

Qx17 – Sins Against Humanity Promoted in the NT

Dear: The previous two chapters were a bit of a “detour”. Prior to the detour, I began to show you some of the injustices and immoralities promoted in the New Testament (NT). On the detour, first I tried to show you some of the incoherencies in NT policies and then, some of what I think are best described as “insanities”. I especially wanted to show you some details of “Saint” Paul’s insanities, because if I didn’t show them to you, I’m afraid you’d have difficulty appreciating not only that anyone could have promoted such insane ideas but also that such ideas have been used for almost 2,000 years as the basis of a new religion (i.e., Christianity, with all its sects, including Mormonism). Now, in this and the next chapter, I want to get back to showing you more of the NT’s immoralities and injustices.

In this chapter, mostly dealing with injustices (or “inequities”), first I want to show you some of the NT’s crazy ideas about sin and then show you some of its crazy ideas about praying (e.g., for forgiveness of sins). The next chapter will deal with even more serious injustices and immoralities (which can be called “iniquities”) promoted in the NT, including the data-less idea of heaven (the imagined reward for being sinless) and the hideous idea of hell (the threatened punishment for being sinful – unless, of course, the clerics forgive the sinner). For reasons I’ll show you, I consider such ideas to be so evil that, in my opinion, the clerics should be indicted for crimes against humanity for promoting such iniquities.

Incidentally, I had some difficulties with the titles of this and the next chapter. Attempting to maintain an “in-theme” (as in ‘injustices’, ‘incoherencies’, and ‘insanities’!) previously I entitled them, respectively, “Inequities” and “Iniquities” [Promoted in the NT], but not only did that seem rather pedantic, it bothered me when I found that the roots of both ‘inequity’ and ‘iniquity’ are the same (viz., “not equality”) and that usage, alone, has led to ‘iniquity’ being used to describe “an extreme inequity”!

Instead, I settled upon the titles “Sins” *versus* “Crimes” [against Humanity Promoted in the NT], although I seriously considered changing the title of this chapter to “Some Comedy Relief” – because when you start digging into some of the details about sins and prayers, Dear, I wouldn’t be surprised if you respond with something similar to: **“Somebody’s gotta be kidding!”**

That is, some of the stuff that's promoted in the NT is so dumb, so crazy, so infantile, that maybe the best way to interpret it is: as a farce. Granted that some of it is “mighty sick humor”, but the alternative – to assume that someone was promoting such nonsense as serious policy – is almost unfathomable. Let me try to demonstrate what I mean, starting with ‘sin’.

Immediately, however, I should admit that my describing sins to you may be a sinful waste of your time – not because you're unaware of the concept (☹), but because I know so little about it (☺)! In an earlier chapter (**P3**) I already showed you why I'm sinless. I'll just quote what I already wrote:

Dear: no “secular humanist” ever was or ever will be a “sinner”. According to my dictionary, the primary definition of ‘sin’ is “**the breaking of religious law or moral principle, especially through a willful act.**” Rejecting all religions, we secular humanists therefore never sin! Of course we make mistakes, but we don't sin. We make mistakes – and we pay for them, with everything from banged knuckles to lost friendships. Religious people, in contrast, are conned into “believing” that their mistakes are “sins” – to be paid for, not with banged knuckles and lost friendships, but with produce, cash, or whatever else the clerics can con from the people! The stupidity is enough to drive me to suggest a bumper sticker: “**I may be mistaken, but you have to be religious to be a sinner.**” Or maybe better, cause it's shorter:

MISTAKES... SURE ☹ . SIN... NEVER ☺ !

In general, the concept of sin is one of the silliest notions ever concocted. It's also one of the craziest! Yet, it's not the craziest. Even crazier is the idea that clerics can forgive sins! Whoever cooked-up that craziness has gotta be one of the worst con artists ever to have contaminated the world. As Voltaire said ~250 years ago (a classic bumper sticker if I ever saw one):

THE FIRST PRIEST WAS THE FIRST ROGUE WHO MET THE FIRST FOOL.

Now, Dear, as I've written before, it isn't my goal in this **Qx** “excursion” to provide you with an historical perspective of the ideas in the principal “holy books” of our culture; I'll try to do that in the excursion **Yx**. Instead, my goal for this **Qx** is to show you “only” some of the horrible policies that these “holy books” promote. Yet, if I don't give you at least a glimpse of the history, I'm afraid that you'll conclude that the policies advocated in the NT dealing with sin (and the associated concepts of praying and of heaven and hell) are even crazier than they already are! Therefore, please permit me to now “slip-in” at least a little history.

A GLANCE AT SOME HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT OF 'SIN'

First, let me assure you that certainly no Christian cleric concocted the crazy concepts of heaven, hell, praying, and sin – there's no evidence that any Christian cleric was ever that intelligent! In fact (or at least as far as I've been able to discern the facts, which I'll try to show you in **Yx**), Christianity didn't develop by some clever design; rather, like mud, it oozed down to the lowest levels of society, clogging-out competing superstitions among uneducated people, whom power-mongering priests and politicians wanted (and still want) to manipulate.

As for the origin of the idea of sin, written records (some of which I'll show you in **Yx**) demonstrate that Sumerian and Egyptian clerics promoted the concept of sin more than 2,000 years before the clerics' Jesus was allegedly born. Further back in time, the idea of sin probably originated when prehistoric humans wondered what they had done wrong to cause their crops to fail, their mountain to erupt, some lightning storm to set fire to their forest, etc. Having learned as children that their parents would forgive them for their "transgressions" if they were sufficiently "contrite" and having learned as adults that more powerful adults could be bribed, primitive people apparently decided (probably at the urging of some shaman) that the angry gods could also be placated or bribed with some "booty". And with the delivery of that booty to the first shaman, the clerics' con-game was up and running. Again: **"The first priest was the first rogue who met the first fool."**

As I'll show you in **Yx**, over time the clerics added more riggings to harness their donkey followers. The fundamental step (followed by the Christian clerics) was to convince people that their prime goal was to obey "the gods" (for whom the clerics just happened to be the spokesmen). Next, the clerics displayed both the carrot and the stick with which they proposed to move their donkey followers: if the people did what the clerics demanded (if people were "sinless"), then Christian clerics offered the same carrot that, more than 2,000 years earlier, Egyptian clerics offered their followers, namely, "eternal bliss in a heavenly after-life". On the other hand, if people didn't do what the clerics demanded (if the people "sinned"), then the clerics threatened them with the stick of "eternal damnation in hell" (an idea that, as I'll show you in **Yx**, may have been conceived first by Mesopotamian priests, although there are also hints of it in early Egyptian writings). Thereby, clerics used their God-idea to harness their mule-like followers, with the central yoke being the concept of "sin".

Actually, though, evidence (which I'll show you in **Yx**) suggests that, in reality, it was the Egyptian people, themselves, who forced the priests to offer "heavenly bliss" to the people! Thus, in the world's second-recorded revolution (in about 2000 BCE), the Egyptian people demanded that not only the pharaoh but also they should be able to gain eternal life in paradise. The world's first-recorded revolution (a few hundred years earlier in Mesopotamia and in which the people also sought redress of grievances against their priests) led to a similar disaster for the people: a more-powerful priesthood. Of course it was great that people demanded justice, but what a pity that the people were (and still are) so easily misled.

Yet (as I mentioned in an earlier chapter, suggested above, and will show you in more detail in **Yx**), although the same "carrot and stick approach" proposed by Christian clerics had been used by Egyptian and Mesopotamian priests for at least the prior 2,000 years, this approach had also been found to be totally inadequate (!) to fill the clerics' coffers. What the earlier clerics therefore added (and of course the Christian clerics followed their lead) were methods for their mule-like followers to "change their ways".

