

J1 – Jabberwocky about Supernatural Justice

Dear: If this book were divided into parts, this would be the start of Part 3. In prior chapters (in both Part 1, which emphasized goals, and Part 2, where I started to show you what I mean by “belief in god is bad science”), the ideas were mostly about the individual – with the particular individual given most attention being me! Sorry about that – but I tried to show you how the ideas might be useful also for you. For this next part, Part 3, I’ll be addressing, in addition, relationships between and among people (i.e., a switch in emphasis from ‘me’ to ‘us’), addressing concepts such as justice, kindness, love, legality, morality, and so on. In the final parts of this book (Parts 4 and 5), the emphasis will be on nature (or on science) and then on worldviews and on you.

With these five “parts”, the messages that I’m trying to convey are as follows (which, in the electronic version of the book, you see can easily see from the names of the files containing chapters in the five parts). Be aware of your goals, because happiness is in making progress towards your goals (Part 1). Belief in god is bad science (Part 2) and even worse policy (Part 3). I therefore strongly recommend, Dear, that you replace belief in god with confidence in the scientific method (Part 4) and with trust in yourself – particularly in your ability to identify and then successfully pursue your own goals (Part 5).

In terms of the analogy that I introduced in an earlier chapter, my plan with this Part 3 is to invite you to walk with me, not on my “northern trail” but on one of my “southern trails”. As I expect you recall from when we’ve walked, I have two principal “southern trails”, one on the “hill” (where you wanted to see those bleached cattle bones) and the other on the “river road”, with the river on one side and a view of the mountains on the other. In this Part 3, I’ll make reference to this analogy of walking along this river road – using the analogy to continue to try to keep my sanity!

In this Part 3, I hope to show you (in part!) why I think belief in god is (as I wrote in an earlier chapter, not only bad science but) “even worse policy”. And I’ve included the phrase “in part”, because of what I also wrote in an earlier chapter: while I’m trying to show you why I consider “belief in god is bad science and even worse policy”, I want to continue to try to show you better policies, i.e., those of humanism (the essence of which is what I review with my “meditation”). In the final parts of this book, the emphasis will be on showing you these “better policies”, i.e., scientific humanism.

With the change in emphasis in this Part 3 from dealing with the individual to dealing with interactions among people, I also plan changes in the format of the chapters, for reasons that I should probably try to explain. These changes deal with some “technical complications” that arose and that, in turn, had multiple causes. One set of causes (which you may consider to be “picayunish”)¹ has actually caused me a lot of grief. Let me illustrate.

For “J”, when I’m walking, I remind myself about my “Judicial Principles”. But for the corresponding chapter in this book, for **J**, I want to explain to you the source of my “Judicial Principles”, i.e., my concept of “morality”. Yet, if I adhere to my self-imposed alphabetical listing of ideas, then “Morality” should wait until “M”. When I’m walking, this causes me no difficulty (because I already know what my moral values are!), but I’m afraid that it has caused me difficulty trying to explain these ideas to you, and more importantly, I’m afraid it may cause you difficulties trying to understand what I mean.

As a result, you’ll probably find ideas overlapping and intermingling even worse than in earlier chapters. In an attempt to alleviate such difficulties, I’ve cheated some on the alphabetical listing (e.g., in **J3**, I’ll address Interpersonal Justice and Morality) – and I do so without much apology, remembering Ralph Waldo Emerson’s: “a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds” (or maybe people no longer familiar with the word ‘hobgoblin’ would say: “a foolish consistency is picayunish” – or just “picky, picky”).

Another “technical complication” I’ve experienced writing subsequent chapters is their length. When I’m walking, the rest of what I review (from **J** through **Z**) is quite brief, in total usually taking maybe 10-20 minutes (if I don’t get “hung up” on something, because of a problem I’m trying to solve). In contrast, I’m sorry to suggest that you should allot at least 10-20 *months* to read what follows!²

¹ Dear: apparently the word ‘picayunish’ is from the French word *picailon*, which is (was?) a small coin, similar to the British halfpenny (or “half pence”). As maybe you know, ‘picayunish’ (an “Americanism”) has come to mean “anything trivial or petty; small or small-minded”. I suppose it’s the source of the phrase “picky, picky”.

² Surely one chapter per week is enough! And the range from 10 to 20 months (or more!) depends on if you choose to take some of the “excursions” that will be offered.

As I already mentioned, one of the reasons for the brevity of what I review when I'm walking is that I already understand what I mean! On the other hand, the principal cause of the length of subsequent chapters is to show you why I reject all concepts of all gods – and normally I don't review such ideas when I'm walking, because I now find the whole business about gods to be so stupid and so boring that I no longer want to waste any of my remaining mental energy on it! Of course, that doesn't mean that I consider the ideas in the following chapters to be unimportant for someone who has not yet broken free from religious indoctrination, but, Dear, once you've cast off the "yoke" of any religion, then like a colt broken free from some harness, there's little point in pulling the plow (to which the clerics have harnessed you), when your mind is free to run through green pastures of more pleasurable and more profitable thoughts!

And still another "technical complication" that I've had writing these chapters (in turn derived from those already mentioned) is the following. I've found that the brief ideas that I review while walking are sometimes quite inadequately summarize some of the chapters that follow. My resolution of this "technical problem" has generally been to put a summary of each chapter at the beginning of each chapter and then show you what I actually review when I'm walking at the end of each chapter – if, in fact, there's anything in the chapter that I review when I'm walking! For example, Dear, with this long "introduction" to this Part 3 finally out of the way (all of which could be summarized with "Careful: there are changes ahead!"), I'll show you a summary of this chapter – and at the end of the chapter, you'll find no summary, because in this chapter, there's nothing that I normally remind myself when I'm walking.

Thus, as I've already mentioned, when I'm walking rarely do I think about "the god idea" (except in "G", with "God's a bunch of garbage"). Exceptions occur if I've had a recent sad reminder about how the minds of certain grandchildren have been polluted with such junk or if I encounter still another pathetic policy derived from the stupid "god idea". In turn, many if not most of such pathetic policies can be traced to the totally data-less concept of the existence of an "all powerful, supreme judge of the universe" (known in our culture as "Almighty God"), who defines justice and morality, and on "the final judgment day" will judge all humans, sending "the morally good" to "everlasting bliss in heaven" and "the morally evil" to "eternal damnation in hell". Dear: I'll give you a million dollars for each of the tiniest shreds of data that you can find that support such a crazy

idea; unfortunately, I don't have enough money to offer you a penny for each instance of harm that this idea has caused.

Anyway, if I'm in the mood to remind myself of this "Jabberwocky", I might remember a summary similar to the following:

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son" – all supernatural junk about a "supreme judge of the universe" who supposedly defines 'morality' and who supposedly doles out 'justice' on some "final judgment day".

