mention here is *bounce reaction*. People sometimes, in their despair, bounce to the mutual opposite. Deists become mysticists, or *vice versa*, so with materialistic

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<sup>108</sup> Cf. Rose, op.cit.,p.114,5

atheists, and occultistic polytheists. Buddhism originally seems to be at least partially such a reaction from polytheism to atheism.<sup>109</sup> Later however different forms of Buddhism developed, both pantheistic and polytheistic. And so many materialists today get sick and tired of the Western world, and opt for Eastern religions.

In my last section I broached the subject of Satanism. It is the horrible inner tension of atheism and polytheism that make people break away to the fourth and last degree from the truth. The satisfaction of Satanism is that it brings the extrinsic and intrinsic sides of man together. For in Satanism both extreme sides converge. The materialist has to do without the powers of the spirit, and the ascetic occultist without the pleasures of hedonism. Satanism combines both. It seems like there are two roads that lead down away from the truth, the embracing of the material world with its rational laws, and the embracing of the immaterial world with its mysteries and powers. At the very bottom they bend back towards each other and

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<sup>109</sup> See Mai, *op.cit.*, p. 108

converge into Satanism. Thus the Satanist experiences a full life. On top of that comes the deeply felt fascination with the person of Satan. Evil for evil's sake is the most daring step a person can take. However Satan is the worst task master there is. Fanatic Satanists are actually known to have cut off their fingers as a sacrifice to Satan.<sup>110</sup> Suicide is the ultimate gift to their master. In the Old Testament Baal priests cut themselves with knives.<sup>111</sup> The tragic thing is that people are kept blind by Satan to the horrible state they are in.

True freedom is proportionate to one's active compliance with God's laws! When we reject those we run into the unyielding consequences. Religion is all about freedom. For in religion a person expresses his dependence either on the living God or on the arbitrary character of an idol. But the more we become one with the God that transcends all things, the greater the sense of freedom we experience! To be

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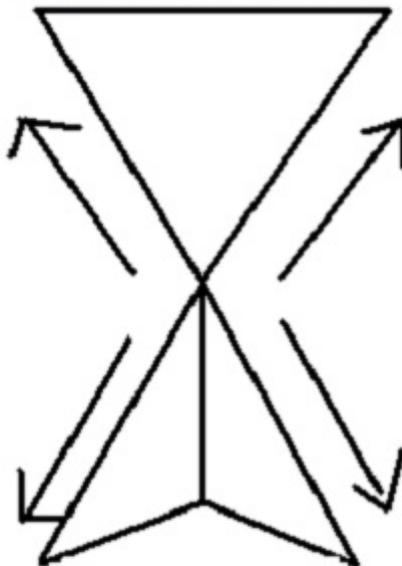
<sup>110</sup> Warnke, *op.cit.*, p. 100

<sup>111</sup> 1 Kings 18.28

one with the Creator of all things enables you to deal with Creation. Just as in ancient times man felt a plaything of the gods, so today many people feel toys of all kinds of powers, ranging from technology to the state. It shows that he is governed by necessity, by cold fate; rather than that he is the governor, who is on top of things. The only way to be in charge is to obey the laws that be. I do not mean manmade laws, but God's ordinances that rule the universe, both its material and immaterial sides. But because we hate God deep in our hearts we try to get away with things. The result is that the necessary consequences heap up.

Increase of blessings when responsibilities are heeded. Graphically:

Increasing Freedom    Increasing Good Deeds



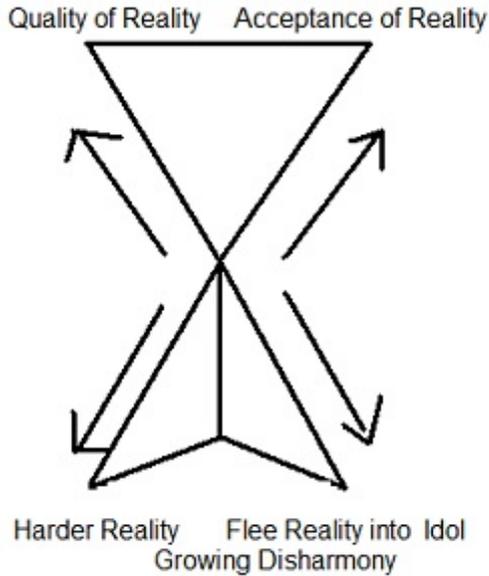
Increasing Slavery    Increasing Sins  
Growing Disharmony

Consequences of God's Law when we believe in self-arrogated "rights"

The bottom triangle represents a vicious circle that worsens as its spirals downwards between the poles of sins and their consequences. The process becomes worse as one rebels more against the consequences. The top triangle represents a virtuous circle that improves between the poles of good deeds and true freedom. It spirals upwards as the two sides strengthen each other. The ancient Roman said, "*Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.*" . Fate leads the willing, but drags the unwilling! In the most ideal situation a person would meet all the exigencies of necessity so there are no negative results from his personal behavior. Unfortunately we are altogether too stubborn to attain to this. Also it seems like a billion curses conspire against us. Nonetheless the first step is to get rid of your personal idol(s). For what do the rationalist, the mysticist, the materialist and the occultist accomplish in the end? Only chaos!

Success after growing harmony through efficiency.

Graphically:



The *circulus vitiosus* here is between the poles of escapism and its hard consequences. The *circulus virtuosus* here is between the poles of changing your attitude, and its increasing success. In the former the two polarities make each other worse, the latter they make each other more powerful. In the former it is God

that blesses us, in the latter it is Satan that hooks us on tinsel.

The reason we all have our idols is because we cannot accept God and His reality. The atheist hammers away so much at God's alleged non-existence, because deep in his heart he fears the contrary. To the other "ists" the same thing happens. When the Diana worshippers in Ephesus were challenged by Christian Jews they cried out aloud for about two hours (sic!), "Great is Diana of the Ephesians (Acts 19.34)!" Go and challenge an inveterate rationalist seriously; he will be filled with anger! We all silence our consciences with violent suppression. Both modern man and ancient man reject God, the only living God. We replace the resulting vacuum with an idol. It does not matter whether it is Venus or making love; the one is occultistic, the other hedonistic, the one polytheistic, the other atheistic. Both are idols. Through our idols we try to play God ourselves. They give us a sense of freedom. They seem to give something for which we can live totally. The tragedy however is that we become totally

enslaved to the god or object of our choosing. We become controlled by it, and lose sight of a host of necessary things. But if we are totally committed to our Creator, Who stands above everything and also upholds everything, only then everything falls into place!

The reason I classify atheism also as a religion is because it is a belief just like any other. Ultimately atheism cannot be proved, nor any other religion. It is theology and Revelation that must show in the end which belief is the right one. For faith grasps higher than reason.

In monotheism the universe is united under a single principle—God—and is organized with one ultimate purpose— God’s glory and man’s happiness in that. God hates all religions except His own. For all religions revolve around an idol, whether it be a lofty idea, philosophy, or a simple thing like soccer. For one can turn everything into a religion. Idolatry cuts reality up into bits and pieces, and also cuts us from God. But God wants a living, full and warm relationship with us! To attain that we must accept both the fulness and the

unity of both Creation and Revelation. Both the diversity and the oneness of God and the universe must be embraced, integrally and essentially. It is the claim of this book that the body, mind, soul, and spirit play important roles in this. They must be balanced delicately and combined integrally by the heart. In my own weak way I will try to show how this is to be done, if you bear with me, please.

For your interest again I will add to this section a few very short analyses of various religions. Mormonism teaches that we all can become gods.<sup>112</sup> This is a form of polytheism, but it hides behind a façade of Christendom. But it is clear that if we all can become gods, then really nobody is. Brigham Young said, "The Christian's God, is the Mormon's devil!" Why, this even sounds Satanic!

The so-called New Age movement combines mysticistic pantheism and occultistic polytheism, and

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112 Ed Decker and Dave Hunt, *The God Makers* (Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 1984), pp. 24 ff.

tries to sell it off under a veneer of rational science.<sup>113</sup> So also Hinduism is a combination of pantheism and polytheism. All the gods lead us to oneness with Brahman, the all-soul. The mantras you repeat are names and adulations of demons really.<sup>114</sup> What about Sun Myung Moon? His is basically a pantheism that derives its strength from occultistic revelations, and is admixed with Biblical concepts that are baptized into his brand of mysticism.<sup>115</sup> The Baha'i faith is a form of Islam, or a derivative at least, and is deistic. For God is altogether too transcendent to be apprehensible. It also adopts a quasi form of reincarnation in that a series of nine men (Adam, Moses, Krishna, Zoroaster, Jesus,

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113 Tex Marrs, *Dark Secrets of the New Age , and, Mystery Mark of the New Age* (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1988). My greatest objection to Marrs is that he is too sensational, however his books do offer necessary warnings. Though the movement is called New Age, its basic ideas stem from millennia old mysticism and occultism.

