

## *J1 – Jabberwocky about Supernatural Justice*

Dear: This is the start of this book's 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, Dear, but I tried to show you how the ideas might be useful also for you. For this next part, 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, trust in your ability to identify and then successfully pursue your own goals (Part 5).

In terms of the analogy 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 and where 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 great view of the mountains on the other. In this Part 3, I'll make reference to this analogy of walking along the 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" (of 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”)<sup>1</sup> 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 first explain to you the source of my judicial principles, i.e., my ideas about morality. Yet, if I adhere to my self-imposed alphabetical listing of topics, then ‘morality’ should wait until Chapter **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 the 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 the next chapter, I’ll address 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 unfamiliar 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!<sup>2</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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”.

<sup>2</sup> Surely one chapter per week is enough! And the range from 10 to 20 months (or more!) depends on whether or not you choose to take some of the “excursions” that will be offered.

hand, the principal cause of the length of subsequent chapters is to show you why I reject all concepts of all gods – and I normally don't review such ideas when I'm walking, because I now find the whole business about gods to be so silly 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 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 inadequate summaries of 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 next 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 idiotic "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 weird idea. Unfortunately, I don't have enough money to offer you a penny for each instance of harm that this damnable idea has caused.

Anyway, if I'm in the mood to remind myself of such "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, I'll try to explain the above, starting with some comments on the wonderful word 'jabberwocky'.

### BEWARE THE JABBERWOCK!

Dear, if you don't know what's meant 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 claiming to rule 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 cleric, 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 master of words (as do all clerics):

“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, Dear, instead of my now showing you his interpretation of the poem *Jabberwocky* (for I have my own interpretation, which I'll indicate later in this chapter), I'll now turn to ideas about 'justice' and jabberwocky about "supreme judge of the universe" and "final judgment day".

## JUDGEMENT BY SOME GIANT JABBERWOCK IN THE SKY

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" (a giant Jabberwock in the sky!) 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 borogoves 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.

### 1. Tracing Written Records of Such Jabberwocky

More seriously, Dear, let me show you some history of the wild idea that, after we die, some giant Jabberwock in the sky will judge people. Partly for the fun of it, I'll search "backwards in time" to try to identify the source of the 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 weird idea?" Therefore, and especially because of how you have been indoctrinated with such a bizarre idea, I'll start with the relatively recently written Book of Mormon and trace backwards in time from it.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1.1 Judgment Jabberwocky in the Book of Mormon

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:<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Dear: As you can find on the internet and as I'll be reviewing later (in **Qx** and **Yx**), the evidence that Sidney Rigdon wrote the Book of Mormon is overwhelming. In fact, to readers aware of 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* (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.<sup>5</sup>

So Dear, following my announced plan, I'll now look backwards in time to see where Sidney Rigdon might have picked up the wild idea of a giant Jabberwock in the sky who is "the Eternal Judge".

## 1.2 Judgment Jabberwocky in Islam's "Holy Book"

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), I'll now quote some from the Koran, because going backward in time, it would appear next.<sup>6</sup> 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),<sup>7</sup> the following appears:

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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 ministrations of angels as an integral and necessary portion of [his] 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 off as "the golden bible" with the help of conniving by the convicted con-artist and "money digger" Joseph Smith.

<sup>5</sup> "The quick and the dead" is a common biblical phrase, written when the word "quick" meant "alive".

<sup>6</sup> Although many if not most Muslims will disagree (claiming that the Koran is an exact copy of the original that Allah has in paradise), yet as I'll review in **Qx** and **Yx**, historians have shown that the Koran was patched together during a ~200 year period after Muhammad's death in 632.

<sup>7</sup> 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!

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.

That is, Dear, about 1,000 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’s manuscript!) and at least according to the “profit” Muhammad (who claimed that he received all his information from the nonexistent angel Gabriel),<sup>8</sup> speculations about a giant Jabberwock in the sky were well established, claiming that “he” passes out judgments, rewarding “the good” and punishing “the bad” (but, unfortunately, only after people died).

### 1.3 Judgment Jabberwocky in Christianity’s “Holy Book”

Looking backwards in time (with hindsight!) 600-or-so years before the writing of the Koran, I’ll now quote from the New Testament, 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](http://www.bible.gospel.net) and in which I’ll keep their reference format (and add some italics to the text).<sup>9</sup>

*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...