In a later chapter in this group, I'll show you what I usually review with "J" (dealing with my "judicial principles"), but here, let me try to explain the above, starting with some comments on the wonderful word Jabberwocky!

Dear, if you don't know what I mean by "Beware the Jabberwock", I hope you'll read the entire story *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll. I expect that you'll enjoy it; I liked it even better than his more famous story, *Alice in Wonderland*. In *Through the Looking Glass*, in his poem *Jabberwocky*, the author (who was actually the mathematician Charles Dodgson, 1832–98) created a wonderful farce of all religious ideas and poked fun at all "leaders" who ruled "by divine right".

In particular, when he wrote the poem *Jabberwocky*, he gave it what-was-then a nonsensical title, but according to my copy of Webster's dictionary, 'jabberwocky' now means: "meaningless syllables that seem to make sense; gibberish"! The poem starts (I almost have it memorized!):

*'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

*"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaw that bites, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch..."*

In the course of the story, Alice meets Humpty Dumpty, who appears to be an important fellow – perhaps an important priest, for why else, when he fell from a wall, would "all the king's horses (!) and all the king's men" even try "to put Humpty Dumpty together again"?!

In any event, Humpty Dumpty clearly demonstrated that he considered himself (as do all clerics) master of words:

“There’s glory for you!”

“I don’t know what you mean by ‘glory’,” Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. “Of course you don’t – till I tell you. I meant ‘there’s a nice knock-down argument for you!’”

“But ‘glory’ doesn’t mean ‘a nice knock-down argument’,” Alice objected.

“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.” [A similar claim is made by all clerics!]

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.”

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master – that’s all.” [And all clerics connive to be masters!]

Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again. “They’ve a temper, some of them – particularly verbs: they’re the proudest – adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs – however, I can manage the whole lot of them! Impenetrability! That’s what I say!”

“Would you tell me please,” said Alice, “what that means?”

“Now you talk like a reasonable child,” said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. “I mean by ‘impenetrability’ that we’ve had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you’d mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don’t mean to stop here all the rest of your life.”

“That’s a great deal to make one word mean,” Alice said in a thoughtful tone.

“When I make a word do a lot of work like that,” said Humpty Dumpty, “I always pay it extra.”

“Oh!”, said Alice. She was too much puzzled to make any other remark.

“Ah, you should see ‘em come round me of a Saturday night,” Humpty Dumpty went on, wagging his head gravely from side to side, “for to get their wages, you know.”

(Alice didn’t venture to ask what he paid them with; and so you see, I can’t tell *you*.)

“You seem very clever at explaining words, Sir,” said Alice. “Would you kindly tell me the meaning of the poem called ‘Jabberwocky’?”

“Let’s hear it,” said Humpty Dumpty. “I can explain all the poems that were ever invented – and a good many that haven’t been invented just yet.”

But instead of my now showing you Humpty Dumpty’s interpretation of the poem Jabberwocky (for I have my own interpretation, which I’ll indicate later in this chapter!), let me turn to ideas about “justice”, “supreme judge of the universe” and “final judgment day”.

And if you’re wondering how “Jabberwocky” would start me thinking about “judges”, “justice”, and so on, it’s because (besides all the J’s!) all the junk in all religions – and most of the propaganda promoted by politicians – is just jabberwocky (“meaningless syllables...”), such as the gibberish familiar in our culture that there’s a “Supreme Being” who doles out “final judgment” on the “day of reckoning”, sending “the good to everlasting bliss in heaven” and “the evil to eternal damnation in hell.” Stated differently: on brillig, the Jabberwock will send all borogroves to the outgrabe for eternal gyre, while sending all mimsy mome-raths to the wabe for everlasting, blissful gimble... or maybe it’s the other way around; I’ll check with a local cleric to make sure.

More seriously, Dear, let me mention some history of this weird idea that, after our death, some giant Jabberwock in the sky will judge us. And for the fun of it, let me “search backwards in time” to try to identify the source of this crazy idea, as if to address the question this way: “Okay, you got the idea from him; and he got it from that guy, but then, where did the earlier guy get such a crazy idea?” Therefore, and especially because of how you have been indoctrinated with this bizarre idea, let me start with the relatively recently written Book of Mormon and trace backwards in time from it.³

The last verse in the Book of Mormon (*Moroni 10*, 34) repeats a theme that the expelled Baptist priest Sidney Rigdon wrote over and over again:⁴

³ Dear: As I’ll show you in some detail in the “excursions” **Qx** and **Yx** – and as surely as we know essentially anything – there’s no doubt that the Book of Mormon was written not when claimed but in the early 1800s.

⁴ Dear: As you can find on the internet and as I’ll be reviewing later (in the “excursions” **Qx** and **Yx**), the evidence that Sidney Rigdon wrote the Book of Mormon is overwhelming – in fact, to readers aware of the nuances of controversies among American Baptists during the 1820s, Sidney Rigdon wrote his signature on hundreds of pages of the Book of Mormon! As William Whitsitt wrote in his amazingly thorough book *Sidney Rigdon, The Real Founder of Mormonism* (which you can find on the internet at <http://sidneyrigdon.com/wht/1891WhtB.htm>):

And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing [judgment] bar of the great Jehovah, the *Eternal Judge* [italics added] of both quick and dead.⁵

So now, Dear, let me go backwards in time to see where Sidney Rigdon picked up this crazy idea that there was a giant Jabberwock in the sky who is “the Eternal Judge”.

Although there’s no doubt that Sidney Rigdon got his ideas from the Bible (because, while writing the Book of Mormon, he plagiarized huge sections of the King James Version of the Bible) and although almost certainly he never read the “holy book” of Islam, the Koran (also spelled Qur’an or Quran), let me now quote some from the Koran, because going backward in time, it was then next to appear. It starts (Chapter 1, Verse 1) with:

In the name of the most merciful God: Praise be to God, the Lord of all Being; the most merciful; *the Master of the day of judgment* [italics added].

Elsewhere in the Koran (*The Star 2: 53.31*),⁶ there is the following:

And Allah’s is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, that He may reward those who do evil according to what they do, and (that) He may reward those who do good with goodness.

“The Disciple history [i.e., a history of a particular Baptist sect] for that period distinctly sets forth the fact that Mr. Rigdon was the man of their number to urge an advance to miracles, gifts of the spirit, and the personal ministration of angels as an integral and necessary portion of the beloved ‘ancient order’. Therefore, the conclusion is here firmly held that while the theology of the Book of Mormon unhesitatingly points to a Disciple author, the circumstance that it also insists upon these other features points with as little hesitation to Sidney Rigdon. It was not possible for him in this production to belie his individuality; it comes to view upon almost every page.”