114 Utz Podzeit, *Duisternis uit het Oosten* (Vaassen: Uitgeverij H. Medema, 1982), pp. 92 ff.

115 James Bjornstad, *Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Church* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1984)

among others), who are said to be manifestations of the divinity, who, through them, gradually makes us more acquainted with Himself. It also claims that all religions are basically identical.<sup>116</sup> However the Baha'is have not discovered the real common identity, which is, among others, the attempt to rationalize the real God away.

Animism seems to occur both in pantheistic and polytheistic cultures. It is the belief that either *everything* is alive with the one soul of God, or with individual spirits. (Animus means 'soul' in Latin).

Fetishism is the worship of an inanimate object, believed to be indwelt by a spirit that will give magical powers. This is polytheism.

The point of these few additions is to show you that all religions can be explained on basis of the divisions that I have mentioned. I have followed these divisions throughout my studies.

Let the following summary suffice. The truth of monotheism is a delicate balance of body/ matter,

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116 Francis Beckwith, *Baha'i* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1985).

mind/ reason, soul/ emotion and spirit/ idea. From these four principles come the idols of atheism/ materialism, deism/rationalism, pantheism/mysticism and polytheism/occultism. For when these four principles are thrown out of balance by denial or reductionism, then one is forced to explain everything in God and Creation on the basis of one's idol. So pantheistic mysticism, because of its emotional idolatry of God's nearness, denies God's transcendence, affirms emanation over Creation, denies the absolute difference between good and evil, and so on. And so deistic rationalism denies God's immanence, accords independence and self-existence to the universe, relativizes God's power and goodness. It would require a separate book to explain adequately the links between the contents of the corrupt theologies and the fact that they are idolatries or deifications of parts of Creation. In this book I will be content mainly to discuss the contents concisely and only touch upon the links briefly.

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## ***B. REVELATION: Introduction***

If God really loves us He would take care that we can know the truth. To be sure we can deduct much from nature. In it we can see God's power, glory and care for us, but also His justice. But having seen that, so many more questions crowd our minds. What will happen in the future? What happens after death? What is the best way to live? Would God have revealed answers to these questions? He must, for else He is an impersonal God, shut off from the works of His own hands. That would not make sense. Why would He first create us and then leave us alone? An absolutely good and loving God would never do such a thing. God said in the Old Testament, "Will I hide from Abraham what I will do (Gen. 18.17)?"

In the days of the patriarchs God communicated directly to them. In the days of Israel God spoke through prophets. But in our days God does not operate in this way. It is because He wants everyone of us to be in an unhindered relationship to Himself. However our sins stand in the way. Therefore He has

given us both the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible. The former is based on the laws given to Moses, the latter on the grace given by Christ. The former is like a finger that points to the latter. Christ said:

“ Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from God’s mouth (Mt. 4.4). “

The literal translation is “man will or shall not live.” However I feel that the meaning of this is “cannot”. For if you try to live on food only then you will die for sheer spiritual poverty. And in fact I think it was king Frederick the Great that experimented with infants, having them grow up without any human contact. He thought that this would prove that we have knowledge of a language passed on to us by our parents. However the infants died quite early, no matter how good the food that was given to them. My point is that we need contact with God, else we cannot have spiritual life.

Besides, through the Bible there are a few other ways God can talk to you. The book of Job says:

“For God speaks once or twice, but one does not see it; in a dream, a vision of the night, when a deep sleep has fallen upon people, or when they are slumbering upon their bed. Then He opens the ear of people, and seals their instruction ( Job. 33. 14-16).”

The passage goes on to say that God then converts people. It also states that God can send trouble and pain to shake them awake from their spiritual deadness. A man told me once that he dreamed repeatedly about Christ and Satan. He told me this when he was quite drunk. Another man told me that he had had a serious talk with God once while dangerously under the influence of heavy drugs. He was panicking apparently. Probably such experiences are at least partly due to what people have heard already. For the Bible says, “Faith, then, comes by

hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10.17).”

Personally I believe in the Bible. But how can I share my faith with you? You might have all kinds of objections. In the following pages I will try to reply to a few of those.

Certainly there are many other books on earth that claim to be revelations from God or the gods, or about them. There is Homer, Hesiod, the Upanishads, the Vedas, and so on. There are the books of atheists, deists, pantheists, and polytheists, even Satanists. I reject all of these because they implicate God in the problem of sin. But God cannot have anything to do with sin. I have already said several times, and I repeat it again; if God is to blame even in the slightest way, then He is schizophrenic. Moreover it is not even possible that God would be evil only a little. His omnipotence would make Him a horrible monster. And in that case there can never be either justice in hell, or love in heaven. An eternal whimsical tormentor would be ours.

So only the so-called monotheist books remain, the Moslem Koran and its tradition, the Judaistic Tenach and Talmud and other writings, and the books of Christendom. We will discuss this so-called triad of monotheism. But we will also come back to the other “isms,” to see what they have to say when it comes to the great questions of life.

### *The Bible Only?*

Christ said in His prayer to God, “Thy Word is Truth (John 17.17).” Let us now see what others have said. The Scholastics claimed that “reason is autonomous and independent from the objective order of things.” The tension in this position, which deifies reason, is, I think, that reason all by itself is bound to the rational, mechanical aspect of the universe. Only the emotional soul and the spirit, with its spiritual ideas and powers, can lift reason up. They failed to see this. Therefore reason cannot be autonomous, at least not by itself. The result of this position is emotional and spiritual poverty, against which several mediaeval mystics

rebelled; only to fall into the opposite error. Deists very well realized the inner tension of Scholasticism, namely that reason cannot comprehend the spiritual truths of Revelation. And they were not satisfied with the Catholic belief that God simply is more rational than we are, and that therefore ultimately everything makes sense in Him. So for them the truth changes continually. It is a motion like a river on its way to the sea. Experimental and rational science is in progress towards something that ultimately contains all truth. And so they simply rejected most or all of Revelation. The tension in this is that we become totally enslaved in the mechanical, rational and deterministic aspect of nature.

Whereas Scholastics committed half a break with the truth, deists altogether broke away. Atheists, to escape the deist's problems, reject the belief in an absolute truth. For them everything is relative. The truth is whatever you happen to believe. The universe is a chaotic conglomerate consisting of innumerable aspects and objects. Everybody has his own idiosyncratic relation to it, his own attempt to create

order in the midst of chaos. If there is such a thing as ultimate truth, then it lies hidden in the essence of matter, whatever that is. But instead of finding freedom in this triple break with the truth, the atheist dies a thousand deaths in a world that is fatal in its sheerly stifling confusion, a world of his own making!

On the other end of the vacillating board of human theories a similar descent into hell takes place. A good example of the mutual opposite of Scholasticism is Jan van Ruusbroec's mysticism. He was a Dutchman (1294-1381 A.D.) who overly accentuated the emotional, particularly the spiritually emotional aspect of Creation; and thus made a half-break with the truth. No doubt he was a very pious man. He believed in the Trinity, and wrote about his conception of the right truth. According to him there are seven degrees, or steps, by means of which one must climb up to God. The first four degrees (a good will, vow to poverty, purity of soul and body, and humility) give us power for a life of work in the material world. The fifth step (nobility of all virtues that honor God above everything) delivers us from the baseness of matter with its lusts

and lifts us up into the realm of the inner life. The sixth step (an emptiness of thoughts, reason and will, a gazing at God's light, and a union with the Trinity ((goodness from the Father, truths from the Son, and work from the Holy Spirit) ), and the seventh (an unfathomable state of not-knowing) carry us into the heaven of contemplation. A hierarchy of nine ranks of angels (all of which are mentioned) helps us to ascend on this stairway into heaven. A sober-minded man like the apostle Paul, even though he had an amazing mystic experience himself—he was taken up into the third heaven, where he heard unspeakable words (2 Cor. 12.4)— would answer Ruusbroec as follows:

“Let nobody take away the prize of your contest, exercising his will in apparent humility and worship of angels, trying to enter into things that he has not seen, vainly inflated by the mind of his fallen nature (lit. “flesh”),....

If you have died with Christ to the principles of the world, why then do you subject yourself to

dead dogmas, as if you were still alive in the world? “Do not take, do not taste, do not touch!” Material things lead only to perdition if you abuse them. These dogmas are commandments and teachings of misled humans. They have a certain appearance of wisdom in that they are teachings about devotion by means of willpower, and about humility and an ascetic way of life, in order not to give any honor to the satisfaction of the fallen nature (lit. “Flesh”) ( Col. 2.18-23).”

