

02 – Objectives of the Gods Clerics

Dear: Ya gotta admit that some people have accomplished much. For instance, consider the word ‘**duh**’. I congratulate whoever first started using it; it’s a great way to get the reader (or listener) to reconsider what was written (or said). For example, in the article entitled “Will I Be Happy?” [which was published in the May 1987 article of the Mormon “magazine” *Ensign* and written by Elder James E. Faust (of the Quorum of the Twelve “Apostles” of the Mormon Church)], when I encounter Faust’s statement, “No gift bestowed upon us is so precious as children. They are proof that God still loves us...”, I can’t think of a better response to such stupidity than **duh**. Has he considered the reality that already there are too many children in the world? Has he considered the possibility that “God’s love” is actually sexual lust? Has he... aw... never mind. Just... **duh**.

Further, think of the advances made with “happy faces” (or ‘smilies’ or ‘smileys’) and similar “punctuation” (i.e., ‘emoticons’ or ‘emoji’). They seem to have started with the “computer age”, when people would type smilies as :>) or similar. Now, in this word processor, if I omit the “nose”, > , then the result immediately jumps to a happy face, as I’ll now demonstrate by typing a ‘:’ followed by a ‘)’ , without a space between them: ☺ ! Similarly, if I type a “frown”, :>(, without the “nose”, then immediately this word processor yields: ☹ ! But it was even better in the word processor contained within the e-mail software in my (old) Netscape “browser”: in it, not only did I get happy faces and frowns (in color, no less!) but also a bunch of others, including ‘winks’ ;>), ‘startled’, ‘embarrassed’, and more. But the nearest they gave to ‘**duh**’ is a “confused face” – which I can’t show you in this word processor (🤔).

So, maybe I should try to create a new symbol to mean ‘**duh**’, such as a “diamond symbol”, suggesting a gaping mouth: ♦ . Nah, that doesn’t do it. How about ♦uh? Nah, still doesn’t do it. How about building a face around it: :>♦ ? Hmm, maybe not too bad. Maybe a “curled up” forehead, too?):>♦ . Hey, that’s better. And then maybe add some italics, to make it appear that the person’s head is cocked a bit:):>♦ . So then, when you read further in the above-referenced article by “Elder” Faust that “The scriptures clearly and consistently condemn all sex relations outside of legal marriage

as morally wrong. Why is this so? It is so because God said so.” Then, I could respond with):>♦ – but I admit that ‘**duh**’ is better.

Yet, sometimes a single word or symbol isn’t enough. For example, suppose you were reading the article in the May 1992 issue of *Ensign* entitled “Our Moral Environment” by “Elder” Boyd K. Packer (also of the Quorum of the Twelve “Apostles” of the Mormon Church) and you came across:

No greater ideal has been revealed than the supernal truth [now there’s something for you: a “supernal truth”!] that we are the children of God, and we differ, by virtue of our creation, from all other living things... No idea has been more destructive of happiness, no philosophy has produced more sorrow, more heartbreak and mischief; no idea has done more to destroy the family than the idea that we are not the offspring of God, only advanced animals, compelled to yield to every carnal urge.

I mean, when someone promotes such idiocy, maybe a single ‘**duh**’ is insufficient; maybe one must add “**but, but, but...**” (or similar) or even spell out the obvious objection: Well, of course “**we are not the offspring of God, only advanced animals**”, but who in Hell (or anywhere else!) ever proposed that humans are “**compelled to yield to every carnal urge**”? I mean, if people do that, they end up with too many children – which is NOT “**proof that God’s still loves us**”!

Further, given that I’ve never even heard of anyone proposing such idiocy, then how can “Elder” Packer possibly suggest: “**No idea has been more destructive...**”? I mean, if nobody ever proposed it, then how could it be so “**destructive**”? Mind boggling! So, then, there’s another “emoticon” that I wish someone would create: “mind boggling” – which is different from ‘**duh**’. But I’ll leave that as an exercise for the reader – ‘cause it’s time that I got on with my “main message” for this chapter.

And actually, my main message is just a continuation of the point that I began to make in the previous chapter. It’s to say that, if you ever want to see how absurd all religions are, Dear, then just keep asking the question (and keep trying to get an answer to the question!): *What’s the objective?* And notice that, the important question is not *what’s the objective of the clerics?* – ‘cause their prime goal is obviously to avoid working for a living! Instead, the important questions are:

1) *What’s the objective (or objectives) of God (or the gods)?* and

2) *What purpose (or purposes) do the gods propose that people pursue?*

Dear: I strongly encourage you to seek answers to the above questions. Further, no one should object to anyone seeking answers to such questions, because even if someone has “bought into” the clerics’ con game, it’s still necessary to know not only 1) God’s purpose but also 2) God’s purpose for people. Thus, all clerics (as far as I know) advocate (and have always advocated) that the purpose of humans is to serve their god or gods, and to do so, it’s obviously necessary to know what the god or gods want! Therefore, Dear, whether you count yourself among “the faithful followers” or among “the free thinkers” (or even if you find yourself on the fence between them), I strongly encourage you to seek answers to such questions.

GOALS AS GIVEN IN VARIOUS “HOLY BOOKS”

But be forewarned, kid: seeking answers to such questions is a huge task. For example, in the “excursion” **Qx** (dealing with “the Quagmire of Revealed Religions”), I go through the principal “holy books” of our culture in all their gucky details, in part to try to identify what the clerics claim their god wants. Thereby, I’ll show you all I could find about both God’s purported purpose(s) and his proposed purpose(s) for people. To do the task completely, however, would take far more than the ~30 chapters of **Qx**! In contrast and in kindness to you (☺), for this chapter, I plan to try to show you just a partial summary of what I found.

Yet, whereas it wouldn’t be the first time that you ignored (☹) sound advice (☺) from your wise old grandfather (☺), let me add that, if you want to explore some of this on your own, you might want to start by typing into an internet “search engine” the words “search +Bible” – and then later, as separate investigations, type “+Koran” (or “+Quran” or “+Qur’an”), “+Book of Mormon”, and titles of whatever other “holy books” that might interest you. When such searches lead you to websites that provide capabilities to search through the relevant “holy books”, then search with such words as ‘purpose’, ‘goal’, ‘objective’ or ‘aim’. Based on my experiences, however, I’m afraid that you’ll become quite disappointed in the results – for reasons I’ll now try to illustrate.

Purported Purposes as Given in the Bible

To illustrate what I mean, let me show you some results from searches of the Bible. If you want to search similarly, Dear, then you might want to use the

“search engine” at “The Bible Gateway” (at www.bible.gospelcom.net), which I used to generate the results shown below, searching the “New International Version” (NIV) of the Bible. If you do similar, you’ll find least useful is to search for ‘objective’: for me, not a single “match” or “hit” occurred! Next less-useful is ‘aim’, which gave four hits – but two deal with aiming arrows, one deals with the aim of “an unmarried woman or virgin” (namely, “to be devoted to the Lord”), and the other advises Christian “brothers” to “aim for perfection”, but neglects to define ‘perfection’!

Continuing in the Bible, for ‘goal’ there are seven hits, which state (in essence): 1) on the third day, the clerics’ Jesus will reach his goal, 2) our goal is to please “him” (neglecting to mention how), 3) we would be foolish to try to attain our goal by “human effort” (neglecting to mention that humans have no other option!), 4) an incorrect match!, 5) the goal “**to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus**” (which probably means the goal is to get eternal life), 6) “**the goal of this command is love**”, and 7) “**you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.**” Thus, according to these Christian ideas (there were no matches for ‘goal’ in the Old Testament), the “goal” of people is “salvation” of their “souls” (viz., get to heaven) and at least one goal of the clerics’ Jesus is to get people to “love” (neighbors and enemies, but not themselves, strawberry milkshakes, or other “worldly things”). God’s goal (if he has one) isn’t mentioned – though don’t give up yet, because by continuing the search, it may yet be possible to find God’s “purpose”!

More progress seems possible using the word ‘purpose’. If I counted them correctly, the Bible (the NIV) uses the word ‘purpose’ a total of 59 times. Most of these 59 uses, however, contain no information either about God’s purpose or about God’s purpose for humans; instead, there are many references just to “my [God’s] purpose”, God’s “mighty purpose”, and similar (without telling us what “his” purpose is), as well as many references to the purposes of various things (such as fat from dead animals) and the purposes of other (typically “godless”) people. If all such “useless” references to the word ‘purpose’ are ignored, then what remains are the following (quoted directly from the NIV, and after each of which I’ve added a “bullet” with my interpretation of the stated “purpose”).