Thus, rather than people just experiencing the consequences of random natural disasters, rather than their suffering the consequences of their own mistakes, and rather than their just getting a dose of their own medicine when what-they-sent-around came back around, sinful followers were told that, if they pray to their god (aka the clerics) for forgiveness of their sins – and paid the required "sin offerings" – then the clerics would forgive the "poor, wretched sinners", rescuing them from a horrible fate awaiting them in their imagined hell, replacing that horror with make-believe eternal-bliss in heaven. Thereby, the clerics (and whatever gods they invented) played the role not just as "judges" but also as "saviors" in this fanciful con game.

In the beginning of this con game, the clerics undoubtedly salivated at their power over the people and their associated good fortune. They defined as "sin" anything that they found would yield booty in their coffers! You name it, and I bet that some cleric somewhere has classified it as a sin. But as commonly happens, power corrupts, and (as I mentioned above) apparently the clerics' excesses were at least partially constrained when people revolted (e.g., in about 2000 BCE in both Egypt and Mesopotamia).

Subsequently, the clerics apparently learned that people had the real power, and therefore, the clerics classified as “sins” only those activities that the majority of the people had already agreed were socially undesirable (e.g., not conforming to customary diets, not maintaining cleanliness, not honoring marriage commitments, not providing workers with a day of rest every week, and so on). Thereby, the clerics could promote the ruse (which continues today) that they weren’t just power mongering con-artists but “keepers of the people’s customs”.

In any event, in their attempt to initiate their own version of the ancient con game, would-be Christian clerics (who were Jewish) mostly just followed the example claimed to be set by Moses (methods that, in turn, followed the methods of Mesopotamian and Egyptian priests). Thus, the existing Jewish priests (the Levites) had found they could amass fortunes by having “sinners” pay them to “compensate” for sins, and thereby all the “sin offerings” that are listed in the Bible’s Old Testament (OT).

At *Leviticus 4*, for example, there is: if “**a man of standing**” (viz., a rich person) inadvertently breaks any “commandment”, then the “**sin offering**” was a “**he-goat**” (used as food for the lazy priests); for “**any person among the common people**” (viz., a commoner) who did the same, the payment to the priests could be of lesser value, namely, a “**she-goat**” (consistent with the male-chauvinistic principle of the Israelites that females are worth less than males); for lesser sins and poorer people, then the sin offering was “**two turtle-doves**”... **and a partridge in a pear tree**...

Sorry, Dear, sometimes I get carried away – sometimes even so far as to concoct limericks:

*If people should want to be mules,
Just follow all clerical rules,
But it's actually worse –
It's a terrible curse –
To be caught in a con game for fools!*

Anyway, Dear, by the time that the new-breed of (Christian) clerics attempted to establish themselves, the Jewish con game was well underway – well summarized in the OT at *Hosea 4, 8*:

Priests feed on the sins of the people.

THE IDEA OF ‘SIN’ IN CHRISTIANITY / PAULISM

Christian clerics, however, couldn't just copy all the old laws (i.e., profit from forgiving all the old “sins”), because if they tried, the people would have said (in effect): **“Why participate in a new con game, when we're already broke playing the old one?”!**

Besides, by the time the new breed of clerics got around to concocting Christianity, the old breed of Jewish clerics had classified pretty-well every activity that possibly could be called “shady” as a sin (e.g., cheating customers, not beating your slave to death properly, not selling your daughter into slavery properly, and so on). Therefore, just as any salesman or con-man must do, the new breed of would-be Christian clerics needed to find a new “sales pitch”: either offer more for less (e.g., a better heaven, easier to get to) or convince the customers that their new product was a “must have” (e.g., if rejected, a worse hell awaited “sinners”). Meeting this challenge required imagination!

Unfortunately for the new breed of would-be clerics, however, if there were a historical Jesus, then (as I'll show you below) he provided them with little-to-no help in setting up a new con game. In fact, a number of pieces of evidence suggest that he wasn't interested in establishing a new priesthood. Instead, he seemed to want people just to recognize that his god (the “good light”) was already within each person: it appears that he promised people that if they would just “see the light”, then they'd find the heaven that they sought, not after they died, but here, on Earth, while they were alive – and without the help of any clerics!

Evidence that such an idea would never lead to a profitable con game is available even in the NT. Thus at *Acts I*, 15, we learn (if the report can be trusted!) that after Jesus had allegedly pulled off hundreds of miracles (including stopping the sun for three hours when he died and then returning to life after he died!), the **“assembled brotherhood”** included only **“about one hundred and twenty in all”!** Please think about that, Dear: if there were any truth to all the miracles reported in the gospels, wouldn't there have been more than 120 “believers”?! Shucks, I bet that there were close to 120 people that Jesus allegedly cured of all their evil spirits! Surely at least they would have “believed”. More likely, of course, is that all the alleged miracles were just “priestly fabrications”, i.e., lies.

In any event, apparently the new religion was off to a very shaky start. If it was to gain momentum, it would need some bold, imaginative new “sin” that the clerics could sell! Thankfully for the clerics, “Saint” Paul sauntered in. As I tried to show you already, Paul (in his insanity) invented not only a brand-new “doozy” of a sin (of which everyone but everyone was guilty – how’s that for a winner!) but also a “doozy” of a way for the people to get forgiveness for this new sin, namely, just believe that Paul wasn’t insane!

Once the would-be clerics saw how the people (especially the poor and uneducated) gobbled up Paul’s garbage, the clerics apparently started salivating at the prospects for their new priesthood. Over time (approximately a century) they concocted the gospels to bolster their cause. Eventually, more and more people bought into Paul’s craziness, the politician Constantine (the “butcher Emperor”) found that he could profit from tapping into the resulting “people power”, and the rest is “Christianity” (better, “Paulism”) – eventually leading to the pollution of the minds of a certain group of grandchildren.

Now, Dear, with that ridiculously brief “historical overview” finished, let me provide you with some supporting evidence – emphasizing policies. At the outset, however, I should caution you (consistent with what I showed you in the previous two chapters) that the evidence is far from unambiguous and, therefore, the policies are difficult to discern. The basic problems are that no unambiguous records of what Jesus actually taught are available and that even the writings of Paul and subsequent authors were apparently modified by subsequent clerics. As a result (as I began to show you in the previous two chapters and I’ll show you more in Yx), the available records are a “mish-mash” of policies that seem to reflect the “remnants” from several antagonistic groups, including the two primary Jewish sects (the Pharisees and Sadducees), the Gnostics, and the Essenes (who probably wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls, who seem to have promoted a cross between Gnosticism and Messianic Judaism, and whose membership may have included John the Baptist and maybe even at least the young Jesus).

In any case, it seems clear from the records of the Gnostics that “the Gnostics’ Jesus” wasn’t interested in establishing a new priesthood – or if he was, that it wasn’t going to get anywhere, because he never gave sufficient attention to defining a new sin that would sell! In fact, not only did the Gnostics’ Jesus say little about sin, he sometimes mocked what other clerics called sins, e.g., the following appears in the Gnostics’ *Gospel of Thomas*:

They [his followers] said to Jesus, “Come, let us pray today, and let us fast.” Jesus said, “What sin have I committed, or how have I been undone?... If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned...”

So, Dear, according to this report, fasting is a sin – which then makes a mockery of the NT’s claim that Jesus fasted “for forty days and nights” (e.g., *Matthew 4, 2*). More relevant to getting converts, however, is that this sin of fasting would never be a good seller, because not many people would choose to engage in the “sin” of going without food – if they could help it!