In this passage I have taken a certain liberty, but I am quite convinced that this is the purport of Paul’s words. I am not going to debate the pro and cons of the King James or any other translation here.

The problem with this kind of mysticism is that it is impractical and also irrational. It is really mawkish sentimentality. The inner tension here, I think, is that our involvement in the material world will always keep us out of reach of this supposedly ultimate truth. Most pantheists are not content with this mystic’s belief that

really in heaven only the “common” man will finally enjoy the blessed state of mystic blissfulness.

Whereas a mystic like Ruusbroec committed a partial break with the truth by stressing too much the *mysterium tremendum* the soul indeed can experience, the pantheists make a complete sweep. They say the divine is here and now. Nature and God are one. All you have to do is to get rid of your own ignorance, in order to discover the “divinity” of everything, particularly your own. However just as the deists ran aground in the determinism of their rational universe, so the pantheists sooner or later get knocked down by the stark nature of the real reality. Do I need to mention that murder is not divine? Or is the murderer just ignorant! Lets not deceive ourselves.

And so to escape the nakedness of matter the occultic polytheist simply denies the reality of matter altogether. Only the invisible things are divine. Matter is a deceptive illusion. We must deny the appearance of our own bodies. However this brand of spiritualism does not free a person either. Ghandi said that the thought of *samsara*, the wheel of incarnation, is

practically unbearable. And indeed it is. How would you like to have a prospect of dying a million deaths until you can enter *Nirvana*? And so we see that the two slopes of sin go down into the same ravine of ghastly death.

The identity of rationalism and mysticism is that both believe in an ultimately absolute truth. But in practice they make it relative. Materialists and occultists are identical in believing that the world is nothing but chaos. Ultimate truth exists only in the nothingness of *Nirvana*.

The hidden motivation of the first pair is the attempt to play God. They are the makers, the gods of truth, whether it be through reason or mystique. The second pair also tries to play God, the one by autonomous random behavior, the other by ascetic severity. The problem is that all these characters run away with one essential aspect of reality. They idolize it, turn it into the god that must lead them to godhood. However the body, mind, soul and spirit must be kept in balance in the heart. It is indeed an unfathomable mystery how God ultimately keeps the extrinsic and

intrinsic world together, but the important thing is that He wants to fulfill all your needs. Do not deny any of them, nor neglect. Therefore “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts....( Hebr. 3.15).”

The apostle Paul said:

“Every scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that a godly human (lit. the human of God) may be complete, perfected for every good work ( 2 Tim. 3.16, 17).”.

When it comes to the inspiration of the Bible there are various options, all hailing down from the four corruptions. The atheist denies that the Bible has been inspired in any way. It is a human book, full of mistakes, mythical ignorance and some beauty. The average deist claims that the Bible is inspired only in *Kerygma*, that is in hidden message. His rationalism cannot accept full inspiration. Then there are spiritists

that abuse the Bible for occultic practices. I suppose they might claim that the Bible has been fully dictated, or inspired by God. The mysticists might claim that the Bible is inspired by God to instruct us in mysticism.

What is wrong with all these positions is that they do not keep the human and divine side of the Bible in balance. If you start overly accentuating one side you end up losing the very thing you cherish. So the rationalist seeks for a divine message hidden in a mainly human book. But his rationalism makes everything so uncertain that his faith lacks power altogether. In the end many such people simply give up, and escape into an agnostic position, or they bounce to the opposite one. On the other side of the seesaw the same thing happens. If the Bible is mainly a divine book then the human being is but a cripple. God helps him along but has to do most of the work Himself. Paul, however, says that “we are co-workers of God (1 Cor. 3.9).” Those that believe that the Bible is mainly divine, regard it as having a certain mysticistic aura. The inner tension of this position is that the human being stands in an irrational relation to God. To

escape that tension one may claim that the Bible is only divine, a dictated book. (Moslems, by the way, claim this about the Koran.). But this position turns us into robots. And indeed spiritists, that use the Bible for occultic purposes, are abused by demonic spirits as marionets.

Whereas the rationalist turns God into a spiritual cripple, the mysticist makes us irrational. Both turn the Bible into an impersonal book and make us stand aloof from it. The materialist takes the Bible away practically altogether, and the occultic enslaves us in a hideous way. Both, in mutually opposite ways, kill the Bible off. The hidden motivation behind all these attitudes is the same----idolatry.

The truth, the miracle and the mystery is that the Bible is both fully human and fully divine. Therefore it is divinely perfect, and also full of the sins and mistakes humans make. God wants us to learn from these.

As to the opinions of the four positions, there is some truth in all of them. There are many passages that have been directly inspired by God's spirit. See for

instance Isaiah 7.3-9. As to mystic experiences, read Revelation, Isaiah, Ezechiel, and so on. As to the hidden *Kerygma* theory, which denies the plenary verbal inspiration of Holy Writ; the Bible is full of passages that have deeper meanings behind the literal accounts----symbolic, prophetic and spiritual teachings hide behind the practical explanation. As to the opinion that the Bible is full of mistakes, contradictions, and historical inaccuracies; I deny this, but only as to the so-called autographs, the original writings. During the course of time indeed a little bit of human error has crept in. People have interpolated for instance John 5.7 in the manuscript the King James translators used, in order to prove the Trinity. So copyists have made grammatical errors over the years. However the ancient manuscripts found in Israel have proved that the factor of human error is minimal. We have now an abundance of very old manuscripts that show us that human error in the Bible is only about two percent. And that concerns only minor details. As to important doctrines, the Bible as we have it today, is still divinely perfect. And most of the two percent of errors are

grammatical, which can be corrected by understanding the context. As to mistakes, archeology proves more and more that the Bible is right. As to the so-called contradictions, most of them can be explained. I refer you to Archer's book at the end of this chapter. The Bible contains paradoxes, rather than contradictions.

That the Bible is also fully human can be seen for instance in Paul's comments, "As to virgins I have no commandment from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one that has received mercy from the Lord to be faithful (1 Cor. 7.25)" and "She is more blessed if she stays so, according to my opinion; and I suppose also to have the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 7.40)."

The miracle of the Bible is that God used sinful, erring people and inspired them to produce something divinely perfect. God used their abilities to the full, and therefore the divine and the human are inseparably intertwined in the Scriptures. The unity of the Bible shows that it is a supernatural book. How else could about forty people write sixty-six books over a period of at least fifteen hundred years without being at loggerheads with each other? There is no book like the

Bible in the world. It is the Book of books. It is God's letter to *you*, dear reader, "personally" addressed!

### *Higher Criticism*

The so-called higher critics (people that claim they can decide what is right and wrong in or about the Bible, based on rational thinking) are firmly rooted in the rationalistic tradition of the Western world. Whereas materialists deny anything their senses cannot perceive, the rationalists still allow for things that make sense to their power of reason, such as the existence of God. However there have been also polytheistic, and pantheistic higher critics. In fact Spinoza, who was a pantheist, is called the father of higher criticism. He combined rationalism and mysticism into some kind of "dualistic" pantheism. So the gnostics, who were some curious type of polytheists, believed that God had created them from all eternity. They considered themselves spiritual people. Other people were either psychical, having a soul, or physical only. The physical world was created

by Satan, the god of the Old Testament, and was absolutely evil. These people therefore rejected the O.T. and also all texts in the N.T. that did not agree with their theology. In practice they were either severely ascetic, or downright lecherous; depending on whether they tried to avoid the “sins” of the body, or whether they considered them of no importance. This shows again that extremes come close together.

But these people were by no means the first critics of the Bible. The Jewish Sadducees, were also some kind of higher critics. They only accepted the law of Moses. They did not believe in angels, or in the resurrection, or that humans have a spirit (Lu. 20.27; Acts 23, 8; Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book XIII, chapter 10,6). So we see that the materialistic atheists, rationalistic deists, occultistic polytheists, and mysticistic pantheists all have their reasons, mutually opposite to each other, to reject the Bible, or at least parts of it. Together they have left nothing of this extraordinary Book intact. But even if you start tampering in the least way with the Bible, for instance by adding to it, or by reading your own thoughts into it;

the result in the end is disastrous. For the word of God is like Christ's seamless garment (John 19.23), which was woven from top to bottom. If you dabble or meddle with it, in the end you undo the whole thing. As always the hidden motivation behind these various contaminated standpoints is the idolatry of different aspects of Creation. But idolatry leads to disharmony, and hence the attacks on the Bible. However the Bible is perfectly in balance with Creation.