Exodus 9, 16: But I have raised you up {Or [have spared you]} for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

- God raises someone up (Egypt's pharaoh) so God can show his power? Why does he want to display his power? Didn't he make the universe? Isn't that "power" enough? Why does he want to display his power to ant-like humans? What does he want, a cheering section? Is this part of the "jealous" bit? Is he in competition with other gods to determine which one of them has the biggest fan club? This does not compute!

1 Chronicles 23, 5: Four thousand are to be gatekeepers and four thousand are to praise the Lord with the musical instruments I have provided for that purpose.

- So, in addition to wanting a cheering section or fan club, he also wants a band to play for him, as at a college football game? He even provides "musical instruments"? Somebody's gotta be kidding!

Psalms 33, 10: The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

- Whatever purposes people might have, these will be thwarted?! Is that why he destroyed the Tower of Babylon? Is that why he created all the confusing languages? Are people not to have purposes – beyond cheering for god or playing in the band that promotes the cheering? Really? Is this god for real?!

Isaiah 48, 14: The Lord's chosen ally will carry out his purpose against Babylon; his arm will be against the Babylonians...

- Apparently one of God's purposes was to cause the Babylonians trouble (details of which are given in *Jeremiah 49, 50, 51*).

Jeremiah 15, 11: The Lord said, "Surely I will deliver you for a good purpose; surely I will make your enemies plead with you in times of disaster and times of distress."

- A "good purpose" for humans is to make "their enemies plead"?!

John 7, 1: After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life.

- Thus, at least one purpose of Jesus was apparently to stay alive – at least for a little while.

Acts 2, 23: This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men {Or of those not having the law [that is, Gentiles]}, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

- So, apparently one of God's purposes was to kill his (alleged) son!

2 Corinthians 5, 5: Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

- In the sentence prior to the above quotation, "Saint" Paul describes the essence of this "very purpose" as "so that our mortal part be absorbed into life immortal." So (at least according to Paul), God's purpose is for us to have eternal life. But if that were so, then it's rather surprising that God seems to be so incompetent at accomplishing his (alleged) goal. If God really wants people to live forever, then why doesn't he just snap his fingers or whatever?

Ephesians 2, 15: ...by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace...

- Although this "purpose" is hard to understand without reading the context, Paul's point seems to be that God's purpose was to eliminate distinction between Gentile and Jew, thereby to break down the "enmity" between them. If one can judge the results from the past 2,000 years worth of data, apparently God rather seriously failed to accomplish this (alleged) purpose of his.

Now, Dear, if you're rather discouraged that none of the above adequately describes either God's purpose for himself or his purpose for people, then please be patient. Shortly I'll show you a way around this problem. First, though, let me show you results from similar attempts to learn the objective, aim, goal, or purpose(s) of God (or Allah = Al Lah = "the god") as given in the Koran and in the "holy books" of Mormonism (which, as you know, include the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham, and the *Doctrine and Covenants*, which I'll abbreviate to D&C).

Claimed Aims as Given in the Koran

If you search the Koran at the website <http://www.hti.umich.edu/k/koran/>, then just as in the Bible, you'll find zero "matches" for the word 'objective'. There are many references to 'end', but essentially all of them relate to time durations. There are a few exceptions, such as (from *The Romans*, 30, 10) "Then evil was the end of those who did evil..." (which seems rather self evident!), but none reveals either God's purpose or his purpose for people

(save that people are to be “good”, which then needs to be defined). In addition, the Koran yields six “matches” for ‘purpose’ and seven for ‘goal’. Of these, those that might provide some guidance for discerning God’s (or Allah’s) objectives are listed below (as copied from the above reference, and after each of which I’ve added some “bulleted” comments).

The Cow 2.115: And Allah’s is the East and the West, therefore, whither you turn, thither is Allah’s purpose...

- So, whatever God’s purpose is, it’s everywhere.

The Clans 33.5: ...that which your hearts do purposely (blame may rest on you)...

- So, if you follow your own purpose (as dictated by your “heart”, e.g., fall in love?), then “blame may rest on you”.

The Divorce 65.3: ...whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him; surely Allah attains His purpose...

- So, another of God’s purposes is to get people to trust him; I trust he realizes that ‘trust’ must be earned!

The Family of Imran 3.14: The love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and well bred horses and cattle and tilth, is made to seem fair to men; this is the provision of the life of this world; and Allah is He with Whom is the good goal (of life).

- God is the “good goal (of life)” – whatever that means!

Ta Ha 20. 50: Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it (to its goal).

- Which, for humans, is what? – besides trusting in Allah!

Objectives Advertised in Mormonism

As my final example of applying this method, I’ll do the same for the “holy books” of Mormonism, which can be searched at the Mormon “homepage” at www.lds.org. As with the Bible and the Koran, there are no “matches” for the word ‘objective’ in any of the Mormon “holy books”. There are three matches for ‘aim’, but all are in the Mormon’s “Bible Dictionary” and none help to identify God’s aim. There are also three matches for ‘goal’, but only in “Study Helps” (or Aids), which are neither of much help nor claimed to be “revealed truths”. Finally, though, there are many matches for the

word ‘purpose’, and those matches that are somewhat informative are listed below (with my “bulleted comments” following each).

Alma 37, 7: And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and by very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls.

- Although this doesn’t describe God’s “**great and eternal purposes**”, it does suggest that one of his minor purposes is “**the salvation of many souls.**” Unfortunately, though, God neither mentions why he wanted to save souls (except that he apparently wants a cheering section) nor provides a single shred of evidence that souls exist. It then follows that people must “believe” and “have faith”, which then means that, in his cheering section, he doesn’t want anyone who evaluates data and hypotheses before reaching decisions. That’s consistent with the statement that “**the Lord doth confound the wise**”, for it’s generally recognized to be wise to evaluate before reaching a decision and to do otherwise, dumb. Thus, God apparently wants in his cheering section only “faithful”, “believing”, and thereby, dumb people.

Alma 37, 18: For he promised unto them that he would preserve these things for a wise purpose in him, that he might show forth his power unto future generations.

- Apparently, then, and just as in the Bible (unsurprisingly), one of God’s purposes is to display his power. Just why he wants to do that, however, continues to be unclear (save as a salve for his admitted jealousy).

Mormon 5, 14: ...that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved [viz., Jesus] his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant...

- This suggest that the oft-described “**great and eternal purpose**” of God is simply to give the Israelites a place to live. That’s not a very impressive “**great and eternal purpose**” for the ruler of the universe! Shucks, I’d be more than willing to give them all of Utah. Couldn’t God just zap up another world for them, or (if that’s too tough for him) how about another continent, or for cryin’ out loud, couldn’t he at least provide each of them with a BMW – or something a little more impressive than a place to live?

D&C 42, 71: And the elders or high priests who are appointed to assist the bishop as counselors in all things, are to have their families supported out of the property which is

consecrated to the bishop, for the good of the poor, and for other purposes, as before mentioned...

- From this it can be inferred that one of the purposes of the people is to pay tithes to the Mormon Church, with the money to be used in part to support the families of “**the elders or high priests**”. It seems rather amazing that God would assign this purpose to the people. Is there any chance that this assignment was made, instead, by the “**elders and high priests**” – for their own purposes?!

D&C 104, 59: For the purpose of building up my church and kingdom on the earth, and to prepare my people for the time when I shall dwell with them, which is nigh at hand.

- So, apparently one of God’s purposes is to build up the Mormon Church – but then again, I wonder: what’s the chance that this purpose was actually specified by the leaders of the Mormon Church, rather than by creator of the universe? I mean, after all, if God can zap a whole universe into existence, couldn’t he have taken another picosecond or so to build the Mormon Church as big as the “elders and high priests” wanted? Or is there a chance that... **Duh**.

D&C 104, 68: And all moneys that you receive in your stewardships, by improving upon the properties which I have appointed unto you, in houses, or in lands, or in cattle, or in all things save it be the holy and sacred writings, which I have reserved unto myself for holy and sacred purposes, shall be cast into the treasury as fast as you receive moneys, by hundreds, or by fifties, or by twenties, or by tens, or by fives.

- So, if a person can believe this is a message direct from God (as claimed – and rather than from some con-artist), apparently an important purpose for people is to send money to the Mormon Church, where the Church leaders can count it *by hundreds, or by fifties, or by twenties, or by tens, or by fives*. Apparently, God doesn’t want any one-dollar bills sent to the Mormon hierarchy; nothing smaller than a fiver, thanks anyway.