In addition, as I’ll show you in more detail in **Yx**, the Gnostics’ *Gospel According to Mary* (i.e., Mary of Magdala or Mary Magdalene) contains:

Peter [whom Catholics call “the first Pope”, but he wasn’t]¹ said to him [Jesus], “Since you have explained everything to us, tell us this also: What is the sin of the world?” The Savior said “There is no sin, but it is you who make sin when you do the things that are like the nature of adultery, which is called sin. That is why the Good [Light] came into your midst, to the essence of every nature, in order to restore it to its root.” Then He continued and said, “That is why you become sick and die, for you are deprived of the one who can heal you [i.e., your own “light” within – which, I trust you notice, Dear, is vastly different from Paul’s idea about why people die, namely, because Adam ate an apple from the Tree of Knowledge!].”

As I already mentioned, it seems that comments about ‘sin’ by the Gnostics’ Jesus were totally inadequate to serve as a foundation for a new clerical con game: “things that are like the nature of adultery” were sins that the existing Jewish clerics were already using in their con game – and forgiving “sins” that were causing illnesses required some competence in “miracle cures”!

THE ‘SIN’ OF SLANDERING THE “HOLY SPIRIT”

The only other comments on sin that seem to be correctly attributed to a historical Jesus concern slandering the “Holy Spirit” – a sin that, as far as I’ve been able to determine, wasn’t “invented” by any other historical figure (although it could be the contrivance of some cleric, falsely attributing it to a historical Jesus). As I’ll show you below, you can find this “new sin” mentioned in all three of the synoptic gospels (though apparently neither in *John* nor in Paul’s letters) as well as in at least one of the Gnostic gospels.

¹ See, e.g., “The Myth of Petrine Papacy” by Paul N. Tobin at http://webspaces.webring.com/people/np/paul_tobin/peterpopo.html.

Thus, in the first-written of the synoptic gospels, at *Mark 3, 28*, there's:

“I tell you this [said the clerics' Jesus]: no sin, no slander, is beyond forgiveness for men; but whoever slanders the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven; he is guilty of eternal sin.”

At *Luke 12, 10* there's:

“Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will receive forgiveness; but for him who slanders the Holy Spirit there will be no forgiveness.”

And at *Matthew 12, 31* there's:

“And so I tell you this: no sin, no slander [or blasphemy] is beyond forgiveness for men, except slander spoken against the Spirit, and that will not be forgiven. Any man who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but if anyone speaks against the Holy Spirit, for him there is no forgiveness, either in this age or in the age to come.”

The fact that this “sin” is identified all three of the synoptic gospels is, however, insufficient for me to accept that there was a historical Jesus who proposed this new sin – because the writers of the synoptic gospels were notorious for just copying one-another (save in the case of the first of the synoptic gospels, i.e., *Mark*). In addition, however, there's the following in the Gnostic's *Gospel of Thomas*:

Jesus said, “Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either on earth or in heaven.”

Incidentally, Dear, let me call your attention to two modifications of the above ideas from *Thomas* that I suspect were made by the authors of the synoptic gospels (assuming that at least this part of *Thomas* was written first).

First, notice that the authors of the synoptic gospels didn't repeat the suggestion that it was okay to slander “the Father” (i.e., Yahweh). I expect that this was a purposeful omission, because (as I'll try to show you) the authors of the synoptic gospels seemed to have tried to find compromises between the modified Judaism that perhaps Peter was promoting (“Peterine Christianity”) and the new religion promoted by Paul (“Pauline Christianity” or “Paulism”), and in both of these “Christianities”, Yahweh continued to be

recognized as “the good god”. In contrast, Gnosticism identified Yahweh as “the bad god” (who made mass). Therefore, probably the authors of the synoptic gospels wouldn’t propagate the idea that slander against God was acceptable (because it would violate the first Commandment allegedly stipulated by Moses).

And second, notice that the clerics who wrote the synoptic gospels omitted the idea in *Thomas* that slander against the Holy Spirit wouldn’t be forgiven “either on earth or in heaven”. In this case, I suspect that the would-be Christian clerics didn’t want to leave the hint that a sinful person could get into heaven!

But those points aside, the important point (as far as the new breed of clerics was concerned) was that, just as with the sin of fasting, also this new sin of slandering the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost) apparently didn’t sell! If Jesus had been attempting to establish a new priesthood, then apparently, he must have flunked his college course Marketing 101! As far as consumers were concerned, neither the sin of fasting nor the sin of slandering the Holy Spirit was an “in sin”. People didn’t want to go without food, anyway, and as for slandering the Holy Ghost, I can imagine that two major problems arose.

One of the likely problems is this: Pray tell, how can you slander a ghost? I mean, what are you gonna say: “Hey, Holy Ghost, you’re transparent as Hell!”? How about: “Hey, Holy Spirit, I can see right through you!”? Or maybe: “Hey, Holy Ghost, have you ever wondered why no one ever notices you?”! Sorry Dear.

But if I offend, look at what the writers of the synoptic gospels wrote about the “Holy Spirit” – and apparently got away with it (although maybe their wording was slightly different):

- “Hey, Holy Spirit, word has it that you knocked-up that virgin Mary!”
- “You’re always going around putting words in people’s mouths!”
- “Filled with you, people start babbling!”

And actually, that’s nothing compared to what Philip wrote in his gospel (another one of the Gnostics’ gospels discovered in 1945 at Nag Hammadi):

Some said, “Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit.” They are in error. They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman?

So there you go, Dear: it’s not only slanderous but even ludicrous to say that the Holy Spirit impregnated Mary (as reported in the synoptic gospels) – because (according to Philip) He’s a she – almost certainly “she” being the goddess of wisdom, Sophia (who in Greece was called Athena). *Philip* goes on to state:

His flesh [i.e., the flesh of Jesus] is the word, and his blood is the Holy Spirit.

Which surely must lead thinking Christians (and Mormons) into a quandary (if they’re not already caught in an obvious oxymoron!): pray tell how could the blood of Jesus (the Holy Spirit) have sex with his own mother before he was even conceived? I mean, get real!

Meanwhile, as far as the Gnostics were concerned, Sophia (aka the Holy Spirit?) was something entirely different. To show you at least a hint of this, I’ll quote the online encyclopedia Wikipedia:²

For the Gnostic Christians, the **Sophia** was a central element in their cosmological understanding of the Universe. A Feminine figure, analogous to the human soul but also simultaneously one of the Feminine aspects of God and the Bride of Christ, she is considered to have fallen from grace in some way, in so doing creating or helping to create the material world. For the Gnostics, the drama of the redemption of the Sophia through Christ or the Logos is the central drama of the universe. The Sophia resides in all of us as the Divine Spark.

And even if that’s more than you wanted to know, Dear, I’ll add: if you try to read some of the Gnostic gospels found at Nag Hammadi, the above is key to understanding why Jesus describes himself as “the bridegroom”; that is, his bride (his better half) is the “goddess” or “Holy Spirit” Sophia. It might also help to explain what the Gnostics’ Jesus meant (as given in *Thomas*):

“...whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven...”

Thus, if the Holy Spirit was Sophia (the goddess of wisdom), then Jesus could have been repeating mythically what Socrates said more plainly, ~400 years earlier:

² Copied from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophia_\(gnosticism\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophia_(gnosticism)) .

There is only one good, knowledge [gnosis] and one evil, ignorance [= blaspheming wisdom = blaspheming the goddess of Wisdom = Sophia = the Holy Spirit].

Yet in contrast to that sensible statement (even if Jesus garbled it in mythology), consider again the craziness in the synoptic gospels dealing with “blaspheming” and “slandering” the “**Holy Spirit**”. One source of its craziness – especially about how one “**sins**” against the “Holy Ghost” – is that no one bothered to ask her what she considers to be blasphemy! So, I asked her – and boy did I get an ear full! What I did was just quote some stuff from the synoptic gospels, and she responded. For example, I quoted *Luke 3, 21* where it states that “**the Holy Spirit descended on him [Jesus] in bodily form like a dove**”. Her response was:

“That’s blasphemy! I resent any-and-all implications that I ever stooped to taking ‘bodily form like a dove’. First, I don’t take ‘bodily form’, and second, if it ever I wanted to, it would not be in the form of a dirty old dove but in the form of a cute little tweetie bird!”