Incidentally, Dear, Rigdon was expelled from the Baptist Church basically because he refused to conform to “orthodox” views – in particular, that the days of miracles were finished. He therefore concocted “the miracle” of the appearance of the Book of Mormon, which almost certainly he created by inserting his “unorthodox views” into a manuscript written by Solomon Spalding and which he (and probably Parley Pratt) then foisted the product off as “the golden bible” with the help of conniving by the convicted con-artist and “money digger” Joseph Smith.

⁵ Dear: “The quick and the dead” is a phrase used in the Bible, written when the word “quick” meant “alive”.

⁶ Dear: Apparently there are two common ways to reference quotations from the Koran: either by chapters (called *Surahs*) or by giving the name of the title of the chapter (e.g., *The Star*). I’ll use both methods – usually depending on whom I’m quoting!

That is, Dear, about 1400 years ago, about 1200 years before the “profit” Joseph Smith “received the Book of Mormon from the angel Moroni” (i.e., before Rigdon gave Smith the marked-up copy of Spalding manuscript!), the giant Jabberwock in the sky was well established, passing out judgments, rewarding “the good” and punishing “the bad” – but, of course, only after people died – and at least according to the “profit” Mohammed, who claimed that he received all his information from the nonexistent angel Gabriel.⁷

Progressing backwards in time (i.e., retrogressing) by about 500 years from the writing of the Koran, let me now quote from various parts of the New Testament, which were written during the years from about 50 to 200 of the Current Era (CE) by various clerics who had rejected Judaism. Here, I’ll quote from the New International Version of the New Testament, taken directly from the Bible search engine at www.bible.gospel.net and in which I’ll keep their reference format (and add some italics to the text). And by the way, Dear, consistent with my plan to look “backwards in time”, the ordering of these quotes from the Bible attempts to preserve the chronological order in which they were written (i.e., as you can find on the internet and as I’ll partially review in **Qx** and **Yx**, Paul’s “gospels” were written first – and some of these, such as his alleged letters to Timothy and to the Hebrews are forgeries, not written by Paul, and the letters claimed to be written by Peter are also forgeries, written about 100 years after Paul and Peter had died).

Revelation 20: 4

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to *judge*...

1 Peter 4: 5

But they will have to give account to him who is ready to *judge* the living and the dead.

Hebrews 12: 23

You have come to God, the *judge* of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect...

2 Timothy 4: 8

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous *Judge*, will award to me on that day...

⁷ Dear: If you have any data to substantiate the claim that any angels exist (and I don’t mean the kind of angels that sometimes pass as grandchildren!), then please let me know. Until I see some data that suggest otherwise, I’ll not yield on my description of Gabriel (and similarly Moroni) as “nonexistent”!

2 Timothy 4: 1

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will *judge* the living and the dead... [or, in another translation (to show you changes in word usage)]: I Charge Thee Therefore Before God And The Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall *judge* the quick and the dead...

John 12: 48

There is a *judge* for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the word that I [Jesus] spoke will be his *judge* on the last day [although how a “word” is to judge is rather difficult to understand!].

James 4: 12

There is only one Lawgiver and *Judge*, the one who is able to save and destroy.

Romans 14: 10

For we will all stand before God’s *judgment seat*.

Romans 2: 16

This will take place on the day when God will *judge* men’s secrets through Jesus Christ...

Where (I hope you’re wondering) did the clerics who wrote the New Testament get this wild idea that there was to be a “final judgment day”?

Well, of course I’m not sure of the answer to that question (especially because I’m certainly no historian – having spent my “working days” in science, rather than in studying history), so let me show you the opinions of someone who obviously knows substantially more about such matters than I do (or will ever – or ever want to!), namely Graham Lawrence, whose on-line book *The Fallible Gospels* I’ll be referencing many times and will be encouraging you to read.⁸ In this quotation, I’ve added a few notes in “square brackets” and slightly modified his style of referencing the Bible.

Originally, Judaism had no concepts of resurrection and an afterlife. There was no justification for such ideas in the earliest documents, and no hint of an idea such as the immortality of the soul. The original Israelite view of death was gloomy rather than comforting, an eternal sleep in the shadowy realm known as Sheol. In *I Samuel* 28: 7-21, the dead prophet Samuel is summoned back from Sheol by the Witch of Endor, giving us a rare reference to ancient traditions related to this subject.

The [Jewish sect known as the] Sadducees did not believe in survival beyond death, and they rejected the idea of the resurrection of the dead as a popular superstition, a novelty that was not authorized by the Torah [i.e., by the Old Testament]. As far as

⁸ Available at <http://freespace.virgin.net/graham.lawrence/gospelintro.htm>.

they were concerned, the relationship of a Jew with his God had to be worked out in this world.

Resurrection, along with many other popular ideas at that time, had originated with the Babylonian Exile [during the 500s BCE] not just with the prophets of that time but also with the exposure of the Jews to the influence of Persian religious concepts and attitudes. These included a more optimistic view of an afterlife, a Last Judgment, and a war between powers of good and evil. The resurrection of the dead for a Last Judgment, to reward the blessed and punish the damned, was established in the *Book of Isaiah* 26: 19. Isaiah mentioned the Day of the Lord in Chapter 2, and later chapters go on at some length about judgment and salvation as well as the destruction of earthly powers or the old world order. These ideas were later reinforced by the *Book of Daniel* 12: 2:

Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

As for heaven, for the Jews this was the domain of God, not of the souls of the dead. The idea that the souls of the righteous went to heaven after death grew up with Christianity, although it co-existed with rather than replacing the hope of resurrection. This was a bit silly, really. If the righteous are already in Paradise at the right hand of God, there would not be an awful lot of point in bringing them back from the dead as well. If you are going to Heaven rather than Sheol when you die, why should you need to look forward to the establishment of a Kingdom of God on Earth?

In the “excursion” Yx (dealing with “Your Indoctrination in the Mountainous God Lie”), I’ll try to show you more evidence that suggests it would be inappropriate to “blame the Jews” for concocting the silly idea of judgment after death by some giant Jabberwock in the sky. In fact and in contrast, it would seem more appropriate to praise most of them for doggedly sticking to the ideas about any afterlife that Abraham probably picked up when he lived in Mesopotamia (~1800 BCE) – provided, however, that this praise is for refusing to adopt ideas supported by zero data and not for just being “closed minded” – and excepting some later Jews (including the sects known as Pharisees, Essenes, and Christians) who bought into the ideas about judgment after death promoted by the Ancient Persians and Egyptians.