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<sup>8</sup> Dear: If you have any data substantiating the claim that any angel exists (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”!

<sup>9</sup> 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. Thus, as you can find on the internet and as I’ll partially review in **Qx** and **Yx**, Paul’s letters (or “epistles”) were written first – but some of these, such as his alleged letters to Timothy and to the Hebrews are forgeries, not written by Paul. Also, the letters claimed to be written by Peter are judged by experts to be forgeries, written about 100 years after Paul and Peter had died.



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...

And where (I stimulate you to ask) did the clerics who wrote the New Testament get the crazy idea that there’d be a “final judgment day”?

#### 1.4 Judgment Jabberwocky in Judaism’s “Holy Book”

Well, Dear, 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 ever will – or will ever want to!), namely Graham Lawrence, whose on-line book *The Fallible Gospels* I’ll be referencing many times.<sup>10</sup> To this quotation (which I also used in **Ix-11**) I’ve added a few notes in 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.

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<sup>10</sup> Formerly available at <http://freespace.virgin.net/graham.lawrence/gospelintro.htm>.

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]...

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) [written within a year-or-so of 165 BCE]:

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 show you more evidence suggesting 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 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 adopted 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 speculations from the Persian followers of a fellow by the name of Zoroaster.

### 1.5 Judgment Jabberwocky in Zoroastrianism’s “Holy Book”

Zoroaster (possibly pronounced Zoro-ast-er and which is how the Ancient Greeks rendered his Persian name, Zarathustra)<sup>11</sup> was born in what’s 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. According to one story, Zoroaster<sup>12</sup> 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,<sup>13</sup> the author writes the following [to which I’ve added some italics and some notes in 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:

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<sup>11</sup> Dear: If you ever have a few hours (or days – or more!) with nothing better to do, you might want to dig 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 these, I find most intriguing the suggestion that the Ancient Greeks chose to call him Zoroaster to mean “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 of 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!

<sup>12</sup> 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* [italics added]; and this magic is no other than the worship of the gods. He also teaches him the arts of kingship.”

<sup>13</sup> 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!<sup>14</sup>

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.<sup>15</sup>

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

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.<sup>16</sup>

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!<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 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 seems to be 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 own goal is happiness – if only he would then have investigated what 'happiness' means!

<sup>15</sup> 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, the source of light.

<sup>16</sup> Sorry to add 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).

<sup>17</sup> Never doubt, Dear, that people on supernatural "trips" 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 one's brain, probably the same chemical that "tells you" you're surviving – even, that you've found eternal survival! Recall Marx's: "Religion is opium for the masses." But as I tried to explain before (see chapter **H2**), 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.

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.

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 rhetorical question is that Zoroaster's mind apparently 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 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, that 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,<sup>18</sup> 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, I want to mention, here (because it will come up again), that it appears 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 Muhammad claimed conveyed the details of the religion known as Islam).

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<sup>18</sup> *A Dictionary of World Mythology*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1979, p. 11.

The first people who “bought into” Zoroaster’s wild speculations seem to have been the Persians.<sup>19</sup> Next, his ideas apparently polluted all whom the Persians 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 II) allied Babylon with the Medes (Iranians) to defeat the Assyrians (in 612 BCE); later, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Israelites; and soon thereafter are found in the Bible initial descriptions of the concepts of heaven and hell and a “final judgment”.

Much later, as I’ll go into in considerable detail in the “excursion” Yx, the Bible’s *Book of Daniel* was written (in about 165 BCE), which included Zoroaster’s ideas as filtered by the ancient Greeks. Thus, *Daniel 12* states (where, at least according to the fiction known as the *Book of Daniel*, Daniel was the Jew in Nebuchadnezzar’s court who interpreted 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*, God allegedly cast Adam and Eve out of Eden, so 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 the author of *Daniel* incorporating Zoroaster’s ideas into the Jewish “holy book”].

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 who “believed” in the god Yahweh] 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.

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<sup>19</sup> Zoroastrianism was the religion of the Persians continuously for more than a thousand years before they were enslaved as Muslims by Arab conquerors (who then went further east to enslave people as Muslims in nations now called Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India).