Next, I quoted *Luke 12, 11*, which states “**...do not begin worrying... when the time comes the Holy Spirit will instruct you what to say.**” The response:

“More slander! I categorically deny that I ever put words in people’s mouths!”

So, moving on, I started reading *Act 2, 1*, and even as I read, she interrupted:

While the day of Pentecost was running its course, they [the twelve apostles] were all together in one place [for it was hard to be together in different places, doncha know], when suddenly there came from the sky a noise like that of a strong driving wind [“Blasphemy!” yelled the Holy Spirit, “I never do things ‘suddenly’, I never make noise, and if I ever wanted to, I’d choose to sound like a sweet-singing little tweetie bird”], which filled the whole house where they were sitting [“More slander! Filling the whole house be damned! I’m not overweight – if I wanted to, I could sneak into the house through the key hole!”]. And there appeared to them tongues like flames of fire, dispersed among them and resting on each one. [“Horrible slander, designed not only to suggest that I’m responsible for various unsolved cases of arson but also again suggesting that I’m fat. Further, the statement ‘dispersed among then and resting on each one’ is a blatant lie: I’m slimmer than any of you fat-pig clerics, and should I desire, I can daintily prance from person to person, noiselessly, effortlessly, without any flame or fanfare, just like a cute little tweetie bird.”] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them power of utterance [“Which is still more slander. Never once did I ever stimulate people to speak in any languages other than my native Swahili. Blaming me, rather than Yahweh, for all the confusion derived from multiple languages, is an insult both to me and to Yahweh!”]

Sorry, Dear, as I might have already mentioned once or twice (and as you might have noticed even if I didn't mention it), sometimes I get carried away. But I trust you get my point: as with all “holy books” (the Bible, the Quran, the Book of Mormon, and all the rest of them), it's all made up; therefore, you can say whatever you want – ‘cause it's all nonsense.

Still another problem with the “sin” of slandering the Holy Spirit is that apparently none of the gospels got around to describing exactly what the devil “the Holy Spirit” is supposed to be! As far as I can make it out (poorly!), the Gnostics' Jesus seemed to mean that “the Holy Spirit” was “the good light” that was claimed to be within everyone, that was a part of the “good god”, and that would change a person's life if only the person would “see the light” within. Somehow, subsequent Christian clerics seemed to amalgamate this idea of a “good light within” with ideas about the Jewish god, imagining that it was Yahweh who sent this light down to people – provided that they bought into the clerics' con game (e.g., by being baptized). Based on the lack of evidence in the Gnostic gospels of any such ideas, I suspect that, if Jesus could return from the dead and see how his ideas have been distorted, he would have himself a glorious belly-laugh!

And still another major problem with this “sin” of slandering the Holy Ghost, Dear, is that, as a part of the clerics' con game, it was useless! That is, the key of the clerics' con game was to charge their customers for “forgiving sins”. But Jesus apparently said that the sin of slandering the Holy Spirit could never be forgiven. So therefore... Duh... That's one boot stuck in the mud!

Yet on the other side, the clerics report that the clerics' Jesus gave them full authority to go ahead with their con game (e.g., *Matthew 16, 19*):

What you forbid on earth shall be forbidden in heaven, and what you allow on earth shall be allowed in heaven.

So then... Duh... Both boots stuck!!

To get unstuck, to get a new con game up-and-running, the new-breed of con artists (to be called Christian clerics) needed to identify some new sins – sins from which they could profit by forgiving!

HALF-BAKED, WARMED-OVER CHRISTIAN SINS FOR SALE!!

Granted that the NT contains a group of “half-baked” (or in some cases, “warmed-over”) sins that, for centuries, the Jewish clerics had been using to line their pockets, but on the one hand (as I’ll show you in **Yx**), it’s not clear when the Christian clerics started trying to sell “forgiveness” for these sins (it may have been long after Paul came on the scene), and on the other hand, it seems likely that these half-baked and warmed-over sins were never big sellers. In any case, I’ll just list some of these half-baked sins (or commandments or rules, violations of which would be sins), and then add a few comments on each.

1. All of the Laws of Moses

A summary description of this group of “sins”, is given at *Matthew* 5, 17:

“Do not suppose that I [Jesus] have come to abolish the Law and the prophets [i.e., the Old Testament]; I did not come to abolish, but to complete. I tell you this: so long as heaven and earth endure, not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the Law until all that must happen has happened [or “before all that it stands for is achieved”].”

Therefore, in Christianity (and Mormonism), details about how to sell your daughter into slavery, how to beat your slaves to death, etc. were to be (and apparently still are!) in full force.

In fact, though, this claim in *Matthew* exposes a rift between “Christianities” promoted by Peter *versus* Paul. The claim (that the “Laws of Moses” were still in “full force”) isn’t contained in the first-written synoptic gospel, i.e., in *Mark*, and (as I’ll show you later) the claim was explicitly rejected by Paul. Peter apparently considered Christianity to be “messianic Judaism”, with Jesus the identified “messiah”, and as a version of Judaism, the “Laws of Moses” were, of course, considered to be still applicable. Paul, on the other hand, promoted his Christianity (“Paulism”) as a religion for non-Jews (“Gentiles”) and therefore argued that the “Laws of Moses” (e.g., dealing with diets and circumcision) weren’t applicable. As I’ll show you in **Yx**, the resulting disagreements between Peter and Paul degenerated into open animosities – which the authors of the NT (especially of *Matthew*, *Luke*, and *John*) apparently tried to, if not heal, then at least “gloss over”, which in turn was the apparent cause of many of the policy incoherencies that exist in the resulting NT. But such complications aside until later, notice that the new breed of clerics had nothing new, here, that they could sell.

2. Even More than the Laws of Moses

In addition to the claim that all the “commandments” in the OT were still in force (a claim that Jesus wouldn’t have made, if he was a Gnostic, because the Gnostics considered Yahweh to be the “bad god”), the authors of especially *Matthew* and *Luke* “spiced up” some of the OT’s commandments – although these modifications aren’t so major as most “Christians” apparently have been conned into believing.

For example, the Christian clerics promoted the ideas of “brotherly love” and that a man “commits adultery” just by looking at a woman lustfully (woman apparently don’t sin when they similarly lust after men!). But in reality, both these ideas were already covered by the Yahweh’s clerics – as well as by the Buddha! For example, as Joseph McCabe wrote in *The Story of Religious Controversy* (already referenced):

He [Jesus] goes on to say that the old law was that you should not commit adultery: the new law makes it a sin even to desire a woman. But the oldest law precisely was: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife,” and the later books of the Old Testament say exactly what Jesus is supposed to say: “Lust not after her beauty in thine heart” (*Prov. vi, 25*), and “Gaze not on a maid... gaze not on another’s beauty,” (*Ecclus. ix, 5 and 8*). The Rabbis went even beyond Jesus. “Whosoever,” says the Talmud, “regardeth even the little finger of a woman hath already sinned in his heart” (*Berachot, 24, 1*).

Meanwhile, though, the “story” in the Gnostic Gospels is entirely different. For example, in the *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, there’s

“I [Jesus] have given you no law, as the lawgiver did, lest you be bound by it.”

I can here the new breed of Christian clerics screaming: “How in hell are we gonna make any money if you don’t specify some new sins?!”

3. Requiring the Adoration of Both the Father and the Son

This “commandment” was an original for the new-breed of clerics, but as described for example at *John 15, 22*, it’s really rather silly:

“If I [Jesus] had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin: he who hates me, hates my Father. If I had not worked among them and accomplished what no other man has done [i.e., worked all my miracles], they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father...”