Now Dear, if all the above (from all “holy books” of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Mormonism) were all that’s available to describe either God’s objective (aim, goal, purpose) or God’s purpose for people, then I suspect you’re disappointed. Certainly, I am: I would have expected more from the creator of the universe! That is, if some god had the capability to create this universe (rather than it creating itself *via* a symmetry-breaking quantum-like fluctuation in a total void, leading to the Big Bang), then couldn’t this god

have spent a few picoseconds longer to tell us what he was up to and what people were supposed to do (besides sing his praises)?

GOD'S PURPOSES FOR HUMANS

But maybe the situation isn't so bad as I've sketched. Thus, as unfortunately happens all too frequently, when one seeks knowledge, care is needed to ensure that the method of inquiry doesn't introduce bias in the answers. For example, in the above, the method of inquiry was to use internet "search engines" to find "matches" for words such as 'objective', 'goal', 'aim', and 'purpose'. For contrast, consider the following sentence.

Rather than looking for matches for particular words, what could (or even "should") be done is to read all the "holy books", line by line, to see if we can determine what God wants, both for himself and for us. Notice, Dear, that in the previous sentence, not only did I suggest a different method of inquiry, but I did so without using any of the words I used in any of my searches. Therefore, to determine if the "holy books" of our culture contain information about what God is "up to" and what he "wants us to do", there's really no option but to tackle the enormous task of reading all these "holy books", line by line, with great care.

But as I mentioned already, that's an enormous undertaking, which I'll try to lead you through (if you wish to take the "excursion") in **Qx** (dealing with "The Quagmires of Revealed Religions"). In this chapter, instead, I'll show you just a few results from such an undertaking.

"Be fruitful and increase..."

Perhaps of most interest are the few cases reported to be direct statements by God "himself", either of what his desire is or what he desires that humans do. For example, almost at the start of the Bible, in *Genesis 1*, 26–29 (as quoted below from The New English Bible), God reportedly provides a purpose for humans, without using any of the words that I used in my searches.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image and likeness to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all wild animals on earth, and all reptiles that crawl upon the earth... Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it, rule over the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, and every living thing that moves upon the earth."

In the King James Version of the Bible, the corresponding statement – allegedly made by God – about “the purpose of humans” is given as:

“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

In the Mormon’s *Peal of Great Price (Moses 2, 28)*, unsurprisingly (☹), Rigdon has God state the objective for humans as in the King James Version of the Bible.

Thereby, in either of the forms given above, we have clear statements of three of God’s purposes that he allegedly assigned for humans (even though the words ‘objective’ or ‘purpose’ weren’t used – and therefore, they weren’t found in my “search”):

1. “Be fruitful and increase...”; that is, apparently a prime purpose of humans, according to God (or whoever wrote *Genesis*), is to increase the population,
2. “Fill the earth and subdue it...”; that is, increase the population until the Earth is full (whether that means 10 billion people or 100 billion or... is unclear) and as appropriate, dam the rivers, stop tornados and hurricanes, somehow eliminate volcanoes, quell earthquakes, etc., and
3. “Rule over... every living thing.” Apparently, at least according to God (or whoever wrote *Genesis*), it doesn’t matter how we rule, just rule (or “have dominion”): cut down the forests, harness the horses, and if you want, beat the dogs, kill all the cats, and so on.

Now Dear, perhaps those three objectives seem rather “bland” and shouldn’t upset anyone very much. Besides, rather conveniently, the three objectives are consistent what our DNA molecule had “planned”, anyway! But, Dear, please think again – and remember that our brains are now sufficiently developed that, if appropriate, we can rewrite boss-molecule’s “software” – and sometimes even manipulate its “hardware”.

Thus, with the possibility of nuclear war now substantially diminished (compared to possibilities during “the Cold War”) and with the probability now being rather small that a large asteroid will hit the Earth (and maybe within a few decades, humans can force this probability to drop to essentially zero), then, Dear, what do you think is the biggest problem facing mankind? Regional wars? Terrorism? Global warming? Famines, e.g.,

associated with shifts in climate? Outbreaks of communicable diseases? Environmental pollution? Depletion of natural resources? Decreases in biodiversity?

Maybe you can add additional items to that list, but here's the problem that I think subsumes all those listed: too many people. Please, Dear, think about it. If the Earth's human population were a much more reasonable size (e.g., ten percent of its current value; i.e., fewer than a billion people), then I think that problems such as regional wars, terrorism, global warming, depletion of resources, starvation, global epidemics, etc., would drastically decrease if not essentially disappear. Stated differently (as I'll argue in the X-chapters) humans must defuse the "population bomb": we should dramatically reduce the number of humans that we are asking this poor old Earth to carry.

Meanwhile, billions of humans continue to follow the objective allegedly prescribed by the god of the old Hebrew shepherds (or written by the clerics who were in the process of converting the Israelites to the Persian religion): "be fruitful and increase, fill the earth..." This just happens to be the same prime objective that the DNA molecule specifies! But with our minds we can now say: "Hey – wait a minute; let's be reasonable; let's use our heads; let's keep the population at a reasonable level; let's implement some reasonable birth-control procedures." I trust that such a suggestion seems reasonable to you, Dear, and I trust that, if you think about the options available in China, then even the Chinese government's forcing citizens to have no more than one child per couple is reasonable and responsible.

In contrast, Dear, think about the idiot Pope, who is the "spiritual leader" of (read it and weep!) more than a billion people! This fool is committed to what some silly clerics, ~2,500 years ago, imagined was their fictitious god's prime directive: "Be fruitful and increase." As a result, this stupid Pope says to his followers, in effect: "Birth control is forbidden (I'll kick you women out of the Church if you don't submit to your husbands and have more babies); abortions are totally wrong (have one, and you're heading for eternal damnation in hell); just keep popping out those babies." The leaders of Islam and Mormonism promote similar stupidity; it's belief gone berserk.

In contrast, some credit is due some clerics leading some Christian sects. Maybe they realized the idiocy of God's assumed purpose for humans to "be fruitful and multiply" (as given in the King James Version of the Bible). Or maybe these con artists concluded that they couldn't keep their con games

* Go to other chapters *via*

going in face of the obvious need to curb population growth. Whatever the reason, they decided to adopt new policies.

Now, to be sure, theirs was no small trick – but never underestimate how slippery a good con-artist can be! How they slipped through this one was to read a new interpretation of “God’s” injunction to “**rule... over every living thing.**” Their unjustified (but welcome!) conclusion was that God requires us to rule wisely, which then meant that birth control was okay.

But as much as I welcome such an interpretation of God’s alleged purpose for humans, it points to what has been an absolutely horrible problem for at least the past 2,000 years: God’s assigned objectives for humans are open to interpretations! In God’s incompetence (or could it be the incompetence of those who wrote the world’s “holy books?”), God was unable to convey (simply, clearly, and concisely) what he wanted humans to do! As a result, thousands of different religious sects emerged (such as the Cambellite Baptists, a sect that evolved *via* Sidney Rigdon into Mormonism), led by people who were certain that, finally, they (and they alone) had deduced the “true meaning” of one or another “quirk” in some “holy book”.

The resulting animosities between and among different religious groups – with member of each group convinced that they (and only they) knew “the truth”, that only they were “on the road to glory”, that only they would “gain salvation of their immortal souls” – have been absolutely horrible, out to and including murdering “unbelievers”. Would that it could be said that humans couldn’t possibly be so dumb! Would that God’s objective for humans could be re-interpreted to be something similar to just:

Figure it out for yourselves, ya bunch of dimwits! Evaluate! If you can’t do that on your own, then forget about ever getting into heaven, ‘cause on the Pearly Gates, I’ve posted a sign with a picture of fools like you, with a line through it, meaning “No dimwits allowed”!

But let me set that happy possibility aside for a while and turn to other objectives allegedly assigned to people by God.

“Till and care for [the gardens]”

At *Genesis 2, 15* of the Bible, there’s:

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and care for it...

Wonderful! According to some unknowledgeable old cleric (or some silly old shepherd who concocted this myth), the purpose for humans (as assigned by his imagined God) is to till and care for gardens – which, come to think of it, is rather strange: surely a shepherd would claim that the goal was to herd sheep! Did the Hebrew clerics just copy this myth from another culture – or does it mean that the Hebrew clerics wanted the Babylonian farmers to continue supplying them with food?!