In particular, as suggested in the above quotation from Lawrence, there’s quite a bit of evidence suggesting that those Jews who did adopt the “new fangled ideas” about judgment after death, etc., picked up such data-less ideas from the followers of a fellow by the name of Zoroaster (possibly pronounced Zoro-ast-er and which is how the Ancient Greeks rendered his Persian name, Zarathustra). Zoroaster was born in what is now called Iran

and seems to have lived from about 630-550 BCE, although some historians suggest that he was born somewhere around 1200 BCE.⁹

According to one story, Zoroaster¹⁰ was trained (between the ages of about 7 and 15) to be a “priest” (in the Magi priesthood, which promoted a religion similar to Hinduism, which in turn followed a “holy book” called *The Vedas*). When he was 20, according to this story, Zoroaster abandoned the “priesthood” (of the Magi, which is the source of our word ‘magician’) for a 10-year retreat into the mountains “in search of truth”. In a Zoroaster “biography” by Mohammad Yusuf Khan,¹¹ the author writes the following [to which I’ve added some italics and some notes in “square brackets”].

[Zoroaster] left his home at the age of twenty... It is said that he went to the mountains... He spent years in a wandering quest for truth; counseling with Good Mind, Conscience, and the Holy Love [a trinity of jabberwocky if I ever heard one!]. His hymns suggest that during his travels, he must have witnessed acts of violence. He was conscious of being powerless. He had a deep longing for... *justice*, for the *moral law* to prevail for the strong and weak alike, so that all may be able to pursue a good life in *perfect peace and tranquility*.

During his intense desire and anxiety for searching the truth, he, on a day, arose with the dawn, stood before the sun, and spoke thus:

⁹ Dear: If you ever have a few hours (or days – or years!) with nothing better to do, you can start digging into the meaning of Zoroaster’s name and who he was. You’ll find suggestions that “Zuro-ashta” means “the seed of the woman” (consistent with the myth that Christ’s mother was related to Zoroaster’s daughter), that “Zero-ashta” means the “the seed of fire” (consistent with the *incorrect* idea that Zoroaster was a fire worshipper), that Zero was “the great god” whose seed impregnated the great goddess Ashta or Isha (thus leading to Zero-Ashta), as well as many other suggestions (among which I find most interesting that the Ancient Greeks chose to call him Zoroaster, maybe meaning “the high priest of the stars”, with ‘aster’ as in the word ‘astronomy’). If you do engage in such a search (which I don’t recommend!), then when you try to learn who Zoroaster was, it might help to keep your mind open to the possibility that there were many “Zoroasters” (i.e., just as there have been many popes, there may have been many “high priests of the stars”). Meanwhile, if you wonder why I chose the pseudonym A. Zoroaster (author of this book!), my thought was this: if Zoroaster means “seed of the stars”, then that’s what we all are (since all the elements in us heavier than hydrogen and helium were made in former stars) – so just as are you, I’m A Zoroaster!

¹⁰ Dear: If there were more than one Zoroaster, then this one’s full name seems to have been Ashavan Zarathustra Spitama (i.e., of the family of Spitama). Perhaps Plato was writing of a different Zoroaster, when he wrote: “When the boy [a Persian prince] has reached the age of fourteen he is handed over to the care of men known as the Royal Masters. They are four in number, and are chosen as being the best of the elders of Persia, one the wisest, another the justest, a third the most temperate, a fourth the bravest. And one of these teaches the boy the magic of Zoroaster the son of Oromazes; and this magic is no other than the worship of the gods. He also teaches him the arts of kingship.”

¹¹ The article is available at <http://www.alislam.org/library/links/00000150.html>; it’s entitled “Zarathustra and His Faith”.

“Thou great star! Where were thy happiness, without those for whom thou shinest!¹²

“Ten years hast thou climbed hither to my cave: thou wouldst have wearied of thy light and of this pathway were it not for me, mine Eagle, and my Serpent.¹³

“But we awaited thee each morning and took of thy super-abundance and blessed thee therefore.¹⁴

“Lo! I am weary of my wisdom as the bee that hath gathered overmuch honey; I need hands outstretched to take it.

“Fain would I bestow and distribute until the wise amongst the men rejoice again in their folly, and the poor in their riches.¹⁵

“To that end must I descend into the deeps: even as thou dost at nightfall, when thou sinkest behind the sea, and bringest light to the underworld, thou most bounteous star!

“Like thee, I must go down, as say the men to whom I would descend.

“Bless me, then, thou tranquil eye that canst look without envy even upon too great a happiness!¹⁶

“Bless the cup that is about to overflow, so that its waters may be a golden flood, carrying everywhere the reflected splendor of thy bliss!”

“Lo! This cup must again become empty, and Zarathustra must again become a man.

“Thus began Zarathustra’s down-going.”

¹² Actually, that’s an interesting line: not the suggestion that the sun has emotions (!), but to reveal how lonely Zoroaster had become. That is, he’s really projecting his own emotions outward (to the sun!) and asking: “Where’s my happiness, without someone to interact with?” It’s also interesting that, thereby, he’s recognizing that his goal is his own happiness – if only he would then have deduced the meaning of “happiness”!

¹³ To talk to the sun, and to have an eagle for a pet, I understand. But a snake?! Maybe snakes are good for keeping rats and mice away. But with only an eagle, a snake, and the sun to talk to (although no doubt he also talked to other things, such as trees and mountains), then Zoroaster’s charge that the sun would miss him (rather than *vice versa*!) suggests that his mind had gone over the hill! On the other hand, maybe all of this is allegorical: in Egypt, an eagle was the symbol of the Sun and a snake was a symbol of knowledge, so maybe this means that Zoroaster thought he had knowledge of the Sun, i.e., the source of light.

¹⁴ I find it interesting that he didn’t need to struggle very hard for his survival: he sat around in the morning, waiting for the sun to come up!

¹⁵ Sorry to add still another footnote, Dear, but if it’s not just a grammatical error, there are some very good points in that line: that some of the rich are foolish, that some of the poor are wise, and that all of us are very rich (having the good fortune to have been born).

¹⁶ Never doubt, Dear, that people on a supernatural trip aren’t happy! This delusion of grandeur (that you’re in direct contact with the “supreme judge of the universe”) seems to be able to pump an enormous amount of a chemical (dopamine?) into the brain, probably the same chemical that “tells you” you’re surviving (you’ve even found eternal survival!). Recall Karl Marx’s: “Religion is opium for the masses.” But as I tried to explain before (see chapter **H2**), the happiness from this dopamine surge is a bogus survival signal; this “grandeur” is a delusion; with it the ancient Christians could happily go to be eaten by the lions, and some current Muslims gladly strap explosives around their waists to die for the Jihad, for it’s their way to go directly to their heaven. So again, Dear, please be careful of bogus and traitorous survival signals.

And what (I hope you are now asking) was Zoroaster so pleased about that he felt he should praise the sun and tell the people?