As well as the Pharisees, a Jewish sect call the Essenes apparently adopted most of Zoroaster's ideas. A few hundred years later, John the Baptist was probably a member of the Essenes sect – as possibly was Jesus, if he ever existed. And incidentally, Dear, one of my reasons for including the above quotation from Smitha is, so you'll know who was being referred to when "the reporters" (Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John) reportedly had the clerics' Jesus state: "**Beware, be on your guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees**" (*Matthew 16, 7*) and "**Alas, alas, for you, lawyers and Pharisees, hypocrites that you are!**" (*Matthew 23, 13*), which are sentiments that the clerics' Jesus is quoted as expressing repeatedly.

But those quotes are from going forward in time (from Zoroaster's time to the time of the clerics' Jesus); I'll now continue backwards in time, before Zoroaster, to address the question: did Zoroaster concoct the idea (of judgment after death by some giant Jabberwock in the sky) or did he just borrow the idea from elsewhere? Now, Dear, I remind you that I'm no historian, but it sure seems obvious that Zoroaster could have easily just borrowed these ideas from others, including the Greeks and Egyptians.

### 1.6 Judgment Jabberwocky in Ancient Greece as Reported by Homer

To illustrate Grecian ideas about the alleged "afterlife", consider some of the statements 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 a century before the commonly accepted time when Zoroaster lived). From Homer, we can see that these ancient Greeks had ideas about an "afterlife" somewhat similar to Zoroaster's. 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).<sup>20</sup>

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...

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<sup>20</sup> 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 Zoroastrian name (Angra Mainyu), but the Greek name Hades is sometimes still used rather than Satan!

After him I saw huge Orion [the constellation!] 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 forever and ever.

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 that the ancient Greeks derived their ideas about judgment after death from Egyptian ideas (which I’ll get to, next). 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...”

### 1.7 Judgment Jabberwocky in the “Holy Books” of Ancient Egypt

Essentially the same ideas about an afterlife (as promoted by Rigdon and Smith, Muhammad, Jesus – or “Saint” Paul – 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, almost 2,000 years before Homer or the commonly accepted time when Zoroaster was alive,

Egyptian priests were promoting such silliness 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 [called Osiris]... 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:<sup>21</sup>

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’ Abathur, 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 “Osiris and Isis cult”, with its ideas of “resurrection from death”, can be traced back in Ancient Egypt to essentially the beginning of writing in Egypt in about 3000 BCE. That is, Dear, as far as I have been able to make out, the ideas written in *The Book of the Dead* seem to have evolved from Egyptian mythology traced back at least a thousand 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, Muhammad, Jesus, and Zoroaster, the Egyptians were telling stories about judgment after death. Further, many interactions between the Egyptians and the Persians undoubtedly occurred; for example, around the most commonly accepted

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<sup>21</sup> Available at <http://eawc.evansville.edu/essays/howard.htm>.

time of Zoroaster, Persia conquered Egypt; so, 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 bizarre ideas!

## 2. Speculations about Prehistoric Origins of Such Jabberwocky

Trying to identify ideas about “gods” and “immortal souls” (let alone ideas about “judgment after death”) before 3000 BCE is, of course, much more difficult, because before then, writing hadn’t been invented. As you probably know, Dear, times before writing developed are usually called ‘prehistoric’. And 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 “wild and wooly” ideas about “souls” and “gods”. The database to support such theories is, however, weak – to poor – to nonexistent! Further, as far as I’ve been able to determine, no one has unequivocally uncovered the origin of the idea of “judgment after death”.

Nonetheless, perhaps it would be useful if I provide: 1) a sketch of what appear to be necessary ingredients (or precursors) for the incendiary idea of “judgment after death”, and then 2) a possible scenario of what might have “sparked” someone to propose the idea. In later “**J**-chapters” and chapters in the “excursion” **Yx** (dealing with “Your Indoctrination in the Mountainous God Lie”), I’ll provide details that may help to transform the following sketch into a more meaningful picture. Immediately below, I’ll start with brief descriptions of what seem to be necessary precursors to the idea of judgment after death; I’ll add references to where I provide more details.

### 2.1 Necessary Precursors

Based on anthropological studies (some of which are mentioned below), the following concepts seem necessary (but aren’t sufficient) for a substantial fraction of people in some society to adopt belief in “judgment after death”.

#### 2.1.1 Belief in “Gods”

For people to believe (the wild idea!) that, after they die, some god would judge them, they obviously first need to believe that such things as gods exist. As I tried to show you in Chapter **Ix2**, anthropological studies suggest that primitive people probably developed ideas of “gods” from some combination of the following:

\* Go to other chapters *via*

- Correctly inferring 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, Moon, 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; in fact, many tribal leaders were considered to be gods, especially after they had died, leading to “ancestor worship” (as is actually still practiced in Judaism, Islam, and Mormonism).

