

M1 – The Mountainous God Lie

Dear: When I'm walking, depending on recent experiences (e.g., if there's been another terrorist attack by religious fanatics, if there's been another battle in some other religious war, if there's been another stupid "religious proclamation" by some political or religious leader, if there's been another atrocity committed against women or children by some cleric, or if I've become aware of some additional religious foolishness in which my poor grandchildren have been indoctrinated), then "halfway between L & M", (☺), I might remind myself of the following:

The Mountainous God Lie – The world's longest-running, most widespread lie with evil consequences.

In this chapter, I want to begin to try to show you what I mean by the above summary.

But before beginning, I should mention that the task of trying to show you what I mean by "the Mountainous God Lie" has caused me substantial difficulty, in large measure because the "mountain" is so huge. To try to convey to you its extent, I'll soon suggest an analogy – even though (as I stated in an earlier chapter) I'm not keen on analogies, because although analogies can provide useful outlines, sometimes their details can cause more confusion than clarity. Nonetheless, the God Lie is so extensive that maybe an analogy will help. After introducing my analogy, then in the rest of this chapter, I'll outline some general features of the God Lie and then begin to show you a few details, especially of a part of the God Lie that I call "The Law Lie". In subsequent chapters (in **M2** through **Q**), I'll show you additional details. I'll complete my descriptions in the (extensive!) "excursions" **Qx** and **Yx**, respectively entitled "Quagmires of Revealed Religions" and "Your Indoctrination in the Mountainous God Lie."

To introduce my analogy, let me remind you of where I've been pretending we've been walking – an analogy that I've been using not necessarily to clarify but to try to keep my sanity! In case you've forgotten this analogy, we're currently on what I'd call our third "hike", from **J** through **Q**. I pretended that our first hike (Part 1 of this book, from **A** through **H**) was on my "northern trail", near where we used to live and which you might remember. On that first hike, I tried to encourage you, mostly, "just" to "be

aware”: of your senses, your surroundings, your feelings, your goals, your hopes, signals telling you that you were making progress toward your goals (i.e., signals of happiness), and so on. I must admit that I remember my “northern trail” fondly, especially the meadowlarks.

For our second hike, I pretended we were walking on one of my “southern trails”: the one on the hill, where you might remember you saw all those skeletons of dead horses (and maybe dead cattle). On that second hike, in Part 2 of this book, I began to show you what I mean that “belief in god is bad science”, which is what I tried to show you in the many chapters labeled with **I** – including the “excursion” **Ix** exploring the “skeletons of mistaken ideas” (contained in a huge number of silly myths).

On this third hike, from **J** through **Q**, I’ve been pretending that we’re walking on my other “southern trail”, by the river. In these chapters (Part 3 of the book) I’m trying to show you what I mean by saying that “belief in god is... even worse policy”. To this point on the hike, I’ve at least begun to address some aspects of justice, kindness, love, and morality; in the remainder of this Part 3, I’ll show you more “policies”, and then at the end of this hike (at **Q**), I’ll offer you the “excursion” **Qx**, in which I’ll provide some details and “background information” that I decided were too bulky or too heavy to carry on the main trek from **J** through **Q**.

Now, to get closer to introducing my analogy for the Mountainous God Lie, let me remind you about my “southern trail” by the river. Do you remember where I’d park the truck? From there, we’d walk along the access road, adjacent to the irrigation ditch. For the first half-mile or so, the road is fairly level (and I’ve been pretending that I’ve been talking to you about the concepts that I put in the **J**-chapters). Next, the road swings away from the irrigation ditch and up a steep hill: **K & L**. Maybe you remember that one time, half way up that hill, I challenged the two oldest grandchildren to see if they could hit with a rock an imagined pheasant for their breakfast (with the “pheasant” being a discarded bottle at the bottom of the hill, in the “wash”). I sure remember, cause I hit it with my first throw! What luck!

Anyway, Dear, at the top of the hill, do you remember the tremendous view of the mountains, which totally encircle this area? Well, welcome to “The Mountainous God Lie”! The God Lie is like those mountains. Just as they totally surround this valley, the Mountainous God Lie totally encircles our culture, complete with pinnacles and precipices formed by power mongering

priests and politicians. And I kid you not, kid: the big mountain, to the Northwest, otherwise standing somewhat alone, is called “Mormon Mountain”!