Well, Dear, my answer to that assumed question is that apparently his mind snapped: in his dream world, his “golden flood” was his speculations about the “supernatural”. In particular, he conceived “a supreme being” who defined “moral absolutes” and then appropriately doled out “final judgments” to humans after we die. In his own words [passed down in hymns] Zoroaster states:

When I conceived of Thee [notice, Dear, than he admits that he “made it all up”, i.e., “when I *conceived* of Thee”] *O’ Mazda* [his name for his god; literally, Ahura Mazda is “the Lord of Wisdom”] *as the very First and the Last* [much later, the Christians used the same idea but used the Greek words (or letters): the alpha and the omega], *the most Adorable One, as the Father* [male chauvinism, right from the start!] *of the Good Thought, as the Creator of the Truth and Right, as the Lord Judge of our actions in life* [my italics], *then I made a place for Thee in my very eyes.*

Zoroaster’s more complete speculations about judgments after death are well summarized by Arthur Cotterell,¹⁷ whom I’ll quote here to spare you my belaboring the details:

Zoroaster’s doctrine of rewards and punishments, of heavenly bliss and infernal woe allotted to good and evil men in another life beyond the grave had a direct influence on Judeo-Christian eschatology [viz., from Webster: “the branch of theology... dealing with death, resurrection, judgment, immortality, etc.”].

That is, Dear, apparently it was Zoroaster’s “idea” that there was a single, all-powerful and all-knowing [male] god who was everyone’s final judge and jury and who, on a final judgment day, would sentence us to heaven or hell. Also let me mention here, because it will come up again, that it appears that Zoroaster also invented seven “archangels” who assisted Ahura Mazda (i.e., God), one of whom was Mithra (and the resulting religion known as Mithraism was Christianity’s prime competitor in its early day) and another of whom was Gabriel (who Mohammed claimed conveyed the details of the religion known as Islam).

The first people who “bought” Zoroaster’s crazy ideas seem to have been the Persians. Thus, “Zoroastrianism” was the religion of the Persians before they were converted to Islam, about a thousand years later. Next, apparently Zoroaster’s crazy speculations polluted all whom the Persians

¹⁷ *A Dictionary of World Mythology*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1979, p. 11.

and their allies conquered. In particular, at about the time of the common estimate of Zoroaster's birth, the king of Babylon (the father of Nebuchadnezzar the Second) allied Babylon with the Medes (Iranians) to defeat the Assyrians (in 612 BCE); later, as described in the Bible in the *Book of Daniel*, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Israelites; and soon thereafter are found in the Bible substantial descriptions of the concepts of heaven and hell and a "final judgment". Thus, *Daniel 12* states (where, at least according to the Old Testament, Daniel was the Jew in Nebuchadnezzar's court who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's – and Zoroaster's! – dreams):

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth [according to the "dust-to-dust" concept that prevailed in the Bible prior to this passage] **will wake, some to everlasting life** [whereas, in *Genesis*, the old shepherders had God deciding to cast out Adam and Eve from Eden so that they wouldn't have "everlasting life"!] **and some to the reproach of eternal abhorrence** [which is the first time in the Bible, as far as I know, that there's a suggestion of an everlasting "hell" – and surely this is just Daniel's incorporating Zoroaster's ideas into the Jewish Bible].

I should probably add, however, that (as you can find on the internet and which I'll go into in some detail in **Yx**) Biblical scholars seem to be essentially unanimous in the opinion that the Bible's entire *Book of Daniel* is "priestly fabrication", written hundreds of years after it was claimed to have been written.

Nonetheless, by about 300 BCE, acceptance of Zoroaster's ideas seems to have been widespread among the Hebrew people (if not among their priests). Thus in his book *Antiquity Online* (which now seems to be renamed *The Ancient World* and is now at <http://fsmitha.com/h1/>), Frank E. Smitha writes:

Persian officials and their families were stationed in Judah, and in Judah were colonies of Persian merchants. With them in Judah were Persian temples and priests. And with the good feelings of Yahwists [i.e., the Hebrews, viz., those who "believed" in the god Yahweh or Jehovah] toward the Persians, Yahwists might have been open to receiving religious ideas from the Persians. Not known to have been a part of Yahweh worship before the coming of the Persians were [Zoroaster's ideas of] hierarchies of angels, demons in conflict, Satan as an independent and evil force rather than an agent of Yahweh, reward and punishment after death, the immortality of the soul, the coming of a final judgment ending in a fiery ordeal and resurrection of the dead. It appears that the aristocratic Yahwist priesthood – the Sadducees – resisted these changes to Yahwist belief and that commoners accepted them – ideas to be championed by those to be known as Pharisees [and later, the Essenes, whose membership probably included John the Baptist and possibly included Jesus, although if so, he apparently later abandoned the sect].

Incidentally, Dear, I included the above quotation in part so that you'll know who "the reporters" (Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John) reportedly had the clerics' Jesus refer to, in such statements as (*Matthew 16, 7*) "**Beware, be on your guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees**" and (*Matthew 23, 13*) "**Alas, alas, for you, lawyers and Pharisees, hypocrites that you are!**", which is a line that the clerics' Jesus is quoted as saying again and again. But these quotes are from going forward in time (from Zoroaster's time to the time of the clerics' Jesus); let me now continue backwards in time, before Zoroaster.

The question of interest (well – maybe of interest, but certainly not of much importance!) is: did Zoroaster concoct the idea of judgment after death by some giant Jabberwock – or did he just borrow the idea from elsewhere? Now, Dear, I remind you that I'm no historian, but it sure seems to me that Zoroaster could have easily just borrowed these ideas from others. Thus, consider some of the ideas in Homer's book *THE ODYSSEY*, which in "the excursion" **Ix** I encouraged you to read and which was written in about 700 BCE (i.e., about 100 years before the commonly accepted time when Zoroaster lived). Homer, writing about events that apparently occurred about 1200 BCE (i.e., about the time of Moses), shows that these Ancient Greeks had somewhat similar ideas about an "afterlife" as did Zoroaster.

For example, in Book XI of *THE ODYSSEY*, Homer has the "hero" of the book, Ulysses, describe the following about "the underworld". This underworld was ruled by the god Hades (similar to the Christian's "fallen angel", Satan).¹⁸

Then I [Ulysses] saw Minos son of [the Roman god] Jove [the Greek god Zeus] with his golden scepter in his hand sitting in judgment on the dead, and the ghosts [of the people] were gathered sitting and standing round him in the spacious house of Hades, to learn his sentences upon them...

After him I saw huge Orion in a meadow full of asphodel driving the ghosts of the wild beasts that he had killed upon the mountains, and he had a great bronze club in his hand, unbreakable for ever and ever.

¹⁸ Dear: If again you find that you have nothing better to do (!), you might want to explore on the internet to learn the different names given to the various gods in Roman mythology "borrowed" from the Greeks. In particular, it might intrigue you to explore why the Greek name of the "god of the underworld", Hades, seems to have outlived the later Roman names for the same god: Pluto, Dis, and Orcus. Of course, it's clear why the Jewish and Christian names for "the god of the underworld" (Satan) outlived his Persian name (Mahzda), but the Greek name Hades is sometimes still used rather than Satan!