Almost certainly, the time when members of a specific tribe adopted ideas about gods depended on a host of special circumstances (e.g., those tribes living near volcanoes probably identified a “volcano god” when the mountain first erupted!), but generally speaking, there’s little doubt that most primitive people had identified their gods at least by 10,000 years ago.

### *2.1.2 Belief in “Immortal Souls”*

For people to believe (the weird idea!) that they’d be judged after they’re dead, they obviously needed to believe that possessed “immortal souls”, available to be judged. As I tried to show you in Chapter **Ix2**, about all that can be reasonably concluded from anthropological, archaeological, and behavioral studies 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 mind-altering 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).

Archaeological evidence suggests that some people adopted the idea of “immortal souls” perhaps as long as 100,000 years ago.

### *2.1.3 Opinions about Morality*

For people to believe (the bizarre idea!) that, after they die, some god would judge their moral behavior during life and appropriately reward or punish them, they obviously needed to possess opinions about morality (i.e., to be able to distinguish between ‘bad’ and ‘good’). As you know, essentially all organized religions (and certainly all the Abrahamic religions) claim that some god dictated moral rules, which are usually detailed in the religion’s “holy book”. As I’ll start to show you in this Part 3 of this book and show you more in the “excursion” **Yx** (e.g., see Chapter **Yx14**), however, such claims are not only wrong, they’re bizarre. In reality, “moral rules” are simply behaviors that people learned through experience to be beneficial for helpful and productive interactions among members of the group. Given that most social animals (such as monkeys, elephants, and dolphins) have developed many aspects of what humans consider to be “moral behavior” (e.g., reciprocal altruism, detection of cheaters, etc.), it’s consistent to conclude that ideas about morality were well established in “proto-humans” at least a million years ago.

### *2.1.4 Opinions about Justice*

For people to believe (the jabberwocky!) that, after they die, they’d finally achieve justice (with “bad people” punished and “good people” rewarded), people obviously needed to appreciate the concept of ‘justice’. As I’ll start to show you in the next chapter, people learn about different types of ‘justice’ when they’re still toddlers: the “natural justice” that all effects have their causes, the “personal justice” that people generally get what they deserve, and the “interpersonal (or social) justice” that, in interpersonal relations, people should generally get what they deserve and not get what they don’t deserve. People tenaciously cling to (and even fight for) this concept of “fairness”; so, upon encountering instances of “unfairness” in life (whether from natural causes or from interactions with other people), then rather than relinquish the view that “fairness” should prevail, some people adopted the “belief” (i.e., “the wish to be”) that, eventually (even if only after they die), justice will finally be achieved.



As I'll be showing you in subsequent chapters in this Part 3, behavioral studies have shown that most social animals “instinctively” possess rudimentary (but fundamental) ideas about justice, suggesting that some basic concepts of morality and justice (e.g., basic ideas about “fairness”) seem to be “programmed” in our DNA. But regardless of that detail, it seems safe to assume that primitive people possessed ideas about both morality and justice even before (millions of years before!) they speculated about existences of “immortal souls” (perhaps 100,000 years ago) and “immortal gods” (at least 10,000 years ago).

That the above, four “precursors” to speculations about “judgment after death” are necessary but not sufficient, however, can be deduced from results of anthropological studies of tribes that haven't adopted such jabberwocky. Representative of such studies is the following quotation,<sup>22</sup> which apparently relies heavily on the 1990 book by John S. Mbiti entitled *African Religions and Philosophy*, which is “based on a study [or studies] of three hundred [!] tribal groups.”

African philosophy [of Sub-Saharan primitive tribes] is concerned with the here and now. There is no distinction between the physical world and the spiritual world; the afterlife is regarded as simply a continuation of life on earth. *With a few exceptions, most African religions do not posit judgment or punishment in the hereafter.* [Italics added.] There is no heaven or hell, and no desire for a closer contact or union with God. Belief in life after death is not associated with the hope for a better future or the idea of “salvation.” Death is regarded as part of man's destiny, a departure in which the physical body decays but the spirit moves on to another state of existence.