In this section we will debate only briefly a few objections modern critics have come up with. So they have observed that there are Creation, fall, Savior, virgin birth, heaven, and such stories in different ancient religions; including some kind of divine mother, a supreme deity, sometimes even a trinity of sorts, an evil adversary, sacrificial atonements, an order of priests, a sanctuary with rituals, and sacred writings. Infidels have claimed that the ancient Hebrews borrowed from these religions, and that in this way the Old Testament came into existence. They have even dared to state that Christianity is just an unfortunate continuation of ancient paganism. The truth however is

exactly the reverse. God has had direct dealings with people like Adam, Enoch and Noah from the beginning of human history. So in Genesis chapter three God promises that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent. This is the gospel in Kernel. An antediluvian like Enoch prophesied:

“Look, the Lord has come with His holy myriads in order to execute judgement against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their godless works that they have committed without regard for God, and concerning all the hard things ungodly sinners have spoken against Him (Jude: 14.15)!”

As the children of Adam, and Noah afterwards, turned away from God they corrupted the truth, but kept some of its outward things, histories, and prophecies. Ancient religions are corruptions of the truth that people like Enoch and Noah believed in.

So modern critics have claimed that monotheism gradually developed out of polytheism. Somehow the

ancient Hebrews discovered the truth of the one God. If this is true then God is a heartless psychopath to let so many people believe in mythological lies. In my book I will keep on trying to show that the very opposite is true. The truth does not climb up out of heresy, but heresy falls off from the truth. Even logic affirms this. If you take a chessboard with its pieces neatly in order and you give it a bang, then they get scattered all over the place. The opposite is impossible.

In connection with the alleged mythological naïveté of the O. T., modern critics have claimed that Christ Himself knew better but that He accommodated to the false beliefs of His contemporaries. This theory runs into serious trouble however. First it makes Christ an untruthful man, not to say snaky. Secondly it should be clear that if there had been no God Who sent judgement on Sodom and Gomorrah, then Christ's warnings concerning Chorazin and Bethsaida were pointless (Mt. 11.21-24). This holds also true for Christ's comparisons with Jonah and His own sacrifice, and Noah and His own second coming. Moreover if we cannot trust Christ's historical statements, what about

His ethical teachings and spiritual truths? Perhaps Christ's view of marriage was also just an accommodation? But this trend leads us into a fatal quagmire.

As to the story of Jonah, who was swallowed by a large fish, critics have had a field day to make the Bible look ridiculous. But these people seem to be ignorant of the fact that there are fishes that can swallow a man whole, and that this in fact has happened more or less recently. The man survived because the fish was caught and cut open. The air in the fish's belly had kept the man alive. But the stomach acid had disfigured him. (See Willis's book at the end of this chapter).

The so-called higher critics have claimed that the Creation and deluge accounts in the O.T. were adopted from Babylonian sources. However both go back to the same source. That the one is inspired and the other corrupted can be seen in various ways. The simplicity and clarity of the biblical accounts ring altogether true. The description of Creation is written in simple but at once beautiful words, whereas the Babylonian account is full of inconsistencies and

polytheistic nonsense. The Babylonian flood story is clearly a corrupted and unlikely version of what happened. In it is said that the noise made by humans disturbed the peace of the gods. The ark is of cubic form, which is a total failure from a hydrodynamic point of view. The Biblical ark on the contrary has perfect dimensions, which in fact were used by one Dutch shipbuilder in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a design for his ship. In the Babylonian account the flood lasts only six days and six nights, which seems to be a mix-up with the Biblical account of Creation. In the Babylonian account the hero is given immortality.

It is clear that the ancient events, of which the essential ones have been recorded in Scripture, have become scattered in the memory of all ancient nations. So in Hinduism Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, have become the gods Sama, Cama, and Praja-pathi (the terminal a's' are not pronounced, and *Pra* means 'Lord').

The book of Daniel also has been an eyesore for the critics. For the events predicted in it are clearly borne out by secular history. But of course reason tells

us that God cannot use humans to predict the future, if He can know it Himself at all! Therefore Daniel's book is not prophecy but history written in prophetic style after the events! So they have claimed that this book was written about 185 B.C. instead of about six hundred B.C. However why then is the book of Daniel in the Septuagint, which was written about three hundred B.C. (some say between about 300 and 185 B.C.; but who knows that for sure?), and in the canon of the Hebrew O.T.? Josephus says (Book I, 8 against Apion) that the Jews accept only twenty-two books into the O.T. For after Malachi God did not use any prophets anymore, that is after about four hundred B.C. But what about all the predictions concerning Christ, which were clearly fulfilled in the N.T.? How will the critics deny these? But like Freud they have an Oedipus complex bigger than the universe, they refuse to accept God.

John Meldau in his book (see end of the chapter) points out that the chance that all the O.T. prophecies happened by accident is a chance of one on an incalculable number. Fifty prophecies (there are about

three hundred of them!) make one chance in 1,125,000,000,000,000. If you incalculate the time and place as well then you arrive at an unfathomable number. And that is only with fifty prophecies!

There is a critical theory that claims that the writers of the gospels could never have remembered everything accurately. So over time (many) inaccurate things written about Christ stole in, as well as the tendency to turn Christ into a legendary figure. But what does the apostle Peter say?

“For we have not followed cleverly devised fables when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His greatness ( 2 Pet. 1.16).”

The so-called higher critics either turn the N.T. writers into liars, or into bungling fanatics. And what about Christ's words?

“But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, Which the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and will make you *remember* all things that I told you ( John 14.25) (!).”

But all these theories are caused by their damnable rationalistic deism. They have an axe to grind. Willingly they keep themselves blind from the truth, in order to feed their own egos.

One of the best arguments against higher criticism comes from their own history. For the following critic demolishes the work of the preceding one. These infidels are agreed on practically nothing, it seems, but that God is a clumsy cripple. At least their self proclaimed higher wisdom implies that. Is it not striking to see that these people call themselves *higher* critics! They set themselves up above God, Who inspired every word of the Bible. The Bible actually predicts this kind of critics, which shows that the Bible is truly God's Book.

“...Knowing this first namely that in the latter days mockers will come, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For since our forefathers passed away all things remain just as from the beginning of Creation (2 Pet. 3. 3,4).’ ”

We will now conclude this section with one other subject that has to do with higher criticism, namely the subject of literalism and symbolism. These two must be kept in balance as well. This can be particularly seen in Genesis chapter one through three. Certain modern critics believe in the theory of demythologization. This is the first full break with the balanced truth, as it overly accentuates the symbolism and eats away at the literalism of the Bible. The adherents of this theory deny the literal truth of these deeply mysterious accounts, and try to lift the symbolic message out of the literal representation. So Genesis’ first two chapters are nothing but a symbolic hymn of God’s greatness. Chapter three stands for (the beginning of)

the problem of good and evil, and man's broken relation to God. The question arises why God would use incorrect representations to teach correct truth. Moreover if the Fall of Adam and Eve is only symbolical, and not a literal, historical event; then the problem of good and evil, and right and wrong, becomes shrouded in a fog, not to say that it is to be put on God's account! The inner tension of this point of view is that the problem of good and evil becomes inconsequential. For this kind of theology denies the very essential truth of the Fall, namely that it is based in historical fact. Is it any wonder that many a youth intuitively feels the powerlessness of this kind of symbolism, and embraces the atheist's belief that it is all nothing but a myth, not to say nonsensical drivel?

On the other end of the wobble board a similar thing happens. Plato in his account of the garden of Eden exaggerated the literal aspect. He speaks about a time when animals could talk, and communicate with humans. Now this the Bible never states. Only the serpent talked. Anyway, animals do not have vocal chords. Therefore the serpent was used by the

supernatural powers of Satan as a fitting medium, just like God used Balaam's donkey to complain against this magician (Num. 22.28). The inner inconsequence of this kind of mysticism is the arbitrary confusion of phantasy and literalism. The inner tension is that this kind of fairy tale theology is powerless, in which it is identical with rationalistic modernism.

Other examples of fairy tale literalism are the claims that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an apple tree, or a vine (Arthur Custance and others). But the Bible is silent. We simply cannot know what kind of tree it was. Probably the two trees of the garden are not even around anymore. To escape this weakness some people have completely run away with literalism in order to create a powerful theology. So they claimed that Cain, Eve's first child, was the literal offspring of Eve's sexual intercourse with Satan. Hence come the children of Satan and the children of God. This kind of spiritualism is identical with atheism in that it completely destroys the balance of the truth. Another example of heavy spiritualism is to claim that the Fall consisted in sexual intercourse, "which is from the

devil.” This is some kind of extreme literalism and extreme symbolism.