In fact, the most imposing mountains, the entire range to the South, are called “The Virgin Mountains” – so I’ll pretend that they represent the mountainous lies of Christianity, of course including the lie that the mother of Jesus was a virgin. The mountain range to the west, in the distance, I’ll use to represent the mountainous lies of all religions from which Christianity “borrowed” most of its “ideas” (including ideas about “virgin births”, Christmas, Easter, baptism, the symbolism of bread and wine, etc., from the religions of the Egyptians, Persians, Jews, Greeks, and Romans), i.e., the distant origins of all the silly ideas in which you’ve been indoctrinated. To the north, not only is there Mormon Mountain in the northwest but also, just behind the biggest mountain in the northeast, there is the site of the “Mormon Massacre” (where, under the direction of Brigham Young, a group of Mormons attacked and murdered all but a few children in a wagon train headed for California). To represent Islam, I’ll use the mountain range to the east, behind which is the mountains near Zion Park (just as behind Islam is found Judaism, i.e., the Moslems pretend that they’re also descendants of the “patriarch” Abraham), and behind them, farther back, are the Rocky Mountains, which I’ll use to represent the mountainous lies of religions behind Judaism, including Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, and the religions of the Ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, and Sumerians – and even more primitive people.

Now, Dear, in this chapter, I don’t plan to take you on an excursion to all those mountains. That would be a “mountainous” undertaking. Instead, I plan just to pause for a while, at the top of the trail’s hill, and point out a few features of the mountainous God Lie, especially the part of the God Lie that I call the Law Lie. My plan is then to proceed along the level trail at the top of the hill (through **M & N**), go down the other side (**O**), and proceed to the river’s dam (**P & Q**). Then, if you’re so inclined, you can take the “excursion” **Qx**, where in analogy with an excursion along the (muddy!) river bank, I’ll offer you a trek through the “quagmire” of religious revelations of the “holy books” of our culture. In the excursion **Yx**, I’ll offer you an “excursion” to the mountains (driving in the truck!), to get a little closer look at “Your Indoctrination in the Mountainous God Lie.”

But if my analogy doesn't "do anything" for you, Dear, then let me try some other ways to introduce you to The Mountainous God Lie. For example (and once again!), I can't summarize what I want to write so well as Ingersoll already wrote, more than a hundred years ago:

To succeed, the theologians invade the cradle, the nursery. In the brain of innocence they plant the seeds of superstition. They pollute the minds and imaginations of children. They frighten the happy with threats of pain – they soothe the wretched with gilded lies... All of these comforting and reasonable things are taught by the ministers in their pulpits, by teachers in Sunday schools, and by parents at home. The children are victims. They are assaulted in the cradle – in their mother's arms. Then, the school-master carries on the war against their natural sense, and all the books they read are filled with the same impossible truths. The poor children are helpless. The atmosphere they breathe is filled with lies – lies that mingled with their blood.

Yet, though I totally agree with Ingersoll, maybe his summary doesn't provide you with sufficient detail, so that (wise child that you are) you remain skeptical. Good!

So, in response (although, as I already mentioned, I'll postpone supporting information until later), here I'll summarize with the following list of details. Maybe then you'll at least get some hint that I'm not just "whistlin' in the wind".

The Mountainous God Lie – Lingering social evils from initial misunderstandings and then subsequent deliberate falsification of the records, plus manipulation of ignorant people by stupid or poorly educated or power mongering priests and politicians:

- *That gods exist,*
- *That people have immortal souls imbued by the gods,*
- *That birth of children is controlled the gods,*
- *That the dead are ruled by the gods,*
- *That people have souls, which are judged by the gods,*
- *That stars and their movements reveal signs from the gods,*
- *That movements of stars tell stories of gods,*
- *That dreams contain messages from the gods,*
- *That magic displays the mystery of the gods,*
- *That mysteries conceal the secrets of the gods,*
- *That sacrifices are needed to placate the gods,*
- *That rituals convey knowledge of the gods,*