To which, surely any sane person would ask:

“Then what, pray tell, was the point of your coming?! As for the ‘miracles’, thanks anyway, but wouldn’t it have been better if you had just stayed away, rather than make everyone a ‘sinner’? And if you caused others to commit ‘sin’, then aren’t you even a greater ‘sinner’?!”

Meanwhile, though, there’s no evidence in the Gnostic gospels that Jesus said anything similar to the above, i.e., almost certainly it was concocted by whatever (crazy) cleric wrote *John*.

4. Various Other Silly “Sins”

Let me just list a couple of other “sins”, which were never gonna sell (except to someone who was very seriously mentally-ill).

4.a *Hating yourself and life*

This is described for example at *John 12, 25*, where the author has Jesus say:

“The man who loves himself is lost, but he who hates himself in this world will be kept safe for eternal life.”

Similar (and worse) is described at *James 4, 4 & 9*:

You false, unfaithful creatures! Have you never learned that love of the world is enmity to God?

Be sorrowful, mourn, and weep. Turn your laughter into mourning and your gaiety into gloom.

No sane person could make such statements – and more significantly for the would-be clerics, no sane person would buy the bill of goods in which these were official “sins”! And sure enough, they never caught on – except among losers (who didn’t enjoy life) and among some masochistic monks and nuns (who enjoyed perversions such as whipping themselves).

4.b *Loving your enemy*

Actually, the “sin” of not loving your enemies is rather interesting, at least to “Biblical scholars”, because for centuries they searched the Jewish literature for support for the statement at *Matthew 5, 43*

“You have learned that they were told, ‘Love your neighbor, hate your enemy.’
But what I [Jesus] tell you is this: Love your enemies...”

The search for the statement “hate your enemies” was in vain – until the Dead Sea Scrolls were found! It then suggests that the author of *Matthew* (and maybe Jesus, also) was at least familiar with the Essenes’ literature.

But anyway, Dear, maybe with the above illustrations you can see why “Peterine Christianity” never seemed to get anywhere. The would-be clerics failed to propose any major new sin that anyone was interested in (or capable of) committing: How do you slander the Holy Ghost? What sane person can love what he hates (e.g., his enemies) or hate what he loves (e.g., life)?! In addition, although I didn’t provide details, apparently these clerics didn’t offer any major new promises (e.g., a better heaven, easier to get into, or a worse hell, that the people needed to work harder to avoid).

PAUL’S BREAK-AWAY, BREATH-TAKING, BEST-SELLING SIN!!

Then, however, “Saint” Paul entered. In his insanity, he identified a brand-new sin that (as far as I’ve been able to tell) no cleric had ever concocted before. According to him, everyone was a sinner at birth – because Adam ate the apple! Further, if that wasn’t crazy enough, Paul (in his insanity) simultaneously conceived of an absolutely stunning way that people could be forgiven for this “original sin”, namely, just believe that Paul wasn’t insane, just have faith that they could be forgiven for their sins – and they would be – provided of course that the people demonstrated their faith with sufficient contributions to the collection plate!

As I tried to show you in the previous chapter, as “proof” of his speculation that we’re all sinners, Paul offered the evidence that everyone dies. And if you go “Gulp!” to that idea, Dear, then you’ve gotta get with the program:

The reason people die (as the brilliant apostle Paul described so clearly) is because we’re sinners. If you didn’t sin, you wouldn’t die. And since everyone dies, then obviously everyone’s a sinner. What more evidence do you need?

Oh – so you wanna know HOW all of us became sinners even before we’re born? Shucks, that’s obvious. We’re all related to Adam, right? Well, then, look at what Adam did: rotten old Adam ate the apple – he disobeyed a direct order from God.

And don't go givin' me any of that junk about God forgetting to inform Adam that he was supposed to obey orders. Sure God didn't let Adam know right from wrong, but Adam should have known that it was right to obey and wrong to disobey, because – well, just because. And because Adam disobeyed, because he sinned, and because you're related to Adam, therefore, you're a sinner, too. That's why you die; that's just the way it is.

And don't go givin' me all that secular-humanist junk that God made a mistake by forgetting to tell Adam that he was supposed to obey. Mistakes are sins, and God doesn't sin. He's God, and what God does is right, by definition. Adam was just supposed to know that it was right to obey and wrong to disobey. Just 'cause. That's why. Any more questions?

And I don't wanna hear any more secular-humanist junk about justice. God didn't murder his son Jesus, he "sacrificed" him – and there's a big difference between being murdered and being sacrificed. Thus, God sacrificed Jesus, just as people previously slaughtered cattle in sacrifice to the gods and just as Abraham allegedly offered to sacrifice his son (and everybody, but everybody, knows that it was "righteous" of Abraham to offer to kill his son). So you see, the infinitely righteous God slaughtered his infinitely innocent son Jesus to placate himself for bringing sin into the world by forgetting to tell Adam that he was supposed to obey orders.

Thereby, God reveals his "justice", which in essence is: kill the innocent to "atone" for the sins of the guilty. And don't go givin' me any of that junk about this "justice" working especially well for God, since it was God's sin in the first place (forgetting to tell Adam that he should obey orders) that caused all the trouble. As I said before, God doesn't make mistakes, he doesn't sin: what God does is right, by definition.

But, be of good cheer; all is not lost. Just because you die doesn't mean you die. In fact, when you die, you needn't die; instead, all you need do is to believe that Jesus died to atone for your sins. That is, in God's glorious magnificence, he slaughtered his son (Jesus) as a sacrifice to himself, to appease himself, for forgetting to inform Adam that he was supposed to obey.

And so, if you'll just believe all of that, if you'll just believe that Paul didn't lose all his marbles, then you'll live forever in paradise – provided, of course, that you put a half-decent contribution in the collection plate.

Paul proceeded to demonstrate to the other clerics (who were trying to get their con game called "Peterine Christianity" up and running) that people – especially the most superstitious and foolish – would buy into his craziness. When the new breed of clerics saw how many people fell for Paul's con, how his "churches" attracted members, the would-be Christian clerics could barely constrain their joy: a new sin and a new way to forgive sinners meant a new priesthood!

Thereupon, apparently the clerics set themselves the task of writing the “Gospels”, to con still more people into believing three additional and significant lies: 1) that the author of Paul’s crazy scheme wasn’t Paul but Jesus, 2) that Jesus’ had the authority to forgive sins, and 3) that Jesus transferred his “authority” to forgive sins to them, the new breed of clerics.

And I don’t wanna hear a certain grandchild say “Show me the data!” People die, don’t they? What more data do you need than that? And don’t give me any of your “But, but, but... Nature determined that the best way to propagate any species was to create new generations, to adjust to environmental changes and to resist parasitic infections.” What are you, anyway, one of those damn scientific humanists? I tell you: God punishes sinners by killing them; that’s why people die; except for people who believe that Paul wasn’t bonkers, who believe that God killed his son to placate himself for killing people, then you get to live forever in Paul’s paradise. Otherwise, for all people (such as all the damn secular and scientific humanists) who think that Paul was a blithering idiot, they stay dead.

Sorry, Dear, on occasion I get carried away. But let me add that, if the above sounds crazy to you, Dear, then if it helps any, I totally agree. It also seemed crazy to the philosopher Nietzsche [pronounced “Neecha”]:

The concept of sin, especially the concept of original sin and damnation, is an affront to life. Guilt at birth! No chance for innocence, for escaping the priestly judgment!

But you needn’t worry about it, Dear, because I just happen to have authority not only to forgive but actually to absolve anyone and everyone from all “sins” – including you! And in case you wonder how I manage to do it, it’s actually quite easy: whereas the entire concept of sin is simply a religious construct by clerical con artists, therefore you’re absolved of all sins simply by rejecting all religions.