Incidentally, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that the few, mentioned exceptions (in which some tribes do “posit judgment or punishment in the hereafter”) have resulted from “cross-cultural influences” (e.g., “contamination” by Christian missionaries and Muslim proselytizers). Meanwhile, people in these tribes reportedly believe in “immortal souls” and “gods” and undoubtedly have opinions about morality and justice (since even social animals such as monkeys display such traits). Consequently, it seems reasonable to conclude that the four precursors listed above are necessary but insufficient for people to speculate about “judgment after death”. Two additional necessary (but still insufficient) precursors to speculation about “judgment after death” appear to be the following.

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<sup>22</sup> From New World Encyclopedia at [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/African\\_philosophy](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/African_philosophy).

### 2.1.5 *Experiences of Injustice*

Anthropological evidence supports the idea that people wouldn't believe that justice would finally be achieved in "the afterlife" unless the people had experienced what they considered to be injustice. For example, perhaps one reason why such a large percentage of all women still cling to the belief (i.e., the "wish to be") of judgment after death is because of their life-long experiences of patriarchal injustices. More generally, as Karl Marx (1818–83) wrote:

Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

Experiencing tyrannical injustice, however, was (and still is) apparently insufficient to generate belief in "judgment after death". An illustration (examined in the **Ix** "excursion") is that, although the ancient Sumerians depicted in *The Epic of Gilgamesh* experienced tyrannical injustices from King Gilga, yet the Sumerians (and during the next one or two thousand years, other Mesopotamians, including the ancient Hebrews) never accepted (the data-less concept) that, after they died, people would be judged by some god, who would finally rectify injustices.

### 2.1.6 *Conceived Alternatives to Perceived Injustices*

Another apparently necessary (but still insufficient) precursor to people adopting a belief in "judgment after death" seems to be their conception of some alternative to the perceived injustice that they're experiencing. From the (written) historical record, we know of many such alternatives, including the alternatives known as the American, French, and Russian Revolutions. Approximately 2,000 years earlier, as I'll briefly review in **Yx**, the Jewish people successfully revolted against Greek rulers. And as I'll also briefly review in **Yx**, approximately 2,000 years still earlier, perceived injustices led to the world's first, two, known social revolutions: ancient Sumerians revolted against the excesses of their priests and ancient Egyptians revolted against the excesses of the Egyptian oligarchy (which included the Egyptian priests). In each case, the people obviously had conceived of alternatives to the injustices experienced.

### 2.1.7 *Rulers Perceived by "Revolutionaries" to be Vulnerable*

That people conceive of alternatives to what they consider to be injustices, however, is again necessary but insufficient to result in change. In addition, it's necessary for people to perceive that perpetrators of the alleged injustices are vulnerable: that the rulers are not, in fact, so powerful as earlier assumed and as the rulers portray. In the case of the world's first two

revolutions (in ancient Sumer and Egypt), a prolonged drought in the Middle East (associated with a multi-century climate change) may have been an important factor that weakened the existing power structures, permitting the people to realize that the rulers were vulnerable.

### *2.1.8 “Revolutionaries” Capable of Stimulating “People Power”*

But even with all the above necessary ingredients for social change, still another necessary precursor seems to have been (and continues to be) “revolutionaries” able to stimulate people to be aware of the need for social reform (to stimulate “social consciousness”) and to organize them to demand reform (to stimulate “people power”) to eliminate perceived injustice. As I’ll describe in some detail in **Yx**, the revolutionary who led the world’s first social revolution (which occurred in about 2400 BCE) was the Sumerian leader Urukagina.

That the above “precursors” were necessary but insufficient to initiate belief in “judgment after death” is clear by comparing the outcomes of the world’s first, two, known social revolutions, which occurred near the end of the third millennium BCE and which I’ll describe in considerable detail in the **Yx** “excursion”. Here, I’ll just outline the differences.

- In the first revolution, in Mesopotamia and led by Urukagina, the people revolted against the excesses of the priests, who had gained enormous wealth *via* their claim that the purpose of people was to serve the gods (and what the gods didn’t claim, the clerics did). Unfortunately, though, clerical excesses were constrained only temporarily.
- In the second revolution, in Egypt, the people revolted against the excesses of the oligarchy. One of these excesses was the claim that only members of the oligarchy (of course including the pharaoh) would have opportunities for eternal life in an assumed “paradise”, assuming that they were judged to be worthy by the god Osiris. As a result of the revolution, the wily clerics (wanting to maintain their privileged positions) offered the same (meaningless) opportunity for “judgment after death” to the people.