Having shown how the balance of literalism and symbolism can be upset, I will now proceed to show how they must be balanced. That the two trees were literal trees must be believed. For they are essential in the explanation of the problem of good and evil, and right and wrong. God had blessed Adam and Eve abundantly. As proof of their love for and trust in Him, He put them to one simple test. Enjoy everything that is to be enjoyed, except for the one tree. For the fruit of that tree is deadly. And die they did. Symbolically the tree of life stands for obedience to God. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil stands for a person’s choice to try to go it alone- without God. Self godhood through one’s own power to distinguish between good and evil, is what this tree symbolizes. (Please read for yourself Gen. 1-3). However nobody can live out the difference between good and evil perfectly. Sins are the result. But sin is the disobedience of God’s laws, and that causes havoc. Evil is not simply to be compared with eating an apple. Sin is the rejection of

the infinitely Holy One. Therefore this tree causes not only literal death, but spiritual death; in fact eternal pain in hell, which is called the second death (Rev. 20. 14,15). Therefore we must eat from the tree of life, which stands for a humble bowing to God's Person. Abel brought a sacrifice to God, and thereby acknowledged that he was a lost sinner (Gen.4). He needed a substitutionary victim to bear the penalty of his own guilt. In the times of the O. T. sacrifices had to be brought to appease God. This practice was corrupted by the other ancient religions. These sacrifices are actually types or symbols of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. He is the seed of the woman (both literal and symbolic!) that would crush the serpent—Satan. Cain however chose the other symbolical tree. He brought the labor of his own hands as a sacrifice to God. God rejected this kind of blind and self conceited pride.

As to the serpent, scientific research has shown that snakes do eat the dust of the ground literally. It seems to help them to navigate over the ground. Symbolically Satan "eats" fallen sinners, mortal clay.

For we were made of the dust of the ground. Our unrepentant state confirms Satan's hatred of God's absolute greatness. Satan wanted to be like God. Our behavior is like his, only in our own small world.

As to Eve, she was literally made out of Adam's rib. Modern science does not have to consider this ridiculous. A rib contains bone marrow cells which have all the genes necessary to build a new person. The inactive genes that are switched off by the process of differentiation (by which only bone marrow cells are produced) can theoretically be activated by the necessary chemicals. If we take the nucleus from such a cell and put it into the protoplasm of a fertilized egg, whose own nucleus has been removed, then a new person can be constructed. Of course also a y-chromosome would have to be deleted and the x-chromosome doubled. Of course I am not suggesting that God made Eve in such a "bungling" way. But I do avow that by majestic power He literally used Adam's rib. Symbolically Adam and Eve stand for Christ and the Church. Adam's deep sleep symbolizes Christ's death on the cross, and the Church is born out of that

mystery of mysteries. When we hear the literal echo of Adam's words "This time it is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh (Gen. 2. 23)," we can also hear the words of the apostle John: " But we know that when He (that is Christ) has been revealed, we (that is the Church consisting of all true believers) will be like Him... ( I John 3.2)."

It is indeed an ineffable mystery that God is able to combine deep symbolism with exact literalism. Therefore if you cherish one side too much you fall into a vicious vortex, and you lose all in the end. However if you cherish both sides equally, then you are taken up with an upwards spiralling virtuous circle, that is continually strengthened by the two poles!

## Afterthought on Higher Criticism

Most seminars and universities with departments in religion have been thoroughly vitiated by various forms of so-called higher criticism. It is no good to fight them on intellectual grounds. For as soon as one theory is

shot down they erect another one like in an endless target game. Moreover the problem is not an intellectual one to begin with. It is a *spiritual* problem. Higher criticism was started by people that reject the God of the Bible, and His Christ of the cross of salvation. They treat the Bible like any other literary book *in order* to rationalize its greatness away. But the intellectual theories that we can employ to study literature do not apply to the Bible. Higher criticism creates a foul smog around this Book of books in order to unnerve its claims that it directs at us so forcefully and clearly. Higher criticism is like a web that entangles students in a world of facts and theories that are really one phony pretense, not to say lie. I am not at all saying that it is all useless. What I am saying is that the premises make the whole thing a mess, a dangerous morass. Higher critics are blind leaders of the blind, infidels that reject the truth *a priori*. And then they sit down to establish their particular version of the truth. The whole exercise is practically a waste of time for the intellect, not to mention that it is an insult to the pious soul that seeks to follow Christ.

## *“Faiths”*

As you have noticed already I relate the four corruptions of deistic rationalism, pantheistic mysticism, atheistic materialism, and polytheistic occultism with the four human entities; respectively the body, mind, soul and spirit. To be sure, we also have a will and conscience. But these make decisions and condemn or approve moral matters.

In this section I will connect them to the pair of relativism and absolutism. These must be kept in balance. I have tried to point out to you that the scholastics attempted to find absolute truth by means of their relative faculty of reason. What they really were doing was to absolutize the mind. Deism, with its relativism, was the result. But the deists deified their minds. A worse relativism resulted. The atheist escaped into the absolutization of matter, for they only believed in what their physical senses told them. A far worse relativism is the result of this kind of “faith”. Pyrrhoism is a curious case in connection with this. Pyrrho, an ancient Greek, carried doubt to its logical

extreme. He taught that we must not even trust our own senses! However at the same time he was very interested in Indian Fakirs, who he went to see along with the expedition of Alexander the Great. This shows again that extremes meet each other, and that extreme scepticism goes hand in hand with dangerous gullibility.

I have also tried to point out to you that the mystic tends to absolutize his emotions. Irrationality ensues. The pantheist becomes worse in this and absolutizes the problem of good and evil by fixing it in God. A bad kind of ethical relativism results here as well. The polytheist escapes into an absolutization of spiritual power. The outcome is a far worse relativism. In India there are millions of different gods, and everybody has to find his own way among them. So the mutually opposite “faiths” are identical in that they all absolutize a different entity of the human being. A dangerous kind of relativism follows on the heel of this tendency to deify ourselves.

Let us now see how the balance of relativism and absolutism is upset in social behavior. The rationalist

believes that there is such a thing as ultimate truth, but he relativizes it too much. God is at the center of the wheel of truth, and all religions are on the other side, connected on the hub by the spokes. The Baha'is are an example of this. But they cannot live with their relativism; they tend to absolutize their own group.

The inner tension of this outlook is that God is a handicapped individual that cannot simply reveal the truth to us. The materialist does not believe in absolute truth at all. "It does not matter what you believe. Whatever you believe is true for you." However if someone believes that the moon is made of green cheese, this obviously does not make it true. But also the atheist cannot live with this kind of "absolute" relativism. A good example *in casu* is the former party cult in Russia. If you wanted to leave the country you were branded a "heretic". This shows the unbreakable bond of the two sides of the truth. We just cannot live with our own self proclaimed idols, except by great moral and even physical harm.

On the other end of the tipping plank a similar thing happens. There are people who think they have

found the absolute truth. They cherish it in some kind of mysticistic way. Their reality is quite a fervor. However you will find that they compensate this fire, which is too hot, by a certain unconscious relativism. The inner tension of this viewpoint is that these people have a holier-than-thou attitude, and that their tradition has certain irrational inconsistencies. Some Pharisees in the times of the N.T. were more or less like this.

Then there are groups who claim that one must absolutely belong to them in order to be saved. "Only we have absolute spiritual truth." The so-called Jehovah's witnesses are such a group. This kind of attitude is the mark of a cult. Their reality burns at a very high pitch. But also here, unconsciously, there is relativism. This is seen in the arbitrary way that they handle the Bible.

Tolerance and intolerance play an important role here as well. It seems that the more tolerant a person becomes, the more intolerant he will be towards the real truth.

Now let's see how relativism and absolutism must be balanced. God is absolute, as we have seen, and

we are relative. Therefore our finite minds can never grasp the absolute. However God can, and does, give enough light so we can learn everything that is absolutely essential. But because we are relative, we must grow in truth. However since we are created in God's image our hearts can stand in an absolute relation to Him, while our minds remain relative. To come into such a relationship with God you must repent and be converted. Confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead.

It has been claimed by some that since there are so many religions on earth, a person can never find out which is the right one. However this is beating around the bush! Thousands of years of history have shown what these religions are. The combined effort and testimony of missionaries, historians, pioneers and thinkers show us abundantly the character of all these "faiths" . They can all be divided into, or analysed by, the divisions we have discussed in this book. They all directly blame God or the gods for all our troubles. Only biblical Christianity shines out. Not that Christendom is perfect, very far from it indeed, but Christ's message is.

Christ's message cuts deepest, but heals best. Atheism produced Stalin; materialistic Darwinism produced Hitler; Rome produced Nero; but God gave us Christ! All the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, all the teachers that ever spoke, have not influenced the world as Christ has. He is and remains for ever King of kings and Lord of lords!