Simple, huh?! And should you wonder, Dear, where I got the authority, then let me explain. I got it from logic (or, for any Christian in the crowd, I’d say I got the authority from “the Logos”, i.e., “the word”, i.e., their Christ). It was passed on as a hidden message in the form of a limerick:

*Said the Logos with Cheshire-cat grin,
“All the priests know the secret of sin;
As learned long ago
The essence is so:
“People pay to play games they can’t win!”*

And thus, Dear, you can easily absolve yourself of all sins: just refuse to play the clerics' damnable games – and your sins immediately disappear! On the other hand, according to the clerics, you must pray (and pay!) to gain forgiveness of your sins. Which then brings me to the sin of praying – which the Christian clerics certainly didn't invent; they just added additional absurdities.

THE SIN OF PRAYING

Now, Dear, although I'm painfully aware that you already know far more about praying than I wish you did, and although I already showed you some of my opinions about praying (in **J4**), I plan to start again, this time emphasizing the crazy ideas about praying that are described in the NT and yet sprinkling this craziness with at least a little historical perspective.

To start, remember that there are many different types of prayer, including “prayers of adoration”, “prayers of thanksgiving”, and “prayers of petition” (e.g., “prayers of supplication”, “prayers of intercession”, and “prayers for forgiveness”). As you also know, sometimes many types of prayers are all “rolled into one”. For example, consider the “Lord's Prayer”, here from *Matthew 6, 9* and as given in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible:

Our Father which are in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven [i.e., a “prayer of adoration”]. Give us this day our daily bread [a “prayer of petition” or a “prayer of supplication”]. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors [a “prayer of petition” and a “prayer for forgiveness”]. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [another “prayer of petition” and “prayer of intercession”]. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen [another “prayer of adoration”].

Incidentally, Dear, in the NT it's alleged that the above “Lord's Prayer” was prescribed by Jesus (e.g., at *Matthew 6, 9*, it's introduced with the statement allegedly made by Jesus: “**This is how you should pray**”), but as I'll show you now, the veracity of such a claim is highly dubious.

To see the likely evolution of this “Lord's prayer”, first recall that biblical scholars seem to agree that the earliest reports in the NT are those by Paul, and according to him (at *Romans 8, 26*):

We do not even know how we ought to pray...

Next, in *Mark* (the “gospel” written ~20 years after Paul’s), I could find essentially nothing about praying, except the following (*Mark 11, 25*):

“And when you stand praying [allegedly said Jesus] if you have a grievance against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you the wrongs you have done.”

Now, Dear, of course I think that such advice is doubly dumb: 1) if someone has wronged you, then don’t forgive the person; instead, be on guard so that the person won’t wrong you again (“Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me”), and 2) if you’ve wronged someone, forget about the imagined opinion of a fictitious giant Jabberwock in the sky; instead, try to make amends with the person you’ve wronged. But rather than my going into that now (I’ll get to it later), I’ll continue with trying to show you the “evolution” in NT ideas about praying.

Next after *Mark*, chronologically, is either *Luke* or *Matthew*. I have a tendency to think it was *Luke*, because look at what its author proposes that Jesus gave for the “Lord’s prayer” (*Luke 11, 2*):

“Father, thy name be hallowed; thy kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we too forgive all who have done us wrong. And do not bring us to the test.”

In contrast, there’s the “Lord’s prayer” at *Matthew 6, 9* – as quoted a few paragraphs ago from the KJV, but here, consider the version in the New English Bible (NEB), because I suspect it reproduces “the original” more faithfully:

“Our Father in heaven, thy name be hallowed; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us the wrong we have done, as we have forgiven those who have wronged us. And do not bring us to the test, but save us from the evil one.”

It’s almost as if: the later the message, the more words were added! In any event, in conclusion and demonstrating the silliness of the claim that Jesus created this prayer, I’ll now quote from Gerald Massey’s 1900 lectures (referenced earlier):

But the Lord’s prayer is no more original than is the Lord to whom it was last assigned. In the Jewish *Kadish* we have the following **pre-Christian form of it** [bold type added], which is almost word for word the same:

“Our father which art in heaven! Be gracious to us, O Lord our God! Hallowed be thy name! And let the remembrance of thee be glorified in heaven above and upon earth below! Let thy kingdom reign over us now and forever! Thy holy men of old said, “Remit and forgive unto all men whatsoever they have done against me!” And lead us not into temptation! But deliver us from the evil thing! For thine is the kingdom, and thou shalt reign in glory for ever and for ever.”

Such is the skullduggery of the NT authors! Yet, regardless of this skullduggery, consider some concepts contained in this “Lord’s prayer”.

To start, “**Our Father in heaven**” is interesting. For one, and in contrast to the opinions of Pope John Paul II (quoted in an earlier chapter), this statement definitely locates where the clerics’ God resides, namely, “**in heaven**”, which as clearly described in *Genesis*, is where the birds fly, but below cloud base!

Then, in a “prayer of petition”, there’s “**Give us this day our daily bread.**” It’s similar to the sad ritual in which you were forced to engage: saying “grace” at every evening meal. Dear, that’s not “grace”; it’s a disgrace! No giant Jabberwock in the sky gives us our daily bread: our “daily bread” is made from the thinking and sweating of other humans, in exchange for our own. It’s blasphemy against humanity: if anyone proposes to teach humans how to give thanks, then let them teach people how to thank other humans for their honor and their productivity – not how to jabber some gibberish to some giant Jabberwocky in the sky.

Notice, also, that in the “Lord’s prayer”, God is a “father figure”; that is (at least in the days of “the patriarchs”), someone who provides children with food and solves their problems. In earlier times, at the start of agricultural revolution, probably it was the women who provided children with food and solved their problems; in later times, e.g., at the start of the industrial revolution, many children had to find their own food and solve their own problems; in modern times, all those possibilities occur. And for all times, never once has reliable data been recorded to show that any father figure in the sky provided anybody any food or solved anybody’s problems.

In addition, there’s “**hallowed be thy name**”. This is a repeat of the ancient Egyptian idea (subsequently borrowed by the ancient Hebrews) that even God’s name was so “**hallowed**” that it wasn’t to be spoken – and Jews to this day don’t speak or write it, writing G_d, instead!

Also, notice the similarity between the rest of the “adoration” in the Lord’s prayer (viz., “**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever**”) and the “prayer of adoration” (of the god Shamash or Marduk) that, according to Joseph McCabe in his already referenced book *The Story of Religious Controversy*, “was chanted in the Temple of Sin (the Moon god) at Ur as long ago as 2500 BCE”:

Father, long-suffering and full of forgiveness, whose hand upholds the life of all mankind! First born, omnipotent, whose heart is immensity, and there is none who may fathom it! In heaven, who is supreme? Thou alone... On earth, who is supreme? Thou alone... As for thee, thy will is made known in heaven, and the angels bow their faces. As for thee, thy will is made known upon earth, and the spirits below kiss the ground.

In general, Dear, and just as with the ancient Mesopotamians and Egyptians, these “prayers of adoration” are part of the clerics’ conniving to get people to obey (the clerics).

Thus, in “prayers of adoration” the obedient “servant of God” is to “praise the Lord” for his “power and majesty” – and, for good measure, throw in “exaltation” of His truth, justice, love, kindness, mercy, and whatever other attributes that an obedient servant would attribute to his or her master – who has a sufficiently wicked whip. And because these clerics teach that their God is a jealous god who wants continuous praise, then for all religious Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Mormons, the act of greatest morality (a +10 on the morality scale!) is to grovel to God, in some religions multiple times per day, with “prayers of adoration”.