- *That mistakes are ‘sins’ against the gods,*
- *That sins offend and are punished by the gods,*
- *That clerics can forgive sins on behalf of the gods,*
- *That clerics are in contact with the gods,*
- *That clerics exercise authority on behalf of the gods,*
- *That clerics are spokesmen for the gods,*
- *That clerics preach the wills of the gods,*
- *That clerical “knowledge” is direct from the gods,*
- *That clerical hierarchies are established by the gods,*
- *That rather than serving themselves, the clerics serve the gods,*
- *That paying the clerics placates the gods,*
- *That prayers have power to persuade the gods,*
- *That tithes are collected on behalf of the gods,*
- *That oracles and prophets speak for the gods,*
- *That “truth” is told about prophets and gods,*
- *That a “race” of people was chosen by the gods,*
- *That oaths are binding when sworn to the gods,*
- *That morality is defined by the gods,*
- *That laws are dictated by the gods,*
- *That rulers know right by the grace of the gods,*
- *That justice is the jurisdiction of the gods,*
- *That order is ordained by the gods,*
- *That punishment is performed by the gods,*
- *That judges are judged by gods,*
- *That leaders rule by the grace of the gods,*
- *That kingdoms are established by the gods,*
- *That the fate of societies is controlled by the gods,*
- *That human rights are endowed by the gods,*
- *That people should put their trust in the gods,*
- *That believers gain grace as a gift of the gods,*
- *That wars are waged on behalf of the gods...*

Dear: It’s a mountainous pack of lies! In **Yx**, I’ll try to show you how at least some of these misunderstandings and lies developed; in **Qx**, I’ll try to show you how these lies are promoted in the principal religions of our culture; in the remaining chapters of this “Part 3”, I’ll try to show you some of the pathetic personal policies and sick social policies that have resulted from these lies. That is, Dear, if you will be patient with me, I’ll try to give you sufficient evidence to justify my claim that these lies promoted by clerics have resulted in great evil.

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But to start, consider just a single, essentially trivial example of the lie *that the dead are ruled by the gods*. This “trivial” example is from the town where your grandmother and I now live. Here, there are four huge Mormon buildings (two “churches”, one “seminary”, and I don’t know the purpose of the most-recently constructed building). In total, the real estate value of these “monuments to folly” is surely at least \$50 million, i.e., approximately \$5,000 per person – and certainly we’re not all Mormons! The fundamental purpose of these investments is claimed to be “to save immortal souls”. As have all clerics throughout recorded history, the Mormon leaders used a combination of fear and hope of simple people to con them out of their money (a part of which was used to build these “monuments to folly”), claiming “the dead are ruled by the gods”.

Meanwhile in this town, to “save” mortal minds, there’s no college or university (save a one-room extension of the university from the nearest city). Yet, here stand the Mormon buildings, as monuments to the folly of the people – and to the skill of the con artist clerics. And this is the tiniest fraction (a millionth, a billionth, a trillionth...?) of the folly throughout the world and throughout recorded history. For example, think of the Egyptian pyramids. My summary both of the Mormon building in our town and of the Egyptian pyramids: What a waste of human resources! What social evils! What a damnable lie is even just this first small piece of the God Lie!

And I would agree with you if you complained that I should make a distinction between ‘mistakes’ and ‘lies’. As I tried to show you in the “excursion” **Ix**, almost certainly the Mountainous God Lie didn’t start out as a lie but as a series of mistakes by primitive people. Perhaps extrapolating from the strangeness of their shadows, their own reflections in pools of water, and their dreams, primitive people apparently came to the mistaken idea that they possessed a “second self”, a soul. Maybe from the experience that their “souls” seemed to wander off in dreams when they slept, people apparently concluded that their “souls” wander off when they die.

Judged from ideas in various myths, an early idea that primitive people apparently had about death was that, when people died, their souls wandered throughout the Earth, e.g., in the wind, led by the wind god Woden (whom you still honor every Wednesday!), thereby to populate everything with “spirits”. Subsequently, when people began to notice the stars, they apparently imagined that after some people died, their souls drifted up to

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“the heavens.” And subsequently, while attempting to understand their surroundings, ancient people apparently imagined “super spirits”, some apparently the “spirits” of especially powerful but dead tribal leaders and some eventually called gods, which (the people imagined) had control over the rain, thunder, lightning, volcanic eruptions, the motion of the planets, and so on. Some modern-day primitive people (such as the pope!) still imagine that one of these “spirits” initiated the Big Bang, which apparently started this universe.