Consequently, the different outcomes of the two revolutions (with the Egyptian revolution leading to widespread belief in “judgment after death”) depended on the pre-existence of such a crazy alternative to perceived injustices.

## 2.2 The “Spark” that Ignited the Fires of Hell

Given what happened in world’s second, known social revolution, one is led to wonder how such a crazy idea as “judgment after death” became known in ancient Egypt. Unfortunately, though, we’ll probably never know with certainty what spark ignited the above-listed “precursors”, leading to what’s now a belief in the jabberwocky of “judgment after death” by approximately half of all people in the world. As you can find from your own investigations, Dear, most historians seem to accept that the idea probably originated sometime before 3000 BCE in ancient Egypt (or south of Egypt, in what is now Sudan and Ethiopia). The details of how the idea started, however, seem lost in antiquity and buried in fantastic myths.

In later chapters (see especially **Yx21** entitled “The Life-After-Death Lie”) I’ll show you details of what’s probably the most important myth that led to Egyptian belief in “judgment after death”, namely, the Osiris-Isis-Horus myth, but I assure you, Dear, you don’t want me to show you its full details here: the abbreviated version (as recorded about 2,000 years ago by the Greek philosopher Plutarch) describes the “activities” of more than a dozen gods! Among these gods are the “after-death judge” Osiris and his wife Isis, who by a strange manner of “immaculate conception”, gave birth to their son, Horus. Today, though, even the most “die-hard” supernaturalists (e.g., those who believe that Mary, through “immaculate conception” gave birth to Jesus) no longer believe the Osiris-Isis-Horus myth.

As for what might have actually occurred, which led to the Osiris-Isis-Horus myth and the strongly held belief in ancient Egypt about “judgment after death”, of course no one knows. Yet, Dear, I can guarantee you that the following story (which I concocted!) is much more likely to be nearer the truth than the myth that the ancient Egyptian’s believed – simply because my story omits nonsense about “gods”, “immaculate conception”, etc.

Once upon a time in Egypt, a long, long time ago – even before the pyramids were built, about 4500 years ago – a number of tribes lived along the Nile River, each with its own chief. Two girls were born to the chief of one of the tribes. He named one of his daughters Isis and named the other Nephthys.

To the chief of a neighboring tribe, two sons were born. He named one of his sons Osiris (from whose name is derived the English word ‘Sir’) and named the other Set, pronounced ‘soot’ (from whose name the English word ‘soot’ is derived).

When the two sisters grew to be beautiful women and the two brothers grew to be handsome men, the two chiefs of the neighboring tribes arranged for marriages of

their sons and daughters: Isis was married to Osiris and Nephthys was married to Set. The pictures shown are ancient drawings of Isis (on the left) and Nephthys (right).



With such a strong bond between the two tribes, they merged into one larger tribe, which soon became the most powerful tribe in the entire Nile Delta. Set accepted that Osiris should be chief of the combined tribe, while Set became the combined tribe's chief warrior. Osiris' boyhood friend, Thoth, became the "medicine man" or shaman of the combined tribe.

One night, when Set was away at war and Isis was indisposed, Osiris (shown at the right with both Isis and Nephthys) had sex with his sister-in-law Nephthys, for reasons known only to them.





As a result, Nephthys became pregnant, leading to the birth of the boy Anubis. Upon his return and learning that his wife Nephthys had been impregnated by Osiris, Set seethed, murdered Osiris, and sought to become chief of the combined tribe.

Isis was also incensed: that Osiris had cheated on her, that instead of her, Nephthys was pregnant with Osiris's child, and that (with Osiris dead) she had lost her privileged position as wife of the tribe's chief. Isis therefore sought guidance, support, and comfort from Osiris' former confidant and advisor, Thoth, who (with Osiris dead) had similarly lost his privileged position (as the tribe's shaman). Being a man and unaccustomed to such attention from such a beautiful, independent, but vulnerable woman as Isis, Thoth took advantage of the situation and impregnated her.