In any event, Dear, I guess you'll need to abandon thoughts about being a doctor or physicist or artist or whatever else you might be thinking of becoming. Instead, according to God himself, you're supposed to be a farmer. And of course I know that, during the history of this country, the fraction of the total population that can make a living as farmers has dropped from more than 97% to less than 3%, but it says right here in the Bible that our purpose is to be farmers. So, Dear, unless you reject the idea that there is a God who defines your purpose, then... **Duh.**

And, Dear, if you think that I seem to be digging awfully hard to find what God's purpose is, either for himself or for us, then you're right! Thus, in contrast to what one might have hoped (and even expected), it's very difficult to deduce from some of God's seemingly off-hand comments what we're supposed to do! Further, don't we have some innate right to know? That is, if God made humans, then wasn't he under some "moral obligation" – out of common decency! – to have taken the time (a few nanoseconds, at most) to explain to his creations why he created us?

Actually, I would have been satisfied if God had said just something similar to the following (which I once saw suggested in a really good movie, whose title I've unfortunately forgotten):

Look, I have an idea for a new kind of foot, but before I try out my design on another planet and with a higher life form, I thought I'd just test it out here on this miserable little planet Earth. So, consider yourselves prototypes; do whatever you please; I don't give a damn; I'm just interested in the performance of this new foot!

“Obey!”

Yet, the task of identifying both God's purpose and his purpose(s) for people isn't quite so bad as depicted above. Thus, it's possible to identify in the Bible other “purposes” for humans, especially if one accepts the reasoning that, if God gave us some commandments and told us to obey them, then he simultaneously is giving us some purposes – the main one being: **Obey!**

Now, in an earlier chapter, I went through the first Ten Commandments, and though I admit that those dealing with human interactions aren't too bad as general "rules of thumb", certainly they're inadequate as "moral absolutes." That is, Dear, generally one shouldn't kill, lie, steal, cheat, and so on, but nowadays, probably a million-or-so pages of law codes have been written that force judges and juries to evaluate the circumstances of specific crimes.

Further, Dear, if you choose to go through the details in the "excursion" **Qx**, you'll see that some of the details in the other (603?) "Commandments" are absolutely bizarre (such as the Commandment to wear underpants when your praying!), while others are absolutely horrible (such as how to beat your slaves to death and how to sell your daughter into slavery). That is, Dear, if God's assigned purpose for humans is to obey the Commandments, then my summary response to God is: "Blow it out your ear!"

Stated differently (and as I tried to show you in the **M**-chapters), it's astoundingly dumb to suggest that the Bible is the source of our society's moral principles. Choosing the Bible (or similar "holy books" such as the Koran or the Book of Mormon) as a source-book for any society's moral code is like a society two or three thousand years in the future finding one of our books describing our traffic laws and choosing it as the source-book for "moral absolutes".

What craziness! What these old "law givers" (such as Minos, Manu, and Moses) really said was "obey" the laws. And generally, Dear, that's still a good idea. But upon reading these old traffic laws of Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and Joseph Smith, the damnable clerics of our culture saw that they could get a free ride, if only they could get the people to obey long-since obsolete traffic laws! Talk about a speed trap! Talk about a great way to fleece the public! Talk about a con game! But it should be illegal.

As an example of a ~2500-year old traffic law that's highly inappropriate for today's highways, consider again the claim that God told humans: "**Be fruitful and increase...**" Thousands of years ago, this "traffic law" was probably quite appropriate – at least for shepherds, not for people living in crowded river valleys! Its moral value for the Hebrew shepherds might have been judged to be quite high, because the population of shepherds was probably so low that there was a possibility (e.g., with a major drought) that they wouldn't survive.

But now, with far too many humans on Earth (by at least a factor of 10), for Catholic, Islamic, Mormon... clerics to cling to this traffic law, encouraging large families, opposing birth controls, describing abortion as immoral, etc., is the height of idiocy (or better, the depth of dumbness). In fact, what such idiots are advocating (i.e., to continue to “obey” this 2500-year-old traffic law) is not only dumb, but to act in such a manner would be immoral, causing potentially severe damage to the dual survival goals of every person on Earth – save for the clerics, of course, who have the potential to increase their power over still more people.

But all the above is from just the first few pages of the Bible, and thereby, Dear, perhaps you can get a hint of a major problem that I encountered while writing this chapter for you. The problem is: there are a huge number of absolutely idiotic and absolutely horrible statements in the Bible (and in the other “holy books” of our culture) that allegedly convey God’s purpose for humans (even if they weren’t detected using my original “search words”). To solve the problem (i.e., to make progress on this chapter and yet to try to show you some of the idiocies and horrors of other objectives for humans allegedly dictated by God), I created the “excursion” **Qx**. As you can see there, I used ~30 chapters to show you just some of these idiocies and horrors! And thus for this chapter, I’m trying to show you just the barest few examples and a few of my conclusions, leaving details for **Qx**.

THE ABRAHAMIC GOD IS EVIL!

One of my main conclusion, Dear, is that the god depicted in the “holy books” of our culture (i.e., in the Bible, the Koran, and various other “holy books” such as those of Mormonism), the so-called “Abrahamic god” (although as I’ll be showing you in **Yx**, it would be more appropriate to call “him” the Zoroastrianic god, since “he” was conceived by the ancient Persian Zarathustra) is evil.

Now, Dear, to explain why I consider the Abrahamic god to be evil will require much more space than I can allocate here. I’ll provide you with some details in the **P**-chapters and more in **Qx** and **Yx**. Here, I’ll provide you with just an outline of the “justification” for my indictment and, then, a few examples to illustrate what I mean.

* Go to other chapters *via*

At the outset of any “justification” for the indictment that anyone or any god is evil, it’s necessary to define ‘evil’. To do so, I’ll first return to the “morality scale” that I introduced in Chapter **J2** entitled “Justice and Morality”. There, I proposed that the morality of some act (or proposed act) could be identified as being on a scale that runs, say, from –10 (denoting “pure evil”) to +10 (denoting the extreme of “good”). Thus, by claiming that the Abrahamic god is evil, I’m claiming that the moral values of many of God’s acts (or proposed acts) depicted in our culture’s “holy books” are negative (i.e., less than zero). In fact, as I’ll try to outline below, some of the moral values are very close to the limit of “pure evil”; i.e., –10.

Next (in any “justification” for the indictment that the Abrahamic god is evil), it’s necessary to provide definitions for ‘evil’ that are independent of any “supernatural” concepts. Specifically, on humanitarian grounds, I reject the circular argument: “Whatever God does (or urges other to do) is ‘good’, by definition.” Thus, as examples, if God should kill innocent people or if God should urge others to murder infants, rape children, enslave and brutalize men and women, or similar, then I state, categorically, that God is not only morally wrong, but evil.

More to the point, I agree (at least on these matters) with Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), some of whose ideas I reviewed (and rather harshly criticized) in Chapter **M3** entitled “Muddled Moralities”. In particular, I agree with his recommendation (or “categorical imperative”)

Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.

As a result, Dear, I claim that I (or anyone) can judge the morality of some acts (or proposed acts) based on the conception of “universal” laws – i.e., moral principles that can be applied universally, including to any god!

Of course, as I also reviewed in **M3**, it’s not easy to identify such universal, moral laws or principles. Generally, it seems necessary to introduce some “weasel words” to try to account for exceptional circumstances. For example, I already reviewed (in **M3**) some criticism of Kant’s “*never treat others as means to some end*” and suggested that a “weakened version”, such as “*never treat others as means to your own ends*”, seems more appropriate. Other, potential, “universal” laws or principles include: the idea of “reciprocity” promoted by Confucius, my own expression “everyone has an

equal right to claim one's own existence", the common claim "punishment should fit the crime", and (e.g.) Michael Shermer's recommended principles (referenced in Chapter M4, entitled "Morality without Gods"):

1. *The Ask-First Principle*: We need to take the Golden Rule one step further, through what I call *the ask-first principle*. There is one sure-fire test to find out whether an action [dealing with another person] is right or wrong: ask first...
2. *The Happiness Principle* states that it is a higher moral principle to always seek happiness with someone else's happiness in mind, and never seek happiness when it leads to someone else's unhappiness.
3. *The Liberty Principle* states that it is a higher moral principle to always seek liberty with someone else's liberty in mind, and never seek liberty when it leads to someone else's loss of liberty...
4. *The Moderation Principle* states that when innocent people die, extremism in the defense of anything is no virtue, and moderation in the protection of everything is no vice.

Now, Dear, with such proposed, "universal moral laws" (or principles) in mind (and others that you judge to be appropriate), consider a few examples of how the Abrahamic god violates such principles – and is therefore evil.