And I saw Tityus son of [the Earth Mother] Gaia stretched upon the plain and covering some nine acres of ground. Two vultures on either side of him were digging their beaks into his liver, and he kept on trying to beat them off with his hands, but could not...

I saw also the dreadful fate of Tantalus, who stood in a lake that reached his chin; he was dying to quench his thirst, but could never reach the water, for whenever the poor creature stooped to drink, it dried up and vanished, so that there was nothing but dry ground-parched by the spite of heaven. There were tall trees, moreover, that shed their fruit over his head – pears, pomegranates, apples, sweet figs and juicy olives, but whenever the poor creature stretched out his hand to take some, the wind tossed the branches back again to the clouds.

And I saw Sisyphus [pronounced Sis-eh-fuss, and someone whose “penalty” I’ll be exploring in a later chapter] at his endless task raising his prodigious stone with both his hands. With hands and feet he tried to roll it up to the top of the hill, but always, just before he could roll it over on to the other side, its weight would be too much for him, and the pitiless stone would come thundering down again on to the plain. Then he would begin trying to push it up hill again, and the sweat ran off him and the steam rose after him.

In turn, it appears the ancient Greeks derived their ideas about judgments after death from the Egyptians. Certainly it’s clear that these ancient Greeks traveled to Egypt. Thus, Homer gives the following description in Book IV of THE ODYSSEY:

Menelaus [the husband of Helen of Troy] overheard him and said, “No one, my sons, can hold his own with [the Roman god] Jove [i.e., the Greek god Zeus], for his house and everything about him is immortal; but among mortal men – well, there may be another who has as much wealth as I have, or there may not; but at all events I have traveled much and have undergone much hardship, for it was nearly eight years before I could get home with my fleet [from Troy]. I went to Cyprus, Phoenicia, and the Egyptians; I went also to the Ethiopians, the Sidonians, and the Erembians, and to Libya...”

Further, essentially the same ideas about an afterlife (as preached by Rigdon and Smith, Mohammed, Jesus, and Zoroaster and as described by Homer) are found in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, which was written somewhere between 1700 and 1000 BCE but whose source includes “the pyramid texts”, from ~2500 BCE! That is, Dear, ~2,000 years before Homer or the commonly accepted time when Zoroaster was alive, Egyptian priests were promoting such ideas as the following “defense” that a dead person’s “soul” was to argue before the supreme judge on the “final judgment day”:

Homage to thee, O great God... I have not committed sins against men. I have not opposed my family and kinfolk. I have not acted fraudulently in the Seat of Truth. I

have not known men who were of no account. I have not defrauded the humble man of his property. I have not done what the gods abominate. I have not vilified a slave to his master. I have not inflicted pain. I have not caused anyone to go hungry. I have not made any man to weep. I have not committed murder... I have not encroached on the fields (of others). I have not added to the weights of the scales... I have not driven the cattle away from their pastures. I have not snared the geese in the goose-pens of the gods [?!]. I have not caught fish with bait made of the bodies of the same kind of fish [!!]. I have not stopped water when it should flow... I am pure, I am pure. I am pure...

According to an essay entitled “The Egyptian Culture Reflected in Worship” by Deborah Howard:¹⁹

The soul was [then] led before the seat of Osiris who sat as the Judge of the Dead. [Thus, similar to the Christians’ Jesus, the Persians’ Mahzda, and the Greeks’ Minos, the Egyptians’ god Osiris was in charge of judgments of the dead]. He weighed the heart [? – or soul?!] of the dead person on his balance. Maat, the goddess of truth and justice, balanced the scale. If the heart of the deceased weighed true, he went to his eternal reward, wandering the shadow land that was the double of the Nile Delta. No famine or sorrows bothered him in this blessed afterlife. If his heart weighed too heavy, he would be thrown to the animal gods who [would] tear him to shreds.

This “Isis and Osiris cult”, with its ideas of “resurrection from death”, can be traced back in Ancient Egypt at least until 2500 BCE. That is, Dear, as far as I have been able to make out from a number of internet searches, the ideas written in *The Book of the Dead* seem to have evolved from Egyptian mythology traced back thousands of years before *The Book of the Dead* was written. In particular, the idea that at least the Pharaoh’s “soul” lived forever is the prime “reason” why the Egyptian pyramids were built (mostly in the period from about 2700 – 2200 BCE) – and the pyramids (the epitome of monuments to folly!) are just well-preserved symbols of the idea of an “afterlife” that evolved over thousands of years.

Thus, Dear, thousands of years before the times of Rigdon, Mohammed, Jesus, and Zoroaster, the Egyptians were telling stories about judgments after death. Further, no doubt there were many interactions between the Egyptians and the Persians; for example, around the most commonly accepted time of Zoroaster, Persia conquered Egypt – so maybe rather than spending 10 years in the mountains, Zoroaster might have spent 10 years living in Egypt, learning about their ideas of the “afterlife”! And of course, all these stories are all the more amazing, for never once was a single shred of reliable data provided to support such weird ideas!

¹⁹ Available at <http://eawc.evansville.edu/essays/howard.htm>.

Trying to trace ideas about “immortal gods” and “immortal souls” back before 3000 BCE is of course much more difficult, because before then, writing had not been invented. As you might expect (and as you might have seen in **Ix**, if you took the “excursion”!) many theories have been proposed to try to explain the source (or sources) of these “wild and wooly” ideas, but the data base to support such theories is weak – to poor – to nonexistent!

About all that can be reasonably concluded is that primitive people probably adopted ideas of “immortal souls” from some combination of experiences with the following:

- Their dreams (in which people seem to be able to travel elsewhere, leaving their bodies behind),
- Their hallucinations (from ingesting various hallucinatory roots, fruits, leaves, etc.),
- Their shadows (a secondary presence that seems to follow people),
- Their images (e.g., in pools of water), death (of others and fear of their own), and possibly from
- Their fear of things “that went bump in the night” (imagined to be “the spirits” of people who had died).

Similarly, primitive people probably developed ideas of “immortal (and powerful) gods” from some combination of the following:

- Correctly concluding that all effects have causes, and, therefore, that there must be causes (identified as various gods) of thunder, lightning, floods, volcanic eruptions, etc.,
- Inability to identify links between causes and effect (i.e., ignorance about many aspects of nature, including the sun, planets, and stars, all of which were at various times considered to be “immortal gods”),
- Fear of the effects and therefore attempts to placate the alleged causes (the gods) to alleviate the effects (e.g., volcanic eruptions, floods, fires, etc.), and

- Being required to obey the leader of the tribe (many tribal leaders were considered to be gods, especially after they had died, leading to “ancestor worship”, as in still practiced in Judaism, Islam, and Mormonism).