The reason that people get caught up in false "faiths" is that they are not in the first place concerned about *what* the absolute truth is. They are more concerned with a framework that gives them a certain satisfaction. For most people, unconsciously, the search for religion is like looking out for what kind of car they shall buy. Having found it they identify themselves with it to such an extent that it literally becomes their God. Attack their God, and you attack them! Of course this is really a game. For we worship ourselves in worshipping a god that we have set up ourselves. For it is *we* that have created this god. "This is *our* god, and don't you speak against it!" "This is *my* car, and don't you even touch it!" " But it is not honest. Everybody that believes a lie, becomes a liar. For he

systematically ignores everything that disproves it, and thus perpetuates the propaganda of his lie.

The apostle Paul wrote:

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for  
the proof of things unseen ( Hebr. 11:1).”

Why is he so confident that he used the word “proof”? Because the right faith is the *proof* of the invisible truth! False religions make for poor “faiths”. If a person’s religion is wrong one can find that a poor attitude hides behind it. False religions are in fact hatred of God. For, because of the Fall, the natural heart hates God and is not capable of true faith. Who wants to believe in the cripple god of the deists? Who wants to believe that everything is divine, including death? Atheism and polytheism show a very poor attitude as well. Who but someone extremely guilty wants to believe that upon death it is all over, or that after death one loses totally one’s own identity, and one may become a rat!? And who, as the confirmed Satanist does, wants to glory in hell? All these people, whether consciously or

unconsciously, blame God instead of themselves. “Everybody that hates Me, loves death (Prov. 8. 36),” God says. All these religions are clearly sick and rotten to the bone, yes to the marrow of the bone. They make an eternal future of glory an absolute impossibility. Thus the true faith is PROOF enough in itself!

### *God's Name*

Let us now take up very briefly how people have used God's name. Some more or less well-meaning people have used God's name in oaths. However this is either dragging God down to your level (rationalism), or lifting yourself up to His level (mysticism), depending on your attitude. Christ, however, said, “Let your word be “yes,” “yes,” “no,” “no.” And what is more than these is from the evil one (Mat. 5.37).” However some governments use the verb “to swear an oath” as nothing but a solemn promise.

Rationalistic theologians used God's name with a tinge of indifference, not to say coldness. The (ancient) Jews were so mysticistic that they did not even dare to

pronounce God's name. Because of this extreme deference up till today we do not know for sure the correct pronunciation. Scholars think it is *Yahweh*. The Jewish copyists supplied the vowels of *Adonay* ("my Lord") to the Tetragrammaton of YHWH, Hebrew being a vowelless script. Thus the hybrid word of *Jehovah* came about. Both sides tend to make God impersonal, which is a break with the truth. The hidden motivation behind both attitudes is that we rather avoid God.

But God's name can be used in a far worse way. Many materialists abuse God's name as a curse. Some occultists abuse His name for magical purposes, ignorant of the fact that powerful demons inspire them. Some scholars think that the Hebrew word *Abacadabra* is an ancient magical expletive for the Father, the Spirit and the Word. If you know Hebrew then you can indeed see this. Both mutually opposites use God's name in a blasphemous way. The hidden motivation behind both attitudes is that we hate God. Why else would we abuse His name? Cursing is not a custom like saying "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." It comes from the bottom of our hearts. And what is found there is pure

hatred. Therefore in the time of Moses somebody that took God's name in vain had to be stoned (Lev. 24.10-16).

It is not striking to see that God's name, in ways good and bad, is so "popular"! This is also an indirect testimony to the truth!

### *God and Man in Relation*

Throughout history people have had various ideas about how God reveals Himself. Aristotle said that God thinks Himself only. This is lopsided deistic rationalism, as it makes God too high to take interest in creatures as *other* beings than He Himself is. Hegel posed that the absolute Spirit comes to self-consciousness. This is mysticistic pantheism. A lot of modern theologians believe in a finite God that does His level best to work out our destiny. What is wrong with these positions is that they either make God unloving and selfish, or turn Him into a cripple.

Materialistic atheists and occultistic polytheists break away from God altogether. The atheists believe

that the forces of evolution will propel us to godhood eventually. We must take control of these forces, and thus ensure our destiny. The polytheists believe that the gods spin out our fate like somebody could weave a cloth. Sooner or later these people realize that these “forces” are really hostile determinisms that have no mercy. Aleister Crowley, the Satanist, considered Satan his liberator. “He leads us unto victory. We will throw God out of heaven, or at least keep Him from the earth. At the battle of Armageddon, when Christ returns, we will conquer.”

The Bible, however, teaches that God reveals Himself both directly, and indirectly in Creation (Psalm 19). This process of Revelation is progressive. For we are finite and God infinite. Therefore Creation and Revelation will combine unto all eternity to declare the glory of God and the purpose of Man in His Works. God spoke to people like Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Job. He had Moses write the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Then came many other people, Kings, prophets and others, to whom God revealed Himself directly. At last He spoke through His Son (Hebr. 1.1),

and the writers of the N.T. The Bible now is complete, and we are told not to add to it, nor to subtract from it (Rev. 22.18,19). However in a certain way Revelation keeps going on, for it takes an eternity to discover all the riches of Creation and Revelation.

Christ said:

“Every religious teacher that has been made a disciple for the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man, or master of his house, that produces out of his treasure things new and old (Mat. 13.52),” and, “I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When He comes, the Spirit of the Truth, He will lead you in all the truth; for He will not speak out of Himself, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will announce to you the things that are coming. He will glorify Me, for He will receive from Me, and will announce it to you (John 16. 12-14).”

Therefore on earth, Revelation, through the interplay of Creation and the Bible, under direction of the Holy spirit, will progress until:

“.....we arrive all at the oneness of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, at the state of a perfect man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4.13).”

To come to a good understanding of this passage we would have to combine it with others such as Eph. 2.21; 4.16; 5.30; 1 Cor. 12.13-27. What the apostle is saying, I think, is that all Christians together of all the centuries of Christendom, contribute to the fullness of the knowledge of Christ. This process goes on till the last member is added to the Church. It also means that at all times in history God gives enough light to his disciples to deal with Creation, and also to deal with the idolatries that are rampant according to the evil spirits of the age; in order to distinguish between good and evil, and between right and wrong. Therefore we must keep on looking for “things new and old”. For who is it but a fool

that will say in his heart that he has seen it all! Therefore I like so much the eighteenth verse of Psalm 119, “Open my eyes and I will see wonders from Thy law”. (I do not imply that there will be added to the Bible).

### *The Trinity*

The Bible clearly teaches that the One God “consists in” three divine Persons, all co-eternal and equally divine. This is an unfathomable mystery that transcends reason altogether. Earlier I have tried to point out that God transcends mathematics, this implies arithmetic. The Catholic tradition however overly accentuates reason, in which it follows Aristotle. So it started tampering with this ineffable mystery, and invented the idea of the *procession of the Trinity*. Since God must be absolutely One, which He is indeed, it cannot be that at the same time He is equally three. For that would be polytheism. This is what the Moslems accuse us of. And indeed if there are three *different* Gods, then God’s simplicity is a farce. If God is not absolute in His simplicity than He cannot be fully

Himself, absolute dynamic actuality, purest life. He is more like a car that consists of parts. (Excuse my language) . The idea of the procession of the Trinity holds that the Son proceeds from the Father, and the Holy Spirit subsequently from the Father and the Son. This is the belief of the Catholics in the Latin West. In the Greek East they omitted the so-called *Filioque* clause, teaching that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father only. Wars of words have been fought over these two different processions; sadly both sides were wrong. After this idea had been established, relatively early in Christendom, we see a man like Thomas Aquinas read it into biblical texts that say that God sent His Son, and texts that say that Christ will send the Holy Spirit, namely John 8. 42; 15.26. But these texts denote simply Christ's coming into humanity, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Texts like these show rather that there is some kind of "hierarchy" within the Trinity. So we see this also in the order in which the three divine Persons are mentioned, as in "... baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit (Mt. 28.19).“ Notice how it says the *name* (singular), rather than *names* (plural). God is One!

In order not to take away from Christ’s eternity, the Catholics invented the idea of Christ’s *eternal generation*, and read this into the texts that say “only-begotten Son”. The Greek word however, which also the King James translates as only-begotten (John 3:16), should be translated as “unique or only (in *kind*),” from *monogenes* (only-kind)”. It must be realized that there is no scriptural warrant for these ideas, none whatsoever. Therefore I once accused an Anglican of dishonoring the Trinity. He replied that Christ Himself said, “...for my Father is greater than I am (John 14.28).“ But Christ said this as the *human*, not as God. If I am to believe Catholics then the Persons of the Trinity are at once equal and unequal in greatness. Their idea is therefore a contradiction in terms. This Anglican also told me that the Father is greater than the Son by *only one logical moment*, whatever that is supposed to mean. However it seems to me that the idea of eternal generation is somehow time bound. Stripped of time, because God is timeless, then this “one logical moment” looms very

large. It seems to make the Father an infinity greater, and turn Christ into a relative infinity. How can Christ be *absolutely* one with the Father (John 10.30), if they *differ* by “one logical moment”!? The same thing holds for the Holy Spirit. In that first “logical moment” the Father was not the Father really, but just an impersonal deity, a pantheistic first cause. Where was or is the Son in that first “logical moment”? But this is all sophistry!