Thereby, it’s easy to imagine how our ancient ancestors came to such mistaken conclusions – and even easy to understand why some primitive people still cling to such ridiculous “scientific” models of the universe. For the ancients, so much was unknown: What causes the wind? Why is the volcano erupting? What did we do wrong to cause the thunder god to be so angry? What are those strange spots of light in the nighttime sky? What happens when people die? As for modern-day primitives, they’re almost as uneducated as our ancient ancestors – and they were indoctrinated with nonsense by their parents, who in turn were taught by the scientific quacks known as clerics.

As a result of clerical quackery, the minds of my poor grandchildren – along with the minds of literally billions of other children – have been polluted with a mountainous pile of intellectual rubbish. And although the foundation of the resulting mountainous quackery seems easy to identify and to understand (it was just the next phase in the development of primitive people who found the physical world “understandable” only if they attributed all the strange happenings to the working of their gods), the perpetuation of the God Lie has been deliberate and debasing: leaders from ancient Egypt to “modern” America have perpetuated this lie – to promote their power over the people.

Yet, when examining power mongering by priests and politicians, I admit that again there are difficulties (again there are questions), this time in distinguishing between cooperation vs. collusion (between making mistakes vs. perpetrating lies). “In the beginning”, surely it all was just a huge mistake. Of course I don’t know, but I imagine that for essentially every tribe of primitive people, the “political” leader was probably the strongest member (who then ruled by “might makes right”), while the shaman (or witch doctor or “high priest”) was probably the “smartest” member (or, at least, the member whose imagination excelled, who had good

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communication skills, and who knew the herbs and similar that had medicinal value and could induce hallucinations). Therefore, I expect that, “in the beginning”, such leaders and “high priests” cooperated to lead each tribe. And although they obviously made huge mistakes, it would probably be more appropriate to say that these leaders made massive mistakes in the cooperative leadership of the people – rather than to say that they colluded to perpetrate lies.

But slowly, typically taking thousands of years (!), various con artists manipulated the people’s mistakes into priestly lies. As I’ll try to show you in **Yx**, this manipulation occurred in a huge variety of ways and with varying degrees of success, but in all cases, the goal seems to have been the same: for the priests (and colluding politicians) to gain and maintain power over the people. Yet and as I already mentioned, in many cases in the past, it’s difficult to identify when the transition from a “mistake” to a “lie” occurred – and in those cases for which the origin can be identified, if the transition occurred because its “creator” was mistaken, a liar, or insane.¹

To try to show you what I mean, let me outline a few “case studies”.

- It’s unknown (as far as I know) when the mistakes were made to “think” that stars were the souls of dead people and that, when the Pharaoh of Ancient Egypt died, he would journey to the stars. From the age of the pyramids, however, clearly the idea is ~ 5,000 years old!
- It’s even unknown (to within at least 500 years!) when Zoroaster “decided” that life on Earth was a part of a battle between good and evil, on behalf of the gods (with consequences of heaven or hell for the combatants), but as I showed you in a quotation in **J1**, it appears that Zoroaster realized that he had concocted the whole scheme (i.e., that it was a lie) – and this lie subsequently became the basis of Christianity, Islam, and Mormonism.
- In the case of Moses and Jesus (if they existed!), and in the case of Muhammad (who almost certainly did exist), probably we’ll never know if they were mistaken, liars, or insane – although if the odds were favorable, I’d put a little money on the possibilities that Moses was “just”

¹ By ‘insane’, Dear, I mean as in this word processor’s (Word’s) dictionary: **1.** legally incompetent or irresponsible because of a psychiatric disorder, or **2.** (informal) showing a complete lack of reason or foresight.

a liar (or better: the clerics who concocted the stories about him were liars) and that Jesus and Mohammed were insane (based upon the story in the New Testament that Jesus' mother and brother went to "take charge of him" because he was said to be "possessed" and upon Muhammad's description of himself in the Koran as "the mad poet").

- In the case of more modern clerics, when the historical record is clearer, then more reliable assessments can be made. For example, as I'll show you a little in **Qx** and more in **Yx**, there's little doubt that Sidney Rigdon (the first "high priest" of Mormonism and almost certainly the author of the Book of Mormon) was insane (or, more completely, a liar who suffered from mental disorders) and there's no doubt that the Mormon "profit" Joseph Smith was a pathological liar – including lying to his many wives!