As months went by and Isis's pregnancy became obvious, then to protect themselves from the tribe's reaction if the truth became known, Isis and Thoth concocted a fantastic "explanation" of what had happened, which as former shaman of the tribe, Thoth expected he could "sell" to the superstitious tribal members. He claimed:

- That Isis's sister, Nephthys, was indeed impregnated by Osiris, but it wasn't because Osiris had been unfaithful to Isis; instead, jealous (because her sister was "queen" of the tribe) and sexually frustrated (because Seth was impotent), Nephthys had gone to Osiris in the night disguised as Isis. The sleepy Osiris didn't realize that he was having sex with the nymphomaniac Nephthys.
- That Set was wrong to kill Osiris; Nephthys was the one deserving blame; therefore, Set was unfit to rule the tribe.
- That Isis became pregnant in a most amazing manner: just as vegetation is resurrected every year from the soil, and the Sun and stars are resurrected every year, Isis resurrected Osiris from the dead, who then impregnated her.
- That Osiris now resides in the stars and judges the dead: if people live honorable lives (as did Osiris), then he grants them eternal life with him; if people don't live honorable lives (for example, if they don't believe this factual account of what actually happened), then upon their death, Osiris extinguishes their souls.

Subsequently, Isis gave birth to the boy Horus, who (similar to Jesus) was claimed to be born by "immaculate conception" (i.e., it was claimed that she was impregnated by the dead Osiris), and Isis (with Thoth's help) became ruler of the tribe. When he became a man, Horus killed his "uncle" Set (who had killed his alleged father), but Horus lost an eye in the process.

As the years rolled by, the tale that Thoth told was adopted as "the Truth".

The most unbelievable part of the above story is that, not only did tribal members accept the Thoth's tale as "the Truth", subsequent Egyptians embellished the tale with even more fanciful ideas: that Osiris, Isis, and Horus were (good) gods, that Set was an evil god, that after her death, Isis



became the star later called ‘Sirius’ by the Greeks, and that Osiris was the constellation the Greeks later called “Orion the hunter”.<sup>23</sup> Further, later Egyptian rulers claimed that, when they died, they would pass Osiris’ tests and become immortal stars; they had pyramids built to assist their souls on their journey to the stars.

Subsequently, the Osiris-Isis-Horus myth spread throughout the Middle East. Hebrew clerics adopted the part of the myth dealing with the killing of Osiris (light) by Seth (dark) as their myth about Cain and Abel, symbolizing the killing of daylight each night. Both Christian and Muslim clerics adopted Set as Satan and of course adopted the crazy idea that, upon their deaths, people would be judged by their god who would decide their “eternal fates” in fictitious “afterlives”. Christian clerics (and, of course, later Mormon clerics) adopted the story about Osiris’ impregnating Isis by “immaculate conception” and the birth of baby Horus at the winter solstice as a template for the story of the “immaculate conception” of Jesus *via* Mary’s being impregnated by God in his activities as “the Holy Ghost”. Shown below, on the left, is an unknown sculptor’s depiction of Isis and baby Horus; on the right, from about two thousand years later, is an unknown artist’s depiction of “the virgin” Mary and baby Jesus.



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<sup>23</sup> In some versions of the myth, however, Osiris seems to be only one of the stars in Orion’s belt, while still other versions claim that the three stars in Orion’s belt are the three wise men who brought birth presents for Horus (similar to the story told thousands of years later about the baby Jesus).

Now, Dear, should you become ill thinking that such a story (concocted more than 5,000 years ago, basically because Osiris had sex with his sister-in-law) led to your own belief in “eternal life” – if it sickens you to think that such nonsense (about an in-law couple copulating) could be the origin of your delusion that, after you’re dead, some god will judge your eternal fate – then perhaps you should go to a local drugstore for medicine. And while you’re there, notice the druggist’s Rx sign: it’s the ancient Egyptian symbol for the eye of Horus (and also for the planet Jupiter, later identified with Jesus). Also, Dear, when you pay for your medication, have a look at the back of a one-dollar bill: atop the pyramid you’ll see the eye of Horus!