The reason that the mystery of the Trinity was not left intact is that, unconsciously, we hate to admit that God transcends us so much. The desire to comprehend God by means of the most fundamental rational principles, is nothing but the sinful desire to be like Him; either by dragging Him down, or lifting ourselves up unduly. But God, though His own mind must be the purest form of reason, transcends the law of contradiction. He created this law. He created mathematics, and arithmetic. One cannot be three at the same time, is true in Creation, but not in God. If our principles held true for God then we would be like Him! There would be no difference between God and Creation. The Oneness of God must be kept in perfect

balance with His Three-ness. He is the One in Three and the Three in One. Catholics have overly accentuated His Oneness. Therefore their Trinity is at once deistic and pantheistic, in that it is too rationalistic and also too much like Plato's pantheistic trinity of first cause-logos-all-soul.

Let us now see how this particular form of rationalism has grown worse like a cancer. Sabellius could not endure the mystery of the Trinity like the Catholics could. Whereas the latter made a half break with the truth, he destroyed the Trinity practically altogether. He claimed that the One God consists in, or is operative simply in, three *modes* or *aspects*; thus denying the existence of three divine *Persons consisting in the One God*. It must be well understood that this is the logical result of Catholic rationalism. They started by absolutizing God's Oneness. Sabellius only went a step further. Arius made things worse still. He claimed that Christ was the first created angel. And so we fall into Unitarianism, which holds there is simply one God. Armstrongites and Jehovah's witnesses are curious cases in connection with this. They claim that the Holy

Spirit is a force. For how, so Armstrong reasoned, can Christ be the Son of two different Persons? This makes these people also half deists and pantheists. This brings us to Plato's "trinity." He taught that God, the One and the Good, is the first cause of everything. He created or emanated reason, the "logos" or "word", from which proceeded the all-soul that pervades the whole world. In this he no doubt drew upon earlier thinkers. The Mormons make things worse even. They call Christ Satan's elder brother. This makes them polytheists.

We will now consider various mock trinities. (It seems Satan delights in blaspheming God through human minds) . The atheist gradually broke with the deists altogether and ended up with the evolutionary trinity of time, chance, and the impersonal, as their supreme father, creator-son, and all-soul. The Hindus believe in Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, as their supreme first cause, loving preserver, and all pervading spirit of death and destruction. Satanists break away from this despicable madness altogether, and hail the trinity of Satan-sin-death, as their unholy father, unholy creator-son, and unholy spirit.

All these corrupt trinities have in common that everything ultimately is impersonal, determined, and fatalistic. Even the so-called monotheistic trinities of the various sects imply this, though their initiates would vehemently deny it. If God is ultimately pure reason, the unmoved mover of Aristotle, the first cause of Plato, the *causa causans* of Thomas, then everything has been determined from all eternity. However God cannot be reduced to reason. Therefore we must do away with this form of rationalism (or rather rationalisticism!), even though reason has an important place. These people suffer from '*rationitis*'...

God is more than pure reason, and He certainly transcends our understanding of cause and effect. To call God the first cause makes sense rationally, for He Himself has not been caused. But if He is the cause of everything, then He is also the cause of sin. Scholasticism turns God into a "machine", whose "love" is but intellectual will power, and Plato's first cause turns Him into the author of sin, even though he called God the supreme idea of the good, the beautiful and the one. But God is not the cause of sin, Satan is. How is this

possible? The Bible lets it remain a mystery. This does not make me a dualist, nor do I believe, like the Catholics, that evil is simply deficiency like the holes in a Swiss cheese. But to call God simply, or *primaevally*, the first cause of *everything*, is certainly a theology that falls short of completeness. As to sin being simply a deficiency, does this not make God responsible, Who should have give Satan the goodwill and willpower to remain perfect? But Satan had the power to remain perfect! It does indeed remain a mystery that only faith can accept. Therefore rationalism *per se*, as well as mysticism by itself, is evil and certainly lacking. Only spiritual faith can handle this problem. Some have argued that God allowed the Fall in order to bring in a greater good. So Paul says that where sin abounds, God's grace superabounds (Rom. 5.20). Augustine even exclaimed as to the Fall, "*felix culpa*" or *lapsa*, "happy guilt!" But this is spiritual drunkenness. Others have reasoned that the Fall had to be allowed to avoid a greater evil. Augustine's enthusiasm makes us look like playthings of God's arbitrary love; and the second argument is altogether too pragmatic, as if God were

bound by necessity. All we can do at this outskirts of eternity, at this outpost of theology, is to kneel down like little children, thumbs in our mouths, and rest our little heads in the lap of our heavenly Lord. In Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2.3).

In the Trinity there is One What (God's essence, absolute simplicity, pure actuality, pure life), and three Who's (the three divine Persons). In Christ there are two Whats (natures) and one Who. When God makes clear to us that He is both One and Three, it must be realized that He speaks in creational terms. We can feel a little bit of sympathy for the Moslems when we were to say that God consists in three essences or principles, rather than one. It would be like saying that a human being has more than one distinct consciousness, which seems worse than schizophrenia, for a schizophrenic is still one person. If God were to have more than one essence, He would not be the unique being He is. To have an essence means that there is something essential about you, something that characterizes you to the very depth of your being.

There seems to be an idea around that sees the different Persons of the Trinity in the passage of 1 Cor. 12, associated with three different functions. I think this is wrong. All we can gather from Scripture is that the Holy Spirit never draws attention to Himself. He glorifies the Father and the Son. Therefore it is wrong to pray to the Holy Spirit. It is rather the Holy Spirit that motivates a person to pray in the first place. As to Christ, we know that He is the Creator of all things (John 1), and that He came to undo the works of Satan (1 John 3.8), and that He reveals the Father (John 17.26).

I think we are allowed to ask questions though. Thus the King James version translates John 4.24 with "God is a spirit". But it can also be "God is spirit". The former can imply that the three Persons are three Spirits, the latter could imply that there is one spirit. The latter position raises the question how three Persons can be one spirit, seeing that each angel is one spirit only. The former position might lead to tri-theism, raising the question how three spirits can be One God. So one could ask whether the three divine Persons share one consciousness, or whether they are three

consciousnesses that are “simply” One? The former idea might be Sabellian , the latter again tri-theistic. We must not take such questions too seriously, and leave it up to God to reveal Himself more when we are with Him.

It has been argued, rightly I think, that God has left His imprint not only on us, in creating us as a human trinity consisting in a spirit, soul, and body (the mind pervades these three); but also on Creation. So it has been argued that the universe consists in space, matter and time. Each of these consists in three subspects, respectively: height, width, and length; energy, movement, and phenomena; past, present, and future. The light of the sun consists in light-, warmth-, and actinic rays (which cause growth). Light, again, has three basic colours. I kind of like this.

We will now consider the deity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. For if they can be shown to be divine, then the Trinity becomes a clear fact for the eyes of faith.

The Jehovah’s witnesses claim that Christ is Michael the archangel, and that He is **a** god. They also claim there are many gods. They quote different Scriptures for this. However this makes the word “God”

meaningless. To be God means to be absolutely unique, and absolutely the greatest. As such there is only one God. Sometimes the Scripture uses the word god to denote idols (Ps. 96.5), also it can denote people that *represent God*, such as Moses, (Ex. 4.16), or judges, or disciples (John 10.34,35; cf. Ps. 82.6). But in John 1.1 this is not the case for He is presented as the Creator there. It should be clear that the Jehovah's witnesses do not claim that the word God in Gen. 1.1 does denote a god, but the God. Why then the difference in John 1? Clearly there cannot be two different Creators! Christ said, "I and the Father are one (John 10.30)". The Jews, who accused Christ of blasphemy, understood Him better than the so-called witnesses.