Even for modern instances of the God Lie, however, it's difficult to discern if the person is a liar, a fool, or insane. And I suppose that, if I were more diplomatic, I'd wonder if the person was lying, being foolish, or exhibiting signs of some mental disorder such as schizophrenia – but as you probably noticed, 'diplomacy' isn't one of my strong suits.²

As examples of my attempts to distinguish lies from foolishness and from insanity, I submit the following speculations.

- From his statement "I believe today that my conduct is in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator" and from his subsequent actions, I conclude that Hitler was insane.
- From his statement "The Bible is the authoritative Word of God and contains all truth", I conclude that President Clinton was again demonstrating his propensity to lie.
- From his comment in the commencement address that he gave at Harvard in 1994,

I believe in serving God and trying to understand and obey God's will for our lives. Cynics may wave the idea away, saying God is a myth, useful in providing

² Ain't it neat how I used the plural, there?! You might prefer if I wrote something similar to: I never scored high in 'diplomacy'!

comfort to the ignorant and in keeping them obedient. I know in my heart – beyond all arguing and beyond any doubt – that the cynics are wrong

I don't think that there's enough information to decide if Vice President Al Gore was a liar or a fool.

- From his statement “And how can we ever again succeed in educating children to become moral men and women if, in America's public schools, we consciously deny them all religious instruction, and deny them access to that primary source of morality, God's own word”, and from many similar statement, I conclude that US Presidential candidate Pat Buchanan was demonstrating that he was a borderline case between being a fool and being insane.
- From his statement “No, I don't know that Atheists should be considered as citizens, nor should they be considered as patriots. This is one nation under God”, I conclude that President Bush (Sr.) was a fool.
- From his recitation, complete with hand over his heart, “I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior, for whose Kingdom it stands, one Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again, with life and liberty for all who believe”, along with other evidence, I conclude that Vice President Dan Quayle was a borderline case between being a fool and being insane.
- From his statement “Our priorities is our faith”, and many similar stupidities, I'm convinced that President Bush (Jr.) is a fool, bordering on insanity.
- From his similar statement “It is crucial for us to be patient and to cooperate in righteousness and piety and to raise awareness to the fact that the highest priority, after faith, is to repel the incursive enemy which corrupts the religion and the world, and nothing deserves a higher priority after faith....” (from a November 1996 interview with *Nida'ul Islam*), I'm convinced that similar to President G.W. Bush, Osama bin Laden is also a fool, bordering on insanity.

But regardless of all such details, if I'm to be honest (at least when I'm dealing with my grandchildren!), then I must “call 'em as I see 'em”, i.e., it's

all a Mountainous Lie, because if I were to do otherwise, I would be deliberately misleading my grandchildren, i.e., lying.

Yet, in this chapter and the next three, I don't plan to go into details about the entire Mountainous God Lie. Instead, in this chapter, I want to emphasize, especially, the lie that links religion to law, e.g., *that laws are dictated by the gods*. In the next three chapters, I'll focus on the lie *that morality is defined by the gods*. To start, let me try to explain why I use the word 'lie' in "Law Lie".

To that end, first I'll provide at least a few hints about how some of these crazy ideas (e.g., that "the gods" dictated laws and morals to people) might have started, perhaps more than 10,000 years ago. I suspect that insight on how such stupidity might have started can be gained from considering experiences of even modern-day children and from realizing that the mental development of most ancient people was not much more advanced than that of modern-day children – and many modern-day adults!

For modern-day children, their parents continuously dictate rules (laws and morals): "No – you can't have a chocolate bar for breakfast," "Give that toy back to your brother," "Be nicer to your sister," and so on, throughout the day, including "Brush your teeth and go to bed." If in response to one of their rules, you had asked your parents "Why?" or "How come?" (as you were wont to do!), then provided that they had the time and patience, your parents probably would (and usually did) give you appropriate reasons: "Because candy isn't adequate nourishment", "Because it's his toy," "Because people need to learn to get along with other people," "Because if you don't brush your teeth, they'll decay, you'll get toothaches, and it'll cost a lot of money to get them fixed."