And so to summarize, Dear, let me suggest the source of all these silly ideas about judgment of one’s “immortal soul” after death. Certainly many wrinkles have been added subsequently, but in substance, these ideas seem to have come from our savage ancestors – or from the Neanderthals.²⁰ Thus, just as the aboriginal Americans had their ideas about an afterlife in some “happy hunting ground”, the Neanderthals seemed to have prepared at least some of their dead for an afterlife (leaving various “implements” in graves alongside bodies of their dead). And thus, Dear, a criticism that you may hear about all such silly ideas: “They’re Neanderthal!”

But even if such silly ideas are “Neanderthal”, what’s their source? Well, Dear, of course I don’t know the answer to that question, but in the next chapter, I’ll show you my own speculations. And whereas I consider it to be a “dirty trick” when an author puts off an explanation in that manner, let me at least outline my speculation here, in a single paragraph.

I expect that the basic source of the silly idea that some giant Jabberwock in the sky will “clean up the balance sheet” (punish “the bad” and reward “the good”) after we’re dead is that all humans (and even animals!) have an instinctive knowledge of “fairness” (“programmed” by our DNA molecules, simultaneously with “the programming” of our individuality). We cling to (and even fight for) this concept of “fairness” tenaciously. And then, upon finding so many instances of “unfairness” in life (whether from natural occurrences or from interactions with other people), rather than relinquish the view that “fairness” will prevail, some people adopt the “belief” (i.e., “the wish to be”) that, eventually, even if only after we die, “fairness” will finally prevail. Thereby I suggest that, if such ideas are “Neanderthal”, then in a way, “hats off” to the Neanderthals: they refused to relinquish their desire for fairness.

Meanwhile, Dear, please consider all the data supporting such ideas (none!), and consider again the opening lines of Bertrand Russell’s essay “On the Value of Skepticism”:

²⁰ Dear: ‘Neanderthal’ is also sometimes spelled ‘Neandertal’ (and therefore pronounced differently). Literally, ‘Neanderthal’ means “Neander valley, where *thal* or *tal*, similar to ‘dale’, is Greek for ‘valley’. *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis* designates “a primitive man [actually, an extinct subspecies] of the Paleolithic (viz., old stone age) period whose skeletal remains were first found in the Neander valley of the Rhine Province of Germany.”

I wish to propose a doctrine that may, I fear, appear wildly paradoxical and subversive. The doctrine in question is this: that it is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true.

Thus, Dear, are you aware of even the tiniest crumb of reliable data that supports the speculation that, after you die, your “soul” (whatever that means!) will be judged by some giant Jabberwock in the sky? Oh, sure, there’s a huge amount of “hearsay” evidence (as I’ve been showing you), and certainly a large fraction of the people now alive “believe” such nonsense – but not so large a fraction as those who previously “believed” the world was flat and that the Sun spun around the Earth!

In fact, one of the oldest written records that exists (written in Egypt about 2650 to 2600 BCE – almost 5,000 years ago, ~3,000 years before Mohammed, ~2500 years before Jesus, ~2,000 years before Zoroaster, and ~1500 years before Moses!) is from *The Song of the Harper* (found on the tomb of the Egyptian king Inyotef):

There is no one who can return from there [i.e., death]
To describe their nature, to describe their dissolution,
That he may still our desires [to know]...

Perhaps this lack of data encouraged the Christians to add the “testimonies” that they saw their Jesus “rise from the dead”, but in any reasonable court, Dear, a judge would rule this evidence as unreliable “hearsay” evidence.

Yet, of course these ideas are still with us. Mormon leaders and Christian and Moslem clerics mixed especially Zoroaster’s Egyptian ideas with Plato’s garbage (which I’ll outline later), conned people into “believing” it, and it pollutes humanity to this day: on some “final judgment day”, a supreme being (knowing everything that everyone had ever said and done!) will appropriately hand down his decree – either eternal bliss in heaven or eternal damnation in hell.

But that idea always perplexed me: couldn’t a “supreme being” discern more than just black or white – or feel more than just hot and cold? You know, something similar to:

“Well, Well, Well, little girl. Let’s see, now... Hmm, on a scale of zero to ten, apparently you were a 6. That’s pretty good. So I think I’ll start you off at a temperature of 123°F, keep you there until you’re well tanned, and then you’ll be able to spend the rest of eternity at 83°F.”

“Please, Sir”, said Alice, “if it wouldn’t be too much trouble for you, would you mind if the final temperature was closer to 90°F? You know how much I like to swim, and...

“What impertinence!” shouted Jabberwock, “haven’t you heard that I’m omniscient and omnipotent!”

“Oh, I beg your pardon Sir”, said Alice, “I didn’t mean to suggest that you didn’t know everything and that weren’t all powerful! Why, I’ll bet you could even arrange to have the temperature change, day and night, and with the seasons, and everything, just like on Earth. And then I could swim in the summer and ski in the winter and everything.”

“Well of course I can do that!”

“Fine”, said Alice, “I’ll take it.”

“But...”, stumbled God, “Oh, take her away; give her whatever she wants. I’m a very busy supreme judge of the universe, you know. Who’s next?”²¹

Sorry, Dear, sometimes I get carried away. Such stupidity really gets to me. How would you react if your grandchildren were indoctrinated with the philosophy of the Neanderthals, had ideas about morality and justice dictated to them by dinosaurs, and had political leaders of all persuasions basing public policies on such slime?! If you criticize me for getting carried away by my emotions, I’d respond that I deserve a medal for displaying such constraint!

What a pity for humanity that, when the first person asked “What happens after you die?”, some old grandfather didn’t respond:

²¹ Indeed he would be a very busy “supreme judge”! With ~5 billion people on Earth, each living for ~50 years, then ~100 million people die per year. So, with ~100 million dead people to be judged each year, i.e., in ~30 million seconds (working 24 hours per day, with no rests on every seventh day!), then to avoid “court congestion”, he would need to settle 100 million cases ÷ 30 million seconds = three cases per second! And because God is notorious for getting tired, let’s assume he works only 6 hours per day, 6 days per week, so he’d need to settle ~ 10 cases per second. Meanwhile, Dear, It’s rather difficult to imagine that “justice” would prevail, with all evidence heard and considered, and with judgment made, all within one tenth of a second! It may be that “justice delayed is justice denied”, but this is ridiculous: it takes longer than a tenth of a second just to say your first name! I suppose he could use “lower-court judges” to handle the simpler cases, but what about the appeals process? Hasn’t the great Jabberwocky in the sky heard about “due process”?!