But actually, Dear, no earthly slave-master would ever be able to create such obedience in his slaves as the clerics demand of their “servants of the Lord”, because obedient “servants of the Lord” praise their master not only willingly but even eagerly. Thereby, Dear, I hope you’ll remember what the Russian author Mikhail Bakunin wrote ~125 years ago:

A jealous lover of human liberty... I... say, “if God really existed, it would be necessary to abolish him.”

It’s a powerful idea: if your values demand that slavery be abolished, Dear, then for the same reason, the idea of God must be abolished, for it is an idea that clerics throughout the world – for their own benefit – have used to enslave foolish people.

In summary, Dear, I'll just mention how much such "prayers of adoration" sadden and disgust me. It's saddening to see humans willingly enslave themselves. How could modern humans (with any ability to think for themselves and with the availability of so much information demonstrating that all gods are figments of primitive people's imagination) grovel to some giant Jabberwock (or flying pink elephant) in the sky? Further, it's disgusting to see adults mimic some conniving, whimpering children praising someone more powerful, commonly while whining for some favor, in some affiliated "prayers of petition".

As you may recall from what I wrote in **J4** (and as you probably already knew from all your indoctrination), there are at least three types of "prayers of petition", including "prayers for forgiveness", "prayers of supplication", and "prayers of intercession".

As an illustration of a "prayer for forgiveness", there's the line in the "Lord's prayer": "**forgive us our sins**" (in *Luke*) or "**forgive us the wrong we have done**" (in the NEB version of *Matthew*) or "**forgive us our debts...**" (in the KJV's *Matthew*). All are not only nonsensical but also dumb. Dear, it's not the job of any giant Jabberwock in the sky to forgive us for our "sins": if you decide that you made a mistake, make amends as best you can; forgive yourself, and then move on.

Further, with respect to the rest of the same line in the Lord's prayer, viz., "**as we forgive our debtors**" or "**as we have forgiven those who have wronged us**" (and similar), in general, Dear, please don't – unless those who wronged you make what you consider to be an acceptable offer of restitution for how they wronged you. Otherwise, if you forgive them without their offering restitution, you'll be encouraging them to wrong you again – and simultaneously, you'll be encouraging them to wrong others, as well. That is, this little phrase "**as we forgive our debtors**" is more of the same pacifism crap that Christian clerics promote in their "**turn the other cheek**" idiocy.

In general, Dear, please don't buy it. Instead, be on your guard (so that such people can't wrong you again), try to avoid them in the future, and if you decide that it's a reasonable course of action, try to punish people for wronging you – not for revenge (remember: "**the best revenge is to live well**") but so they'll be less likely to wrong you and others in the future.

Dear: if you don't put conditions on your "forgiveness", then you'll be simultaneously encouraging such people to wrong still others (i.e., you'll be an accomplice in their mistreatment of others). Further, if you forgive people for wronging you (without their offering restitution), you'd then be thwarting Nature's lessons in personal and interpersonal justice: people who wrong you need to be reminded of Nature's principle of personal justice (that people generally get what they deserve) and they need to learn what the rest of us have learned about interpersonal justice (that "[what you send around generally comes back around](#)").

In fact, the other two types of the clerics' damnable "prayers of petition" (i.e., "prayers of supplication" and "prayers of intercession") are also astounding examples of attempts to violate justice. In particular, as I'll try to show you in what follows, "prayers of supplication" ("[a humble request addressed to someone with power](#)", e.g., in the Lord's prayer, "[do not bring us to the test](#)" and "[save us from the evil one](#)") illustrate the clerics' ignorant views about natural and personal justice, while "prayers of intercession" ("[especially a request on behalf of somebody or something](#)") illustrate the clerics' ignorant views of personal and interpersonal justice.

The prototype for "prayers of supplication" can be seen by watching some movie that depicts savages dancing around in a circle to the beat of a drum, chanting to their sky god, "petitioning" the god to modify or violate some natural course of events, e.g., to make it rain, to stop a volcano from erupting, or similar. And actually, it's rather amusing: in such prayers, the petitioner's case is "pleaded" before the obviously more powerful "god", i.e., Mother Nature!

As Donald Morgan said:

[Christians \[and Muslims and Mormons\] say that – without exception – their God answers all of their prayers; it's just that He sometimes says 'yes' and other times 'no', 'maybe', or 'wait'. Of course the same could be said of the rain-god...](#)

In particular, with regard to praying for rain, Aiken's summary of quotations also provides the following good summary from Steve Allen:

[If you pray for rain long enough, it eventually does fall... The same happens in the absence of prayers.](#)

No doubt smarting from this type of criticism ever since they promoted the silly concept of prayer, clerics of all colors developed the defense that, for the sky god to answer your petition, you must have enough “faith”. That idea is detailed in the NT in a number of places, for example at *Matthew 17, 19* and *Mark 11, 23*. Thus, *Matthew 17, 19* states:

Afterwards the disciples came to Jesus and asked him privately, “Why could not we cast it [another devil] out?” He answered, “Your faith is too small. I tell you this: if you have faith no bigger even than a mustard-seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there!’, and it will move; nothing will prove impossible to you.”

That’s quite a bizarre claim – given that, to the best of anyone’s knowledge, all mustard seeds have absolutely zero “faith”! Meanwhile, concerning the same incident, *Mark 9, 29* states:

Then Jesus went indoors, and his disciples asked him privately, “Why could not we cast it [the same devil] out?” He said, “There is no means of casting out this sort [of devil] but [or except by] prayer.”

This may appear to be another incompatibility between these gospels, but it’s apparently resolved at *Mark 11, 23*:

“I [allegedly Jesus] tell you this: if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted from your place and hurled into the sea’, and has no inward doubts, but believes that what he says is happening, it will be done for him. I tell you, then, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.”

That is, Dear, according to the clerics, if you have sufficient “faith” then your prayers will be “answered”.

Of course there’s the obvious question: “How much faith is needed to move mountains?” To which there’s the equally obvious response (given by someone else): “Why, enough faith to move mountains, of course!”

Which then leads me to wonder why even the highly paid leaders of various religions (such as the Pope and the heads of the Anglican and Mormon Churches) have such little faith. I mean, obviously they’ve made a great number of prayers petitioning the giant Jabberwock in the sky for world peace, and yet...? And if it’s objected that asking for world peace is “too much”, then let me point out that, just last week, the Pope prayed for rain in Europe, and yet... So, obviously the Pope has insufficient faith even to get Mother Nature to make it rain...

Dear, if you want to move a mountain, be reasonable: get yourself appropriate tools (praying is not one of them), and get to work! More generally, if you desire to cause some effect, then don't pray, work! If you do, then courtesy Mother Nature (and her "law" of causality) you'll get pretty much what you deserve. The essence of all "prayers of petition" (whether the petitioner is for the supplicant or for someone else) is the desire of the petitioner to abandon the real world (with its principle of causality) for a wish world, in which some giant Jabberwock in the sky intervenes between cause and effect: a world in which Nature's justice is thwarted.

Yet, extremely fortunately for humanity (☺), the clerics' Jesus provided methods for the rest of us to test the faith of people who claim leadership positions in various Christian denominations (including Mormonism). Thus, from the later clerics who added the last five paragraphs of *Mark*, we learn that their Jesus said, without equivocation:

“Go forth to every part of the world, and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation. Those who believe it and receive baptism will find salvation; those who do not believe will be condemned. Faith will bring with it these miracles: believers will cast out devils in my name and speak in strange tongues; if they handle snakes or drink any deadly poison, they will come to no harm; and the sick on whom they lay their hands will recover.”

So, Dear, as I remember suggesting in an earlier chapter: how about if you get some poisons that are relatively safe to handle (but not to drink!), such as various petroleum distillates, and let me collect some rattlesnakes, and let's see how many church leaders have sufficient faith...