Sometimes, however – and perhaps not surprising to you – the patience of parents "wears thin" (especially if there are many children in the family, in which parents have many problems besides rearing children and the children don't work from dawn to dusk in the fields or in some factory). In such cases, when a spoiled child takes a break from watching cartoons on TV to seek a chocolate bar for breakfast (not of course that I'm referring to any of my grandchildren!), a parent who says "No!" may respond to "How come?" with something similar to: "Just because", or "Cause I said so", or (especially when the real reason is complicated) "Cause God said so." Thereby, the claim that some rule is "absolute" (i.e., dictated by some God)

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is used to conclude the discussion: if someone “in authority” can convincingly claim to be conveying the opinion of no less than the creator of the universe (!), then objections from children (and simple-minded people) will usually end.

I call the result “The Law Lie” (i.e., the lie that any god ever dictated any law). In turn, as I tried to indicate with the list above, this Law Lie is part of a bigger lie, which I call “The God Lie”. But as I already mentioned and I’ll describe in some detail in **Yx**, it may be somewhat “unfair” to label some ancient leaders who were “law givers” (such as, if they all existed, Menes, Minos, Moses, and Manu) as “liars”. In olden days, when people (and dolphins!) knew only instinctively (or intuitively) that, for example, they should be kind to one another, it was probably less a lie and more a speculation that such “instinctive knowledge” had been conveyed to them by “the gods”. After all, if the gods had made humans, animals, plants, and everything else (as primitive people “thought” – and still think!) and if the gods continued their involvement in the world by controlling wind, rain, thunder, lightning, volcanoes, the motion of the stars, etc., then it was “obvious” that the gods had also dictated how humans “should” behave.

In olden days, therefore, the Law Lie (as with the rest of the God Lie) was quite likely less a lie and more just a mistake. Apparently, few people (if any – and fewer dolphins!) saw that laws and ideas about morality were merely methods (discovered, in some cases, from eons of experiences) for promoting the goals of individuals and groups. As I’ll sketch in **Yx**, maybe it was the Ancient Greeks who first clearly saw that people and not gods made the laws, but perhaps the Ancient Egyptians, Indians, and Chinese saw it even earlier. In any event, I feel it necessary to call the Law Lie a lie (and the God Lie a lie), because if I promoted the stupidity that “morality” or any “law” was dictated by any god, then I would be a liar – because the best available evidence shows me that it’s all a pack of lies! And I repeat that anyone who still promotes such ideas (that laws and morals were dictated by some god) is a fool or a liar or insane.

And again, Dear, I would agree with you that those aren’t very “friendly words” and that a more diplomatic person would stick to the word ‘mistake’. But when I think of the murders, rapes, tortures, wars... that have resulted from such stupidity, I don’t feel any urge to be diplomatic. Further, with my use of the word ‘insane’, I realize that it’s not a medical term, but it’s a word used in our judicial system: a plea of insanity is made if a defendant claims

inability to distinguish between right from wrong – and to understand the legal ramifications of the difference. Thereby, by the way and according to the Bible, Adam and Eve were legally insane (i.e., they were unable to distinguish between right and wrong) – by the will of God!

There are a huge number of reasons why so many subsequent humans are also (criminally) insane, i.e., unable to distinguish between what's right (viz., ideas that summarize substantial data and that have been tested by the scientific method) and what's wrong (viz., speculations summarizing no data and are untested – or worse, are untestable – or worse, are meaningless, e.g., “God exists”). As I tried to indicate in chapter **Ii** and will show you more in later chapters, reasons for this ability to distinguish between what's right and what's wrong include immaturity, marginal intellectual capabilities, childhood indoctrination, fear, greed, and so on. Besides, just as with ancient people, modern day primitive people find bliss in their ignorance, just as others find bliss in hallucinatory drugs.

Meanwhile, Dear, although it's easy to imagine how the Law Lie might have been adopted, it's difficult to determine how and when the idea that “the Lord laid down the law” was first used. In **Yx**, I'll show you some examples from Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, as far back as written records reveal (i.e., ~5,000 years ago). As I'll try to show you, also, there are stories of subsequent people claiming that their authority was commissioned by some giant Jabberwock in the sky, including stories about Menes of Egypt, Minos of Crete, Zoroaster of Persia, Numa of Rome, Moses of Egypt, and Manu of India – most of whom allegedly climbed mountains and claimed that they obtained their laws directly from their sky gods, but all of whom – save perhaps Manu of India and Minos of Crete may have been just mythical figures, because all such stories are suspiciously similar.