“Well, all data are consistent with the idea that, when you die, there’s no longer any ‘you’ – in the sense that ‘you’ aren’t what you eat (or what you drink) but what you think. That is, when you die, your brains stops, you no longer think, and therefore, there’s no longer any ‘you’. Of course, data are consistent also with the ideas that, after you die, your dead body may be around for a while (until the stink gets so bad somebody buries it or burns it) and that other people may remember something about ‘you’ (for example, what you liked to eat and drink and think about), but that’s their brains working, not yours. So your question contains a meaningless concept: a dead ‘you’. End of response.”

Unfortunately and apparently, however, no one provided such a response; consequently, humanity has been polluted by such crazy religions as Hinduism, Mithraism, Christianity, Islam, and various other sundry sects such as Mormonism, all of which are based on crazy speculations about what happens after ‘you’ die, all based on zero data.

Anyway, Dear, how I hope that you’ll be able to reject all religious jabberwocky. Someday, maybe everyone will be able to reject such stupidity, defeating the damnable clerics who perpetuate such nonsense for their own profit. And if we could defeat these *frumious Bandersnatchers*, armed only with the *vorpal* blade of *uffish* thought, then on that *frabjous* day we could all *chortle* in delight:

*‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

*“Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaw that bites, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!”*

*He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought –
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.*

*And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!*

*One, two! One two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.*

*“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”
He chortled in his joy.*

Dear, although I’m furious about the evils done to humanity by all past and present clerics (as no doubt you’ve discerned), let me “give the devils their due” by mentioning what they must preach if their religion is to be successful (i.e., if the clerics are to successfully mooch off productive members of society). They must preach simple ideas for simple minds, as near as possible mirroring what the people wish to be “true” (for, recall that the Anglo-Saxon word “lief” means “wish”; so, “belief” literally means “wish to be”). Thereby, maybe one can see a part of why Mormonism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and similar nonsense has been so successful – even without the slightest evidence to support their wild ideas (and ignoring the hideous means by which the clerics have propagated their lies, by torturing and murdering “nonbelievers”).

One simple “truth” for simple minds is that they don’t want to die. So, the clerics preach a belief in “life after death” – disregarding that it’s an oxymoron, because simple minds don’t know what an oxymoron is, and even if they did, the clerics would preach that what “life after death” means is that there’s another life after this one. Another simple “truth” for simple minds is that life is much better if people are kind to one another – even “love one another”. Further, if someone isn’t kind (or bad or even evil), then simple minds would like to believe that such a person will be punished. So, given the observation that many “bad” people, during their lives, get away with their unkindness (and worse), let’s believe that they’ll be punished in the next. In addition, essentially all simple minds think that they are (and have been) relatively good (and kind, and so on), so let’s believe that, in the next life, where the bad guys will be punished, the good guys get rewarded. All of which then suggests the source of all these wild ideas about life after death.

Thus, without data to suggest ideas and constrain imagination, speculations can run rampant – and con artists, parasites, and power mongers (i.e., priests) are usually not far behind, trying to capitalize on the people’s

ignorance. It's a classic case – if not “the” classic case – of not only “the tail wagging the dog” but “tales [about death] wagging the dogs”, i.e., people who accept ideas based on zero data.

Now, Dear, if you're wondering why I went through such simple ideas, it's because I want to introduce the next few chapters with the following thoughts: fundamental to human nature, almost as fundamental as our desire to live, is our desire for “justice”, based on our concepts of “good and bad” (i.e., our idea of “morality”). Therefore, in the next few chapters, I want to begin to explore what is meant (or should be meant!) by “justice”, “morality”, “legality”, and so on. And maybe I should explain to you why I plan to devote such a large part of this book to these ideas.

One reason is that, thereby, I'll be responding directly to a question from a certain four-year-old who asked why I didn't believe in God. Thus, Dear, I don't believe in god (any god) because belief in god is bad science and even worse policy – and I want to show you how “pathetic” this policy is, both sad personal policy and sick public policy. As Bertrand Russell wrote in his 1957 book *Why I Am Not A Christian*:

The question of the truth of a religion is one thing, but the question of its usefulness is another. I am as firmly convinced that religions do harm as I am that they are untrue.

In particular, I want to show you what I mean by saying that belief in god (any god) is immoral, even evil – and therefore I need to explain to you what is meant (or should be meant) by morality.

And another important reason for devoting so much space to these topics is related to the following quotation (which I consider to be very important) from Sigmund Freud (from his 1932 book *Moses and Monotheism*):

While the different religions wrangle with one another as to which of them is in possession of the truth, in our view the truth of religion may be altogether disregarded. Religion is an attempt to get control over the sensory world, in which we are placed, by means of the wish-world, which we have developed inside us as a result of biological and psychological necessities. But it cannot achieve its end. Its doctrines carry with them the stamp of the times in which they originated, the ignorant childhood days of the human race. Its consolations deserve no trust.

Experience teaches us that the world is not a nursery. The ethical commands, to which religion seeks to lend its weight, require some other foundations instead, for human society cannot do without them, and it is dangerous to link up obedience to them with religious belief. If one attempts to assign to religion its place in man's evolution, it seems not so much to be a lasting acquisition, as a parallel to the neurosis

which the civilized individual must pass through on his way from childhood to maturity.

In particular, Dear, please think about Freud's statement: "The ethical [or moral] commands, to which religion seeks to lend its weight, require some other foundations instead, for human society cannot do without them, and it is dangerous to link up obedience to them with religious belief."

One of Freud's friends, Einstein, said something similar:

The foundation of morality should not be made dependent on myth nor tied to any authority lest doubt about the myth or about the legitimacy of the authority imperil the foundation of sound judgment and action.

I think that this Freud-Einstein concept is extremely important, Dear, and in this group of chapters (Part 3 of this book), I want to show you "some other foundations" (for morality, justice, and peace), namely those of humanism, that are derived from science, simple to understand (and to apply), and don't require the involvement of any supernatural Jabberwock from the "wish world" (i.e., the world of believing).

Further, I want to amplify Freud's important point that "it is dangerous to link up obedience [to ethical or moral commands] with religious belief" and Einstein's important point the "the foundation of morality should not be made dependent on myth nor tied to any authority". In particular, because I feel obliged to try to promote peace in this world, and because I'm convinced that peace is unlikely without justice, and justice is unlikely without a shared moral code, therefore I again need to explain to you what is meant (or should be meant) by morality. Thereby, maybe I can show you a "foundation [for] sound judgment and action", a foundation on which peace may yet be built, extricating humanity from its 5,000 and more years of religious "neurosis".

And in case you're worried that you may miss the point I want to make (possibly because of the length of what follows or maybe more likely because of my incompetence as a writer), let me summarize all of it, here: Dear, please think it through and test your ideas for yourself – against data. Trust no ideas that can't be substantiated with data, and trust any idea based on data only so long as its predictions continue to pass new experimental tests. In brief: apply the scientific method. Remember: "Religion is the science of children; science is the religion of adults." Meanwhile, Dear, why don't you go out and get some exercise?!