God's Evil of Using People as Means to His Own Ends

Dear: if you accept the moral principle that it's evil to use another person as means to your own ends, then consider the Bible's Second Commandment, which includes "**You shall have no other god before me...**" as well as his reason for demanding that he be recognized as the "top dog", namely "**...for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous god.**" In addition, at *Deuteronomy 6, 5* Moses allegedly commanded (and Jesus allegedly repeated this statement, e.g., see *Matthew 22, 36*, claiming it was "**the first and greatest commandment**"): "**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.**"

Perhaps you hope that somebody's kidding. Yet, similar is in the Koran (51.56): "**I [Allah] did not create jinn [angels] and mankind except to worship Me.**" It might puzzle you, also, why God (aka Allah) doesn't use some of the huge amount of money that's collected in his name to pay for an order (say from Japanese manufacturers) for billions of little wind-up toys that would repeatedly shriek (like Muslim fanatics): "**Alluha Akbar**" (viz.,

“**God is greatest**”). Of course, he’d also need to order a huge supply of batteries, but then, with all his alleged power, perhaps he could... **Duh.**

In any case, it seems clear (at least according to the clerics who wrote the Bible) that God’s purpose in creating humans was for his own benefit, to appease his vanity. Thus, God uses people for his own ends. That’s evil.

Some of God’s Evils Revealed in the Myth about Adam and Eve

In fact, almost at the start of the Bible are first hints of some evils, which later in the Bible becomes abundantly clear, namely, clerical claims that it’s acceptable for leaders to rule by fear and to cover up their mistakes with lies. In particular, God reportedly said to Adam and Eve (*Genesis 2, 18*):

You may eat from every tree in the garden, but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for on the day that you eat from it, you will certainly die.

Now, first, obviously this [alleged] God chose to rule by fear: he didn’t explain why Adam and Eve shouldn’t eat fruit **from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**; instead, he threatened to kill them if they did!

In addition, clearly it was God’s mistake to put such a tree in the Garden of Eden – especially since, according to myth, he knows everything (i.e., he’s allegedly ‘omniscient’); therefore, he knew what would happen. To cover up his mistake, the myth then reveals that God lied, stating that, if Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, then “**on the day that you eat from it, you will certainly die**”, which obviously didn’t occur (it’s alleged that, subsequently, they lived for hundreds of years). Thus, God lied.

Now, Dear, as I’ve written in earlier chapters, lying isn’t necessarily immoral. According to the New Oxford American Dictionary, the relevant definition of the noun ‘lie’ is

an intentionally false statement... used with reference to a situation involving deception or mistaken impression...

Whether or not a lie is immoral is judged by its intent. For example, it’s moral (maybe with a moral value of +3) to lie to your mother by saying that you thought the dinner was “great” (if your intent was to try to cheer her up; cf. Shermer’s “happiness principle”). In contrast, though, it’s immoral (maybe with a moral value of –6) to lie to her by saying that you didn’t

break her necklace; your sister did (i.e., if your intent was to avoid accepting responsibility for your action).

Similarly, therefore, in the case of judging the morality of God's lying to Adam and Eve (about their dying "**on the day that you eat from [the tree of the knowledge of good and evil]**"), it's necessary to evaluate the intent of God's lie. So, Dear, for whose benefit did God lie? Would it be to the benefit of the (alleged) first two humans not to know the difference between good and evil or would it be to God's own benefit? Please think about it.

Can you see that, if people couldn't judge for themselves what's good *versus* bad for their dual survival goals (of themselves and their families), then people would be no better than animals. In fact, people would be less competent (less autonomous) than animals, because even animals are capable of distinguishing what's immediately right *versus* wrong for their and their offspring's survival. On the other hand, the benefit to [the alleged] God of his [alleged] lie is clear, given that he [allegedly] wanted "wind-up toys" (i.e., automatons) who would do nothing but praise him. Therefore, this analysis suggests that God's lie (and therefore God) is evil.

But the same quotation suggests even a worse immorality (worse than it's permissible for leaders to lie and to use fear to cover up their mistakes, and even worse than the idea that followers aren't to know the difference between good and evil). The additional immoral (and even, more immoral) suggestion is that followers are to just obey. No matter the order, just obey! No matter if it's a dumb order, obey! No matter if you don't understand the order (because you don't know the difference between right and wrong) obey! No matter if Hitler orders that you murder six million Jews, obey! How could God (or, more accurately, the clerics who wrote this "holy book") be so immoral and so stupid!

The stupidity of what the clerics wrote is glaringly obvious. If (as claimed by the clerical authors) Adam and Eve didn't know the difference between good and evil (and weren't permitted to know the difference, under threat of being killed!), then they couldn't know that it was 'good' to obey! **Duh.**

Meanwhile, though, maybe I should add a suggestion of how the clerics could have been so dumb as to concoct this myth about Adam and Eve. As I'll show you in **Yx**, during thousands of years prior to the concoction of this Hebrew myth, people had reached the silly (but understandable) conclusion

that, whenever something bad happened, the cause was some “sin” against the gods. So, given that death seemed to be “bad”, the silly old clerics who concocted this myth apparently tried to “explain” why people died, and apparently concluded that, somewhere in the distant past, someone must have disobeyed a god.

As for how some ancient ancestors (Adam and Eve) might have disobeyed “the gods”, leading to the punishment that the first people and their progeny would need to die, the clerics apparently speculated that the “transgression” must have been huge. They apparently decided that their ancestors’ “sin” was to disobey the principle god’s order and to transgress on the “holiest of holies”, namely, to learn the difference between good and evil. Such knowledge was clearly “the realm of the gods”; it was information that was to be known only by the clerics, i.e., those with the collection plates – and a principle “good” was obviously for the people to keep the clerics in comfort.

And if, Dear, you’re thinking that such immoralities and idiocies – such evils – are restricted to the Old Testament (OT), then I’m sorry to say: “It just ain’t so!” If you’ll take the “excursions” **Qx** and **Yx**, you may even conclude (as I have), that although the OT is “bad” (and therefore, so is Judaism), it’s the least in evil of the Abrahamic (or Zoroastrianic) religions: as I’ll try to show you, Christianity (and Mormonism) exceed Judaism in idiocy, and Islam exceeds them all in both idiocies and horrors (viz., in brutality). For example, the New Testament (NT) urges people to love their enemies (commonly known as ‘treason’), and the Koran urges people to kill their enemies (i.e., those who don’t accept Muhammad as a messenger of any god) and to take their women and children as slaves (the women, as sex slaves).

God’s Evil Use of Fear and Unjust Punishments

As I already mentioned, a theme appears in the myth about Adam and Eve that’s repeated throughout the “holy books” of all the Abrahamic religions: God’s evil use of fear and unjust punishments. Thus, in the Adam and Eve myth, God attempts to put “the fear of the Lord” into Adam and Eve, threatening them with death, if they don’t obey him. Further, that God’s plan was to rule by fear is repeated many times throughout the OT. For example, at *Deuteronomy 6*, 1–2, when Moses was reviewing God’s [alleged] commandments, he allegedly said:

These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me [Moses] to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children, and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live...

Dear: Do you rule by fear? Would you kill your dog if it doesn't obey you? To rule by fear is the hallmark of an evil tyrant.

That the depicted God is an evil tyrant can be seen in his [alleged] punishments. Not only does God [allegedly] kill people for not obeying him, but because Adam and Eve [allegedly] disobeyed him (even when they couldn't know that it was "good" to obey him!), then [allegedly] God also sentenced all humans to death, i.e., we all must die. But we didn't participate in their [alleged] crime! We weren't born yet! So, why are we punished with death? **Duh.**

And in the OT, there's much more and similar stupidity (and evil). Thus, another example of evil of the god depicted in the OT can be seen from his alleged Commandment to love him, his admitted reason for wanting people to do so, and what he plans to do if they don't love him:

... for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous god. I punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me.

That's a lot of evil packed into a single Commandment:

- Dear, when you're in a position of authority, I trust you'll never demand that someone do something that's impossible; for example, don't demand that your dog jump over the moon and don't demand that someone feel an emotion (such as love).
- Dear, when you're in a position of authority, I trust you'll never let undesirable emotions (e.g., jealousy) dictate your actions; instead, when deciding what to do, choose what seems to be best for all people involved.
- Dear, when you're in a position of authority and must (unfortunately) punish someone for a transgression, then I trust you'll apply lessons of justice that nature has taught you: people should get what they deserve and not what they don't deserve – and the children of the transgressor, out to **"the third and fourth generations"** definitely don't deserve punishment for something they never did!