In particular, the probability seems fairly high that “the lawgiver” Moses (stories about whom you've heard since you were a baby) was just a mythical figure – although (as I'll show you later), there may have been a “Prince Moses” who led at least a few dozen Hebrews (not a few million of them!) out of Egypt. Thus, as I suggested in **Ix**, some of the “exploits” of the mythical (?) Moses seem to be just “astro-tales”, i.e., stories “written in the stars” [e.g., his meeting near a watering hole and later marrying one of the seven sisters, his parting the Reed Sea (not the Red Sea), his inability to cross the River Jordon, etc., all suggest that he was the constellation that the Ancient Greeks called “Orion the hunter”, the Ancient Mesopotamians

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called “Gilgamesh”, and the Ancient Egyptians called “Osiris”]. In addition, as I’ll show you in **Yx**, many of the other “exploits” of Moses are just “retellings” of older stories, e.g., about the first “law giver” of Egypt, Menes, the Ancient Mesopotamian Sargon the Great (put in the river in a basket by his mother), the Indian hero and “law giver” Rama, the Persian priest and “law giver” Zoroaster, and the Greek “god” and “lawgiver” Bacchus. If you want to see details, now, then just type those names in a good internet search engine and “go for it” – but constrain yourself!!

But setting aside my defending such speculations until later chapters, let me start with some details about the case that undoubtedly is the best example of a leader promoting the Law Lie. I call it “the best example” because it’s one of the first and one of the most complete, and because it’s incontrovertible, uncontroversial, and nonthreatening (to the ideas in which certain grandchildren have been indoctrinated).

For “starters”, let me put it this way. Suppose that a certain bright and beautiful little four-year old asked her grandfather: “How come you don’t believe in God?” Imagine her response if I had replied: “Well, consider Hammurabi’s laws.” I can see her response perfectly: she’d quickly jerk her head back, her eyes would glaze over, and then she’d slowly drawl: “Huuuh?”

But now that you’re “older”, Dear, I want you to consider some features of the laws of King Hammurabi. One reason for my wanting you to consider Hammurabi’s laws is because, if you’ll study the historical record (some of which I’ll show you in **Yx**), then I think that you’ll agree that, among all available examples of people claiming some god as their authority (including Menes, Minos, Moses, and Manu), the best example is King Hammurabi, who ruled Babylon (in Mesopotamia) from 1795–1750 BCE. In addition, I want to show you how belief in gods became entangled with the people’s laws and other aspects of society – causing great harm to the people (and great bounty for all clerics). That is, Dear, although I hope you’ll find some of the details of Hammurabi’s laws interesting in themselves (insofar as they reveal details about life in Babylon about 500 years before Moses might have led a few people out of Egypt), there’s something about these laws (and the laws of Moses and other religious leaders) that I hope you’ll conclude is far more important than these details, namely, “the big lie” that they reveal.

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As I already mentioned, it's not known, but it's not difficult to imagine how the "Law Lie" started. Given that most primitive people had concluded that the gods were in control, and given that these people relied on their leaders to solve practical problems that influenced their lives, primitive people apparently reached the "logical conclusion" that their leaders were appointed by the gods – and that the leaders' laws were the laws of the gods. These conclusions were logically correct, but of course rested on the false premiss that the gods were in control.

Meanwhile, I bet that the leaders were delighted with the people's conclusion that the leaders ruled by authority of the gods and that the laws were dictated by the gods – and evidence shows that, if the people didn't reach the conclusion by themselves, then the leaders promoted the idea! Such are my speculations about how the Law Lie started. I call it a "lie" because either the leaders knew it was false (i.e., they knew that they concocted the laws by themselves, but they promoted the idea that the laws came from the gods), or the leaders were insane (unable to distinguish between what was right and what was wrong). In either case, the leaders utilized the Law Lie to strengthen their power over the people.