Col. 2.9 says, "For in Him dwells all the Fulness of the divinity bodily." Phil. 2.6 says, "... He did not consider it robbery to be equal to God." The word "equal" here, literally means "equal things" to denote that Christ in all things is like God. In Hebr. 10.7 God the Father is also called *the* God. The problem is that the Jehovah's witnesses translate the Bible according to

their own bias. They simply ignore 1 John 5.20, "...and we are in the true One, in His Son Jesus Christ. *This is the true God and eternal life.*" How can an angel be our eternal life? An angel lives by the Grace of God, Who only is pure life! What about John 8.58 where Christ calls Himself the "I am"? This is a clear reference to Ex. 3.14 where God calls Himself also the "I AM". What about Psalm 11.1, "The Lord said unto my Lord..."? The same word is used here for Christ and for God! So Zech. 3.2. Christ's omnipresence can be inferred from Mt. 18.20; 28.20.

As to the Holy Spirit, there are heretics that say He is just a force, like electricity. But God does not operate by means of an impersonal force. For a force cannot know you. Moreover if the Holy Spirit is only a force then how can He be Holy! He would be an undefined "it"! Moreover if the Holy Spirit is a force only, then God is pantheistic! For how can a force be eternal? Force exists only in Creation. If these heretics are right, then the Holy Spirit is just an emanation of God, a force in the world. But that would implicate God again in the problem of evil.

Christ Himself spoke of the Holy Spirit as a Person. He uses the pronoun “He” for Him in John 16.8, which goes against good grammar if the Holy Spirit is an it. Moreover “spirit” in Greek is a neuter word, *requiring* a neuter pronoun. But Christ insist on referring to Him as a Person. The Holy Spirit possesses all the characteristics of a Person: intelligence (1 Cor. 2.11; Rom. 8.26-27); spiritual emotion (Rom. 15.30; Eph. 4.30); will (1 Cor. 12.11). He acts like a Person by guiding us (John 16.13); convicting us of sin (John 16.8); performing miracles (Acts 8.39); interceding (Rom. 8.26). He is talked about as a Person in that He is to be obeyed (Acts 10:19-21); can be lied to (Acts 5.3); resisted (Acts 7.51); grieved (Eph. 4.30); blasphemed (Mat. 12.31); insulted (Hebr. 10.29). How can all these things be said of a force? The Bible does not talk about the Holy Spirit like you refer to your car as “she’! What about these verses?

“But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, also the depths of God. For what human knows the things

of the human being, but the spirit of the human that is in Him? So also the things of God nobody knows but the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2.10,11)".

Now, tell me, how can an impersonal force *know* and *search!*? But these heretics only want to abuse the truth to play God over real Christians, and to delight in confounding them. The holy Spirit shares *one* name with the Father and the Son as seen already in Mat. 28:19!

The existence of the Trinity is essential to our salvation. For if Christ is just an angel or a human, then He could never have atoned for our sins. So the Holy Spirit is a Person that convicts us of sin and guides us in the truth. I will conclude this section by quoting Gen. 1.26," Let *us* make man in our image...." . The "us" here are not the angels, for angels do not create. The "us" here are the three Persons of the Trinity!

If I may use a mathematical metaphor then the three Persons of the Trinity are  $1 \times 1 \times 1$  to form the One God. They are not  $1 + 1 + 1$ . They are the One Love in its height, length and breadth.

## *God's Person: Majesty and Familiarity*

We will now conclude this book by reconsidering two important sides of God. They can be set out as follows.

Majesty	Familiarity
Transcendence	Immanence
Incomprehensible	Comprehensible
Unknowable	Knowable
Unsearchable	Searchable
Impersonal	Personal
Justice	Love
Wrath	Grace
Judge	Savior

The two sides of God can be seen in nature. On the one hand there is clearly loving care and provision, and on the other hand harshness and even terrible wrath. True monotheism preserves both sides and keeps them in

equilibrium. Therefore Islam and Judaism are not truly, or at least not fully, monotheistic. In a sense they are deistic. In Islam God is so transcending, so unknowable, so impersonal that one cannot even call God one's Father. It is blasphemy even to do that. However the N.T. does not just call God the Father of believers but "Abba Father" (Mk. 14.36; Rom. 8.15; Gal. 4.6). Now "Abba" is an Aramaic word of endearment. It comes close to "Daddy". Also Judaism is quasi deistic since it remained stuck in the theology of the O.T. It denies the manifestation of God in the N.T. At the same time both Islam and Judaism know forms of mysticism in which God is too meddling or too close. Though Christians have pictured God also as too meddling or too aloof, the message of Christ does not warrant either such theology.

In other forms of deism God becomes so impersonal that prayer to Him is almost meaningless. In atheism God is really gone. In pantheism God becomes so personal that even matter is divine. Paradoxically this personalness turns into impersonality. In polytheism the divine becomes personified in all the forces of

nature, and even humans can fully become gods. Also there God is gone with the wind of the spirit of the times.

The reason Islam and Judaism prefer a deistic God is because they reject the God of Love, the God Who gave His Son to die for our sins. They reject the God of Christ of the cross, because they do not want to admit that they are lost without Him. A Moslem cannot even say that God is love, so deistic He is for them. According to *sura* 3.29 in the Koran Allah does not even love unbelievers. But Christ said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His unique Son, that everybody that believes in Him may not go lost but have eternal life (John 3.16)." Elsewhere it even says that Christ died for haters.

The contradiction of rationalism is that on the one hand it tries to lift us above matter by means of autonomous reason, whereas on the other hand we get stuck in it. The contradiction of pantheism is that on the one hand it wants to lift matter up to the level of divinity, whereas on the other hand it gets bogged down in a naked reality. Pantheism drags God down into matter, deism exalts man out of it. Both get knocked over in the

process. It is all because the balance of God and Creation is upset. Everything, also our understanding of God, must be kept in balance. In atheism and polytheism the balance is totally destroyed. Therefore in the end they lose even the things they started out to cherish.

It has been claimed by people like the Moslems and Baha'is that God is so high that we cannot know anything or hardly anything about Him. This turns God into a cold and deistic power, a kind of majestic mount Everest. It is not true monotheism. This is really false reverence for God. The unconscious motivation behind it is to make God so impersonal that He is lifted up out of the details of our life. That way we do not have to feel so responsible.

On the other side it has been contended by some that God's incomprehensibility is based merely on a quantitative difference between man's and God's knowledge. This is pantheistic, for it makes God the infinite extension of man. However God's Knowledge is qualitatively different from ours. This kind of false monotheism overemphasizes God's apprehensibility.

The hidden motivation behind this idea is to be as much like God as possible. But if we overemphasize the one side of the balance only in the least way, then in the end we lose everything.

It is official Roman Catholic doctrine that one cannot feel God or have direct contact with Him. This idea is the result of their somewhat deistic rationalistic tradition. God lives in the eternal timeless moment and man flows with the stream of time. There is no direct contact possible between the two. This also upsets the balance. Although I do not consider myself much of a mystic, I do believe firmly that God stoops down to us so we can have a very emotional, personal relationship with Him, based on deep spiritual devotion, led by the Holy Spirit. The panentheists go too far here, in claiming a bipolar God. It would, as said earlier, turn God and Creation into a handicapped pair of Siamese twins.

All these false ideas arise because the fallen intellect cannot accept the mystery of the truth. It looms like an unbearable tension in front of it. So people try to relieve it by reducing one side of the mystery and explaining it by the other one. However faith can accept

the mystery, and have peace in it. The idea of a bipolar God, absolutely immutable and absolutely mutable, is simply an irrational dualism that tears God's two sides apart, rather than overemphasizing one side.

A complete theology gives you practical wisdom in daily life, a rational analysis of God's Nature in relation to Creation ---which analysis is based on spiritual truths that give spiritual power to the practical application--- and a deep feeling of happiness, creature-fulness and closeness to God. In other words, a complete theology involves our whole being: spirit, soul, mind and body.

An example of the practical side of monotheism is this one. If I am a hole digger for fences, or a manure carrier in a stable, then I should recognize that I may do this for the Almighty; not just for myself and my employer. For it is the Majesty on high that created the basic circumstances and conditions of human life. There is great spiritual power in the recognition of the fact that the infinitely transcending divinity bows down to express interest in my cleaning away cow manure.

Examples of names of God that illustrate these two sides are *EI Elyon* (the uppermost high God), *EI*

*Shadday* (Almighty God) in Gen. 14.19 and 17.1 respectively; and *YHWH Yireh* (YHWH will provide), *YHWH Rohi* (YHWH is my Shepherd) in Gen. 22.14; and Ps. 23.1 respectively. Further there are many texts that show these two sides such as Ps. 145.3 and John 3.16.

One's view of Christ, that is one's Christology shapes one's theology, which in turn determines all one's other outlooks on life: philosophy, anthropology, psychology and so on. The question arises what determines one's Christology and theology. That question is not easy to solve. In fact it is one of the great mysteries of life. Ultimately it is our heart that decides what to believe in. But there are many factors that play upon our heart. Ultimately it is the Grace and Truth of Christ that convicts and convinces a person.

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