And as an illustration of why I earlier wrote that Christianity and Islam were worse than Judaism, I'll note here:

- 1) Courtesy the insane “Saint” Paul, Christian “justice” is even more perverted than the “justice” of punishing children, out to the “**third and fourth generations**” for “**the sins of the fathers**”. Thus, first is the Christian (and Mormon) idiotic idea that all people (to endless generations!) are “guilty” (for being related to Adam and Eve, who didn’t obey God – because they didn’t and couldn’t know that it was “good” to obey); therefore, all people are sentenced with the death penalty! And second, according to the insane “Saint” Paul, God “absolved” all the guilty people (i.e., all of us who are “guilty” of “the original sin”) by the most unjust ruling ever to pollute the universe: God (according to Paul) murdered his totally innocent son (Jesus) to appease himself for forgetting to tell Adam and Eve that it was “good” to obey him!
- 2) Courtesy the “mad man” Muhammad (that’s the assessment given in the Koran, not mine!) and the power mongering clerics who cobbled the Koran together, the punishment for not loving God (aka Allah) was not just a reprimand or slap on the wrist, but the most extreme torture imaginable – which is to continue for eternity! That is, no “holy book” surpasses the Koran in the horrors it describes for Hell. And to top it off, the “crime” that [allegedly] leads to such unjust punishment (i.e., Allah’s evil of not abiding to the principle that the punishment should fit the crime) is simply not to believe that the Koran is anything but the ravings of a mad man and the conniving concoction of another group of con-artist clerics. For example:¹

Fear the fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers. [*Ali’-Imran 3, 131*]

...fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones, which is prepared for those who reject faith. [*al Baqarah 2, 24*]

Those who have disbelieved and died while they are disbelievers will have the curse of Allah upon them and the [curse of the] angels and all of mankind. [They will abide] eternally therein. The punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will the punishment be postponed. [*Sahih al-Baqarah 2, 161–162*]

No food will there be for them except bitter *dhari* [a thorny plant], which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger. [*Surah al-Ghashiyah 88, 6–7*]

Verily, the tree of *Zaqqum* will be the food of the sinful. Like molten brass it will boil in their insides like the boiling of scalding water. [*ad-Dukhan 44, 43–46*]

Thus. Then will they taste it – a boiling fluid and a filthy fluid of pus and blood and other penalties of a similar kind to match them. [*Sad 38, 57–58*]

“Then will you truly – O you who have gone astray and denied – you will surely eat of the trees of *Zaqqum*. Then will you fill your stomachs with it and drink boiling water on top of it, and you will drink boiling water on top of it, and you will drink

¹ For more (much more!) of such horrors, see, e.g., <http://www.shariahprogram.ca/articles/hell-devil-description.shtml>.

like diseased camels, raging with thirst. Such will be their hospitality on the Day of Requit.

like diseased camels, raging with thirst. Such will be their hospitality on the Day of Requit.” [al-Qaqi’ah 56, 51–56]

Say, “The Truth is from your Lord, so let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject it.” Indeed We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls surround them. If they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten brass that will scald their faces. How dreadful the drink. How evil the resting place. [al Kahf 18, 29]

Do you not see those who dispute concerning the signs of Allah – how they are turned away from truth? Those who reject the Book and that with which We sent Our messengers – soon they will know. When the yokes will be round their necks and the chains. They will be dragged in the boiling water. Then in the Fire they will be burned. [Ghafir 40, 69–72]

Those who have disbelieved in Our signs – We will burn them in fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We will exchange them for other skins so that they may taste the punishment. [Surah an-Nisa 4, 56]

The Day that their faces will be turned from side to side in the fire, they will say, “We wish that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger.” [al-Ahzab 33, 66]

If, Dear, you think that no one could be so horrible as to write such hideous stuff, then realize that (as I’ll briefly review in Yx) Muhammad had a horrible childhood (pity be upon him = pbuh), and if you think that he must have been insane, then realize that (as I’ll briefly review in Qx and as is reported in the Koran) those who knew him considered him to be “mad”. As for “Saint” Paul, as I’ll be showing you, not enough is known about him to be certain about any diagnosis, but a judge described him as “mad”, Paul’s writings indicate a mind that had “gone round the bend”, and Paul, himself, described one of his epileptic seizures and his hounding to death people who had the audacity to have thoughts different from Paul’s.

Meanwhile, if you’re wondering why I suggested that the OT wasn’t so bad as the NT and the Koran, it’s because the OT shows that subsequent Jewish clerics apparently recognized some of God’s evils described in older parts of the OT and wrote revisions. Thus, as I showed you in earlier chapters, at *Ezekiel 18, 19*, we’re told of the revision:

It is the soul that sins, and no other, that shall die; a son shall not share a father’s guilt, nor a father his son’s. The righteous man shall reap the fruit of his own righteousness, and the wicked man the fruit of his own wickedness... Therefore, Israelites, says the Lord God, I will judge every man of you on his deeds.

As a result, God's evil of punishing children out to the "third and fourth generations" for "the sins of the fathers" and God's evil of sentencing us all to death for the [alleged] sins of Adam and Eve were judged "null and void".

In addition, at *Micah 6, 8*, we're given an entirely different "moral code", totally replacing the entire Ten Commandments:

God has told you what is good; and what is it that the Lord asks of you? Only to act justly, to love loyalty, to walk wisely...

Similar is given at *Ecclesiastics 32, 23* and *Ecclesiastics 37, 13*:

Whatever you are doing, rely on yourself, for this, too, is a way of keeping the commandments... [T]rust you own judgment, for it is your most reliable counselor.

It's unclear why the (later) authors of the NT and the Koran didn't use such "more-enlightened messages" of the OT. Perhaps they didn't study the OT sufficiently, perhaps they disagreed with the more-enlightened messages, perhaps they were too dumb to realize the importance of the corrections contained in the more-enlightened messages, or perhaps they decided to "pitch their con" to their dumbest followers, i.e., those whose mental capabilities were already strained by commandments to "pay, pray, and obey." And unfortunately, such continues to be an apt description of all "religious fundamentalists", be they Jews, Christians, Muslims, Mormons, or some other, similar, perversion of reality. In any case, to suggest (as is done in Christianity and Mormonism) that it was "the original sin" of humans to gain the capability to make moral judgments (about not only current but future acts) is absolutely, astoundingly idiotic – and any cleric who now preaches the idiocy that people shouldn't make moral decisions by themselves is preaching pure, unadulterated evil.

And by the way, Dear, should you encounter Muslims who claim that, in fact, "more enlightened" (more tolerant and more peaceful) messages are contained in the Koran, then be careful: their claim may be either unknowledgeable or deceitful. It's correct that such messages are in the Koran, but as I'll show you in **Yx**, such messages were proclaimed by Muhammad at the beginning of his career, when he was younger, married to only one woman (much older than he was), and under the influence of a Jewish tutor and various Christian and Greek ideas; i.e., it was before he began the second phase of his con-artist career, as a bandit, polygamist, rapist, pedophile, slave owner, and murderer. Fortunately for humanity,

most Muslims today rely on their better instincts and on earlier messages in the Koran, not Muhammad's later, hideous messages; Muslim terrorists, however, follow Muhammad's later, despicable behavior. Thus, in contrast to Judaism, Islam degenerated with time – to the depth of terrorist evils.

God's Evil of Advocating that People Wage War

Let me show you another of the alleged purposes for people as dictated by the clerics' imagined God, to hint not just at the idiocy and immorality of the clerics, but at some absolute horrors – in fact, pure evil. This alleged purpose is given in the OT at *Judges 3, 2*, dealing with the slaughter by the Israelites of all those who were peacefully living on their own land (land that the Hebrews had abandoned hundreds of years earlier to live in the more productive country of Egypt):

These are the nations [listed later in the text] which the Lord left as a means of testing all the Israelites who had not taken part in the battles for Canaan, his purpose being to teach succeeding generations of Israel, or those at least who had not learnt in former times, how to make war...

I put some of that in italics, Dear, to try to ensure you read it carefully: God's purpose was to teach the Israelites how to make war! God left some peaceful inhabitants in the land, so later Israelites could use them to practice killing!! Talk about using people as means to an end!!! Talk about evil.

And, Dear, if you think that the above must contain some sort of "communication error", then think again. That is, the same idea appears at *Jeremiah 13, 11*:

For, just as this girdle is bound close to a man's waist, so I bound all Israel [in the north] and all Judah [in the south] to myself, says the Lord, so that they should become my people to win a name for me, and praise and glory...

So, at least according to Hebrew clerics, not only did God want a cheering section, he chose a team (of course the holy Hebrews!) to be his champions, "to win a name for me" – and therefore, he left a few assorted peoples around to slaughter, so the Israelites could practice killing.

Similar – and even worse – is found in the Koran. In the Koran (3.110), unsurprisingly, Muslims are told that they (and not the Israelites) are God's (aka Allah's) "champions":

Ye [Muslims] are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.