Meanwhile, and in contrast to all the idiocy claimed by Christian clerics, *the Gospel of Thomas* reports that Jesus allegedly said something much more sensible – and desirable:

48. Jesus said, “If two make peace with each other in a single house, they will say to the mountain, ‘Move from here!’ and it will move.”

Please read that again, Dear – and then pause to consider the skullduggery that the Christian clerics apparently are playing, conning people into having “faith” in the clerics' con game rather than in what at least the Gnostics' Jesus apparently taught, i.e., to try to make peace with others.

But let me move on to the other type of “prayers of petition”, from the clerics’ dumb “prayers of supplication” to their even worse “prayers of intercession”. One group of these “prayers of intercession” is basically a way of talking to oneself, focusing on a specific attribute (e.g., “Lord, please give me strength to...”), which is sometimes a useful enterprise – though not because of help from some giant Jabberwock in the sky!

Another group, including prayers for good fortune for yourself or someone else, is bizarre – and horrible. There’s a huge variety of such prayers, for yourself (e.g., “I know I didn’t study for my exam, but please...”, “I know that I didn’t build anything to shelter me from a tornado, but please...”, and so on, including the cowardly stuff in the Lord’s prayer “**Do not bring us to the test**”) as well as for other people (e.g., “I know that so-and-so means well, so please...” or “I know that so-and-so is a nut, but please...”). The essence of all such prayers, however, is the same: to ask some giant Jabberwock in the sky to intervene to violate natural justice (i.e., the principle of causality) and/or to intervene to violate personal and/or interpersonal justice (i.e., getting what you deserve).

As I wrote in an earlier chapter (**J4**) such “petitioners” (i.e., slaves, ingrates, fools, and cowards) should seriously consider the adage, “**Be careful what you pray for; it may come true!**” – because it truly would be hell on earth if causality could no longer be trusted and if personal and interpersonal justice could be violated by some magic man in the sky. Yet, as I also wrote earlier, the clerics do add a neat little twist to their silliness about such prayers. They don’t completely abandon causality, for they advocate that, if believers have sufficient faith (and pay the clerics sufficiently), then natural and personal justice won’t be completely violated, just appropriately bent!

That is, the clerics still recognize a connection between cause and effect: praying to the gods (plus, of course, paying the clerics) is proposed as sufficient cause to produce the desired effect, which is to get other than what the petitioner deserves. Instead, Dear, I hope you’ll use the time and money (which you would otherwise waste on praying) to study harder, to build a better shelter against tornados, and so on.

And though I’ve written this before, let me repeat it here. Dear: if ever you should consider praying for something, please think again about why you want to cause other people so much misery! Is that kind?

If you pray that you'll win some race, get top marks on some exam, be awarded some scholarship, or... then what about those who trained harder, studied harder, worked harder, or whatever? Just exactly what's your beef with personal justice? You want to get what you *don't* deserve? Really? There's another side to that coin. If you think that you'd really like to have what you don't deserve, then how about if in the next minute, your leg just breaks – even though you did nothing to deserve it. How about if two minutes from now you go blind – even though you don't deserve it. How about...?

But besides the silliness of such praying as a personal policy, Dear, imagine the chaos for others if people's prayers were "answered". For example, suppose you went to a lot of effort to plant and nurse a fig tree, and someone "with sufficient faith" came along and cursed it, killing it (as the clerics' Jesus reportedly did). Or suppose you went to a lot of effort to set up windmills to generate electricity from the wind, and someone "with sufficient faith" came along and turned the wind off (as the clerics' Jesus reportedly did). Or suppose you went to a lot of effort to build a road around a mountain or a tunnel through it, and someone "with sufficient faith" came along and moved the mountain (as the clerics' Jesus reportedly claimed could be done by anyone with "sufficient" faith). What chaos! One person's prayer would be another's curse!

The idiocy of it all is enough to drive me to more limericks:

*Although Jesus said he was the way
(And the truth and the light) I just say:
If words still have meaning
The way that I'm leaning:
The worst thing in the world is to pray!*

*Although Jesus claimed we'd get the power
To move mountains and make the clouds shower,
But for what we receive
We are forced to "believe" –
And to beg and to whimper and cower!*

But more to the point of trying to help you, Dear, please consider again the ideas in the essay by Alvin Boyd Kuhn entitled *Prayer and Healing* (available, e.g., at <http://www.theosophical.ca/Prayerhealing.htm>):

The first and most forthright count in the accusation against prayer is that it is infinitely degrading to the human ego. As it springs out of the ego's profound sense of his inferior and dependent status, out of the recognition of his base and helpless nature in relation to the power prayed to, these basic assumptions in the case and the posture and habit of mind bent to conformity with them inevitably tend to strengthen and more deeply ingrain on the subconscious life of the individual so conditioned the dominant obsession of one's lowness and unworthiness. The prayer consciousness thus endlessly renews and sharpens the self-infliction of a most injurious psychological trauma upon the human psyche. In the simplest form of statement, prayer thus constantly beats down the human spirit. It throws over it a heavy pall of depression, of negative cast of consciousness, of self-accusation and self-depreciation...

In his ~1970 book *A Rebirth for Christianity* (in Chapter 11, entitled "Jesus – Man or Myth", p. 83 of the first edition – which unfortunately seems to be no longer on the internet), Kuhn wrote:

The Christian dogma has thus thrust man into a position of hopeless denigration, for on the one hand, it asserts that he is morally responsible for his sins and answerable thereto, but on the other hand, it holds that man's redemption is not within his power to achieve, since it is due to a spiritual agency above and beyond him. Christianity first blackens man as a sinner, then admonishes him that nothing he can do will avert his punishment save appeal to a higher agency. Earnestly as he may strive to merit some credit or consideration, obey as he will every demand of the law, fate nevertheless hangs upon the will of heavenly power, even though it is said to have been focused in Palestine for humanity's benefit. Goodness alone will avail him nothing if he be not saved by Christian grace; yet, a life of crime and violence may be redeemed by last-minute repentance and acknowledgment of allegiance and obedience to Christian codes. This is the inequity established for man in the moral sphere.

Life is today universally rated as being under the governance of natural law, and one of the principles of law is that of causation; cause produces proportional effect. The forces at play being known, one and only one series of effects is possible, but everywhere and always the operation remains within the area of the forces involved.

This abstraction finds immediate relevance to the theological predicament set up by Christianity. Christian doctrine does not apply the principle of law to the moral-spiritual problem in man. It segregates man's moral action from the realm of moral consequences. This has the effect of making moral and spiritual law inoperable in the sphere of man's daily life. So long as men assume that action which is motivated by good intent will bring good results, they will have a proper incentive to right conduct. But if they are deprived of the right to look for such reward, they will become hopeless of the success of moral action. The drive to do one's best is sapped at its source, which is man's will to the good.

The doctrine that human life is, in the final analysis, to be weighed, judged and recompensed by an Intelligence, a Power, which is totally beyond human control or even human understanding, can only vitiate human dignity. Herein can be found no evolutionary goal toward which man can purposefully strive; he can only try to propitiate these external forces. Evolution itself will not save him. If he yearns for salvation, he can only hope and pray.

The Gnostics' Jesus apparently said something similar to Kuhn, but more succinctly. Thus, The *Gospel of Thomas* states:

His disciples asked him [the Gnostics' Jesus]... "Do you want us to fast? How should we pray...?" Jesus said to them, "If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned..."

And if that isn't enough to "inspire" a limerick, then maybe even better: how about a bumper sticker?

As Jesus said:

"IF YOU PRAY, YOU'LL BE CONDEMNED"

(As recorded in the Gospel of Thomas)

Somehow or other, that seems to be a highly appropriate place to end this chapter (☺). In the next chapter, I want to show you how clerics use prayer to promote their con game. Meanwhile, I pray that you'll go out and get some exercise ('cause it would be a sin if you... ☹) – and that you'll smile more frequently (☺).