On the other hand, Dear, if (instead of feeling sick) you feel that it couldn’t be this silly, it couldn’t be that more than two billion people in the world today believe that they’ll be judged after they’re dead (and make life-changing decisions because of that belief!) because of a couple’s sexual infidelities in prehistoric Egypt, then I’m sorry, but that’s life: small (at the time, seemingly inconsequential) “perturbations” can lead to large (even life-changing) consequences. Stopping your car to permit a pedestrian pass can save you from being killed in a crash with a runaway truck, hearing a bird sing can prevent you from trying some mind-warping drug, questioning why a car is parked where it is can prevent a terrorist attack, and so on. As conveyed in an old English proverb:

For want of a nail the shoe was lost.  
For want of a shoe the horse was lost.  
For want of a horse the rider was lost.  
For want of a rider the battle was lost.  
With the battle lost the kingdom was lost.  
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

A mathematical description of such phenomena (in chaos theory called “the butterfly effect”) is (crudely) that the evolution of nonlinear systems (such as an individual or a human society) with “positive Lyapunov exponents” is not only extremely sensitive to initial conditions, but soon after being initiated, its details become unpredictable. Certainly, the evolution of such a system can’t be predicted by some claimed “prophet”, but even an alleged, all-knowing god couldn’t overcome the resulting exponential growth of uncertainties (in the limit, those from Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle).

Thus, Dear, in summary, it appears likely that the idea of “judgment after death” was first conceived in ancient Egypt sometime before 3000 BCE. By

2000 BCE, the idea had spread throughout Egypt, like a raging fire, so much so that the ancient Egyptians became obsessed with the idea. By about 1000 BCE, sparks from the Egyptian fire apparently ignited similar thoughts by people in Greece (such as Homer) and Persia (such as Zoroaster). During the next 2,000 years, the idea spread throughout the Middle East, resulting in such contagions as Christianity and Islam, which now have incinerated rational thoughts about death – and life! – for most religious people in the Western world.

## CRITICISMS OF SUCH JABBERWOCKY

Meanwhile, Dear, please consider all the data supporting such jabberwocky (namely, none!), and consider again the opening lines of Bertrand Russell's essay "On the Value of Skepticism":

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.

In particular, Dear, are you aware of even the tiniest crumb of reliable data that supports the speculation that, after you die, some giant Jabberwock in the sky will judge your "immortal soul"? Oh, sure, there's a huge amount of "hearsay" evidence (as I've been showing you), and certainly a horribly large fraction of all 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! Please, Dear, "screw your skepticism to the sticking point"; remember what you said to me: "Show me the data!"

Ancient, written records of skepticism are sparse, no doubt in part because, in the main, clerics controlled the records and wouldn't keep anything that might undermine their con games. Yet, a third millennium BCE clay tablet from Mesopotamia shows skepticism of "the god idea":

A man without a god – for a strong man it is no loss.

Also, 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 Muhammad, ~2500 years before Jesus, ~2,000 years before Zoroaster, and ~1500 years before Moses allegedly lived!) is from *The Song of the Harper* (found on the tomb of the Egyptian king Inyotef) and shows skepticism of the idea of "an afterlife":

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. Nonetheless and most unfortunately, such bizarre ideas are still with us. Mormon leaders and Christian and Muslim 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 announce 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 the giant 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 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?”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Indeed he would be a very busy “supreme judge”! With ~6 billion people on Earth, each living for ~60 years, then ~100 million people die per year. So, with ~100 million dead people to be judged each year,

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, I'd respond: 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:

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 also consistent 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 Zoroastrianism, Mithraism, Christianity, Islam, and other sundry sects such as Mormonism, all of which are based on wild speculations about what happens after 'you' die – and all based on zero data. Someday, maybe everyone will be able to reject all such supernatural jabberwocky, defeating the damnable clerics who perpetuate it for their own profit. And if we could defeat the *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.*

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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 giant Jabberwocky in the sky heard about “due process”?!

*“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 whiffling 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 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 have 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 stupidities, i.e., 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 “life after death” means 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 is bad or even evil), then simple



minds would like to believe that such a person will be punished. So, given the observation that, during their lives, many “bad” people get away with 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 imaginations, speculations can run rampant – and con artists, parasites, and power mongers (i.e., clerics) are usually not far behind, trying to capitalize on the people’s ignorance. It’s a classic case – if not “the” classic case – not only of “the tail wagging the dog” but of “tales [about death] wagging the dogs”, i.e., people who accept ideas based on zero data.

### REASONS FOR INVESTIGATING SUCH JABBERWOCKY

Now, Dear, if you’re wondering why I went through the above, it’s because I want to introduce the next few chapters with the following thought: 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 investigate 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 the 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 simple to understand (and to apply), that originate from both "Mother Nature" and our own nature as "social animals" (not from any god), and that don't involve any speculations about supernatural jabberwocky 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

\* Go to other chapters *via*

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), I’ll summarize all of it, here: Dear, please think it through and test 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?!