And as far as I know, no “holy book” advocates more slaughtering of people than does the Koran, claiming that such slaughter of people is “justified” if the people don’t believe Muslim claims that they possess “the truth”. Some examples follow, starting with Sura 8, 39:

Fight against them until idolatry is no more and Allah’s religion reigns supreme.

...slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. (9, 5)

Fight those who believe neither in God nor the Last Day, nor what has been forbidden by God and his messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, even if they are People of the Book [Jews & Christians], until they pay the tribute and have been humbled. (9, 29)

The unbelievers among the People of the Book and the pagans shall burn forever in the fire of hell. They are the vilest of all creatures. (98, 51)

I have zero qualms about concluding that such a god (who allegedly advocates killing people because they have thoughts different from the schemes of the ruling clerics) is pure, unadulterated evil.

WHAT WOULD AN OMNIPOTENT GOD WANT?

Dear, if you’re thinking something similar to, “Something ain’t right; somethin’ smells fishy; such (evil) purposes couldn’t be the purposes of an all-knowing (‘omniscient’), all-powerful (‘omnipotent’), all-good (‘omnibenevolent’)... creator of the universe”, then, Dear, “Welcome to the club!” I encourage you to be skeptical. For example, I encourage you to be skeptical of all claims about what God allegedly wants. For instance,

- When you find (or found) that Ezra and co-authors of the *Torah* (the first part of the OT) claimed that God wanted the Israelites to obey the clerics, then perhaps you’ll wonder if it might have been what the clerics wanted, rather than what God wanted.
- When you find (or found) that the clerics who wrote the NT stated that Jesus wanted people to give away all they possessed, with no thought for tomorrow, then perhaps you’ll wonder if it might have been what the new breed of clerics wanted, rather than what God wanted.

- When you find (or found) in Mormon “holy books” that God wants money (but nothing smaller than a fiver, thanks anyway), then perhaps you’ll wonder if it might be what Joseph Smith wanted, rather than what God wanted.
- And when you find (or found) that Muhammad said that God wanted people to supply Muhammad with more booty (including more sex slaves), then perhaps you’ll wonder if Muhammad’s child bride (whom he, when he was in his fifties, used as a sex toy between her ages of six to nine and then had sex with her when she was nine) spoke with substantial insight (“Wisdom from the mouth of babes...”): “**Verily [Muhammad], your lord [Allah] is ever quick to fulfill your whims and desires.**”

That is, Dear, I encourage you to consider the possibility that, what are claimed in various “holy books” to be “God’s purposes” are actually what various groups of conniving clerics wanted (and still want).

Dear: I hope you’ll look into the matter in sufficient depth to be able to reach a firm conclusion. Thus, it’s one level of compliance for people to do exactly as the Commandments dictate (just as any good slave follows orders), but you know that, sometime or other, a slave will encounter a situation requiring independent thought – and it’s very difficult for a slave to make a sensible decision, not knowing what the slave-master (God) really wants. Therefore, Dear, I trust you agree that a perfectly sensible thing to do (even if you believe that God exists) is to check the “holy books” of the religion in which you’ve been indoctrinated, to try to determine God’s purposes both for you and for himself. But as I showed you a little in this chapter and as I’ll show you more in **Qx** (and **Yx**), the task of identifying God’s (reported) purposes isn’t easy!

Further, beyond being “not easy”, to know what God wants may be impossible! Thus, in the OT at *Jeremiah 29*, 11 there is: “**I alone know my purpose... says the Lord...**” Similar is found in the NT (*Romans 11*, 34), where Paul states: “**Who knows the mind of the Lord?**” And in the Mormon’s *Pearl of Great Price (Moses 1*, 30), Sidney Rigdon wrote that Moses asked God: “**Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest [sic] them?**” To this question, Rigdon imagined that God answered: “**For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.**” That is, Dear, although God may have some goal, he ain’t gonna tell anyone!

And actually, Dear, here is where the thicket gets even thicker. In ancient Greece, the poet Pindar (c. 518 – c. 438 BCE) saw the essence of the

problem (and of the clerics' con games), long before the Old Testament, New Testament, Koran, Book of Mormon, and similar nonsense were written. Pindar concluded: **“It is not possible with mortal mind to search out the purposes of the gods.”**

I dearly hope, Dear, that you appreciate the significance of Pindar's statement. If it's correct (and as I demonstrated to you a couple of paragraphs ago, the three “holy books” used for your indoctrination are entirely consistent with Pindar's conclusion), then it means that, claims of all con-artist clerics to the contrary notwithstanding, there never has been and there never will be any guidance from any god about how to live your life!

Instead, all guidance that you've heard and will ever hear from clerics about “God's purpose” was concocted by clerics – for their own benefits. And their main objective, of course, is to fill their collection plates, so they won't need to work for a living. That is, Dear, the “holy books” of all “revealed religions” actually reveal absolutely zilch about any god or any god's purpose. Instead they simply reveal an absolutely mind-boggling amount of clerical stupidity and cupidity (i.e., greed).

AN OMNIPOTENT GOD CAN'T HAVE A PURPOSE!

Further, Dear, there's something more that I hope you'll consider carefully. In his book *Atheism, The Case Against God* (quoted here from Aiken's collection), George H. Smith makes the following stunningly significant statement about God's purpose (to which I've added the italics, a note, and the bold type).

*The necessity of employing means to accomplish an end is the consequence of limited power; therefore, God [claimed to be omnipotent, i.e., ‘all-powerful’] cannot be said to employ means in any sense. Extending this argument, we also realize that God cannot be said to act in any manner, because actions are required only of a being who must resort to some means in order to accomplish a given end. **Nor can God be said to have any kind of purpose, because “purpose” entails unfulfilled desires or goals – and these concepts cannot apply to an omnipotent being.***

Come on, kid, read that quotation again – and think about it! Just as Aristotle concluded (as I showed you in Chapter Ie, dealing with “proofs” of God's existence), if God is as claimed (omnipotent, omniscient, and omnio-whatever-else), then he (or she or it) can't have a purpose! [Where's that “duh symbol” when you need it?!]

So, Dear, the next time someone suggests to you that “God wants you to...”, then rather than responding with “duh”, how about trying the response that you recently used on me (dealing with another subject), i.e., “NOT!” Try it again: “God want you to...” “NOT!”

“Huh?” the other person will respond. To which you might want to screw up your cantankerousness (which I sometimes get the impression is not too difficult for you to do, ☺) and add:

How dare you suggest that God wants something? How dare you insult God like that?!

Or, Dear, if you don't desire to be quite so cantankerous as your old grandfather (even though it may be genetic ☺), you could try your “sweetness and light” routine. Thus, when someone suggests that he or she knows what “the Lord” wants, then maybe you'd like to quote “Saint” Paul (the founder of Christianity and therefore, Mormonism), from *Romans 11*, 33. That is, respond with something similar to:

How can you know what the Lord wants? Saint Paul said:

O depth of wealth, wisdom, and knowledge in God! How unsearchable his judgments, how untraceable his ways! Who knows the mind of the Lord?

I mean, aren't you being rather presumptuous by stating that you know what God wants? Does anyone know? Can anyone know? Are you sure that God wants anything? Aren't you insulting God by suggesting that He wants anything? Isn't that taking the Lord's name in vain?

On the other hand, Dear, if you want to keep peace in your family and your mother says that God wants you to clean up your room, then maybe you should just... and keep the ‘duh’ (or the NOT!) to yourself!

And please, Dear, don't just parrot the nonsense that some lamebrain clerics palmed-off on you about God wanting to “test” people, to determine who is “worthy”, or similar. [And by the way, Dear, similar nonsense is a fundamental claim of Islam.] Because, again: how dare anyone say that God “wants” anything! That would mean that God isn't perfect! Why for that insubordination, somebody's gonna get their toenails torn off for eternity or... Sorry, Dear, sometimes I get carried away.

Meanwhile, though, even if God doesn't want anything (in fact, he can't want anything, since as soon as he would have a thought about wanting something, it would instantly appear – just as the ancient Egyptians and “modern” Muslims assume!), yet, could God have a purpose for people?

[Who knows why, maybe just to “while away” eternity, ‘cause doncha know, it can get awfully boring during eternity, especially when you already know everything; so, there's nothing new to learn – oops, I guess I get my toenails ripped off for that one; it's apparently not nice to suggest that God is bored out of its skull! That is, just as Aristotle saw, God is forced to spend eternity doing the best possible thing, thinking – and thinking about the best possible thing, i.e., himself – contemplating his navel – or whatever.]

Sorry for that aside, Dear, but again, how could God possibly have a purpose for people? That would mean that God would also have a purpose, i.e., to give people a purpose. And thus, Dear, maybe you agree with Aristotle's conclusion: God is necessarily stuck with contemplating his own navel (or whatever) for eternity! Aristotle's exact words were:

Evidently, then, [God] thinks of that which is most divine and precious, and [God] does not change; for change would be change for the worse, and this would be already a movement. First, then, if ‘thought’ is not the act of thinking but a potency, it would be reasonable to suppose that the continuity of [God's] thinking is wearisome to [God]. Secondly, there would evidently be something else more precious than thought, viz., that which is thought of. For both thinking and the act of thought will belong even to one who thinks of the worst thing in the world, so that if this ought to be avoided (and it ought, for there are even some things which it is better not to see than to see), the act of thinking cannot be the best of things. Therefore it must be of [Him]self that the divine [thought] thinks (since it is the most excellent of things), and [God's] thinking is a thinking on thinking.

But upon considering the matter, you probably saw that Aristotle is wrong, because by definition, an omniscient God would know everything – even everything about his own navel! Therefore, nothing would remain for him to contemplate! And thus, the only resolution of this logical conundrum is that an omnipotent, omniscient... god can't (and doesn't) exist.

Now, Dear, if in response to all the above, you're thinking something similar to “It couldn't be this bad,” then let me respond that I promise to show you (in **Qx** and **Yx**) that the idiocies and horrors are actually far, far worse. And if you're thinking that there must be some explanation that could resolve

such logical absurdities, then, first, I congratulate you for your refusal to accept logical absurdities and, next, I assure you that a simple, even obvious resolution does exist. The solution is not only to see (as I tried to show you in earlier chapters such as **II**, entitled “Indoctrination in Ignorance”) that there are no gods (and never were any) but also to see that all “holy books” are just “instruction manuals” concocted by clerics to control and fleece the people. It’s all a massive con game, developed, not for the purposes of any gods, but for the benefit of clerics.

PURPOSES OF THE CLERICS

Dear, as far as I’ve been able to tell, from all the data I’ve seen, no organized religion has ever arisen (and certainly not Judaism, Christianity in each of its various forms, Islam in its many versions, as well as assorted silliness such as the Shakers, the Moonies, and the Mormons) for which its clerics didn’t claim that:

- 1) All earlier and/or competing religions are in error,
- 2) The clerics of all competing religions are nothing but a bunch of conniving con artists,
- 3) Only they (the clerics of the new, “true” religion) know the purposes of god (or the gods), and
- 4) Only they (the clerics of the new, “true” religion) have authorization, direct from the gods and goddesses (or god), both to tell the people their purposes and to collect commissions for “services rendered”.

And thus, Dear, surely these data, alone, should make you wonder if your own religion isn’t just one more phase of the same con game that’s been running for at least the past 5,000 years.

And if you’re again thinking “It couldn’t be this bad”, I again must respond, “Actually, it’s far, far worse.” In fact, Dear, based on only the difference in what I have summarized here and what I will show you in **Qx** and **Yx**, I don’t exaggerate by saying that it’s more than an order of magnitude worse than what I’ve shown you here. Yet, I would agree with you that it’s almost unimaginable that clerics could have been (and still are) so evil.

A MESSAGE FROM THE GODS NATURE

But showing you more is a task for later chapters, and to end this one, let me return to the “message from the gods” (or better, from nature) that was conveyed to me by that black and white “duck” (or nighthawk or whatever it was), which as I mentioned at the start of the previous chapter, flew around me (and over me) when the moon was setting and the sun was rising.

If I were in the mood and had some capabilities as a poet, I might be able to convey this “true message from the gods” in a poem. And in case some day you find yourself searching for some material for a poem, Dear, let me sketch some ideas and symbolism that’s obviously available.

As for symbolism, how about the following?

- The big circle in which the “duck” flew, clearly indicated the **O**’s in openly and honestly seeking objectives behind opinions.
- The black and white coloring of the bird symbolized the black and white of “holy books”, the clerics’ dumb “black *versus* white” views of morality, good *versus* evil, “truth” *versus* error, and even their usual choice of “colors” for their silly attires!
- The setting moon symbolized all the religious followers of the world (holding tight in their orbits, locked to keep their face toward their gods, creating no light of their own, dead to the world, lifeless, only reflecting the light from elsewhere, and some of them obviously lunatics), while the dawning sun symbolizing rising Humanists, Naturalists, or “Brights” (rising in strength throughout the world, providing light on their own, supplying the world with warmth and energy, soon to shine so brightly that the moon will no longer be visible)!

As for meanings in the symbolism, here are some that seem obvious:

- No god has ever sent any sign to any human, but Mother Nature has – and some of these signs can be quite difficult to interpret;
- Most animals desire food, and if ever a priest leaves you after you refuse to fatten him, then wait a bit: like a certain black and white bird, any cleric who preaches any black *versus* white view of morality will almost certainly circle back again, to try again to leech off your productivity;
- The moon will almost certainly always be with us, as will some lunatics (schizophrenics and other neurotics, such as narcissists and egomaniacs), holding fast to their religions;

- On occasion, the lunatics may even, briefly, eclipse the sun: spreading their darkness across a wide strip of humanity, such as is now occurring in most Muslim countries and even in parts of this country (with the Christian fundamentalists in parts of the South known as “the Bible Belt” and with the Mormons in parts of the West, especially in Utah);
- But each day and after each eclipse, the sun’s light will reappear; Humanists are on the rise; the lunatics will wax and wane; the brightness of the Humanists will last for at least another billion years. To succeed, all we need do is remember our prime objective: survival of ourselves, our extended families, and our values, in particular those values derived from trying to help humanity advance and intelligence to expand.

And then, Dear, there’s the true meaning of the message from that bird. Just as the case for all messages ever claimed to be “from the gods”, the message wasn’t from any gods, but from Mother Nature. The objective of the duck (or nighthawk or whatever it was), conveyed in its big **O**, was solely that its DNA molecule wanted to continue to live. On its first pass, perhaps it saw something that I had that it thought it could eat (maybe my hat!), and knowing that the good was to live and that to live it had to eat, it returned. It was out early in the morning, foraging for food, struggling to survive. Its objective was clear (its dual survival goals, of itself and its family), because for that bird, no clerics had confused it with their silliness about any gods: all its values were based on its dual survival goals.

Similarly, Dear, what I want to show you in the remainder of this book (after I finish with the foolishness of all religions) is that the only sound basis for all human values is our dual survival goals, of ourselves and our extended families – extended out to include all life. In fact, I want to show you that an alternative statement of the only sound basis for all human values is to try to help intelligence continue and to expand. But showing you that requires still more “introductory material”, which I’ll start to describe in the next series of chapters. Then, in **V** (for Values) I hope you’ll see the obvious: *the only intelligent objective of intelligence is to promote intelligence.*

From what I’ll try to show you, Dear, what I hope you’ll see is that all religions are just opinions, derived from models of this universe (and our place within it) developed from inadequate data, with incompetent analysis, by primitive people in the infancy of the human intellect and now held by people who believe more than they think. Then, I want you to consider my opinion that to base opinions on other than reliable data is to be traitorous to all humanity.

But before showing you any of that, Dear, I want to provide you with data (in the chapters labeled with **P** and **Q**) that I hope you'll agree are sufficient to support the following conclusion. It starts from my assessment (which is little more than the definition of the word 'opinion', i.e., an evaluation of an idea) that all religions are just opinions.

I then add two assessments that have “stood the test of time”, one from “the father of modern medicine”, Hippocrates (c. 460–400 BCE), who arguably could be described as the world's first great scientist, and the other from his contemporary, Socrates (469–399 BCE), who arguably could be described as the Western World's first great Humanist. Socrates said:

There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance.

Hippocrates wrote:

There are in fact two things, science and opinion; the former begets knowledge, the latter ignorance.

Combined with the concept that all religions are just opinions, these two statements yield: “Science is good; religion is evil.”

But maybe better would be something closer to

Trying to gain new knowledge is good; claiming that you already know “the way, the truth, and the light” is evil.

Or maybe just modify Socrates' statement to:

There is only one good, willingness to learn, and one evil, refusal.

In any case, Dear, before I encourage you to choose to learn more, to try to gain new knowledge, to try to help intelligence expand (as I will in chapters from **R** through **Z**), I first want to show you (in the **P** and **Q**-chapters) some data that display the ignorance, i.e., the evil, perpetrated by the clerics of all religions. And though I hope that you're one of the “good people” who's still willing to learn more, I also hope that already you've learned that you also need to get more exercise!