Essentially the first evidence that supports such speculations – and certainly the best early evidence – are the laws of Hammurabi. As I already mentioned, Hammurabi was the "king" of the city of Babylon from 1795 to 1750 BCE (approximately 3750 years ago!), i.e., roughly when the Bible suggests that "the patriarch" of the Jewish people, Abraham, left Mesopotamia (the city of Ur), probably passing by the Tower of Babylon (or Babel), to settle in Canaan (in land now claimed by "modern" Israelites), roughly 500 years before Moses was born (if he ever existed!), and roughly 700 years before King Solomon ruled Israel (if he ever existed!). Recall from the Bible (*Genesis 11, 9*) that Babylon was a thriving city (with its tower of Babel, meaning "the tower of Babylon") when the Hebrews (which probably means "outsiders") were still wandering around the hills with their sheep.³

³ Dear, I'll continue to use the estimate that Moses wrote his laws about 500 years after Hammurabi, but I should mention that this estimate is a subject of debate, some of which I'll show you in later chapters. To show you some of this debate, here is a quotation from an online book previously entitled *Antiquity OnLine* but now apparently entitled *MacroHistory* by F. Smitha, available at <http://www.fsmitha.com/>:

"According to the Old Testament's *First Book of Kings, 6:1*, Moses and his fellow Hebrews fled from Egypt 480 years before Solomon was to begin building his temple in Jerusalem. This would have placed the exodus from Egypt in 1446, around a century and a half before the rule of Ramses and

Hammurabi's laws were written (or, rather, chiseled) on monuments, one of which (a black stone monument, eight feet high) was found in 1901 and is now in a museum in France. And what an amazingly wonderful find it was! Just think of it, Dear: a record of the "law of the land" from approximately 500 years before Moses reportedly chiseled his laws onto a stone tablet!

But I should add, Dear, that there's little doubt that, similar to Moses (if he existed), Hammurabi did little more than "codify" what by his time was "the custom of the land". Thus, archeologists have found references to (and a few fragments of) two earlier Mesopotamian law codes: Ur-Nammu's code (from approximately 250 years before Hammurabi), of which only five articles can be deciphered, but which suggest that it was supported by quite an advanced legal system) and Urukagina's code (from about 2350 BCE, i.e., ~600 years before Hammurabi and ~1,000 years before Moses) fragments of which show another part of the God Lie, i.e., "that the king was appointed by the gods".

The beauties of "Hammurabi's code" are, therefore, not that it's a copy of the first law code, but both that it's about 500 years older than what for thousands of years in our society people thought was the first law code (i.e., the laws of Moses) and that it's essentially complete. And what I'd like you to do now, Dear, is investigate some details of this archeological find by yourself. To do this, type "Hammurabi" in any good internet "search engine". On various web pages you can find pictures of the monument, some of the original text of the law, and even some details about how to translate the original (complicated!) language. At many sites, you can find the full texts of Hammurabi's laws (including his preamble and postscript), e.g., as translated by L.W. King and as given in *Exploring Ancient World Cultures*.⁴

during a time of no major building in Egypt. The Book of Exodus describes Moses as having come across the small kingdoms of Edom and Moab, which archaeologists believe came into being after 1300. Those believing that the Old Testament is without error cling to 1446 as the year of the exodus. Others estimate that it was under Ramses' successor, Merneptah, that the Hebrews might have managed to flee en masse from Egypt – Merneptah having ruled from around 1224 to 1211. The mass exodus of Hebrew slaves might have occurred when Merneptah withdrew his troops from his frontier facing Canaan in preparation for a war developing on his frontier with the kingdom on his western border."

⁴ Available at <http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/hammurabi.htm>, which is the source of what I'll show you throughout this chapter.

I hope that you'll spend some time reading and thinking about Hammurabi's (282!) laws, Dear, and to try to guide you in some of your thinking, let me mention a few features that I noticed. For example, realize that all claims of all clerics notwithstanding, essentially all laws or "commandments" are little more than a statement of a society's customs – plus methods to attempt to ensure that these customs are preserved. Exceptions occur (such as in the Bible), when the priests insert rules (of course, direct from their gods!) that prescribe how well the people are to treat the priests! But in the case of Hammurabi's laws, apparently the priests didn't have control of the "dictation" of the laws; consequently, Hammurabi's laws are mostly just a "formalization" of what was customary in Babylonia ~4,000 years ago – plus he added definite punishments for violations of these customs.

And I'd like to add, here (but delay showing you details until later), that a huge mistake made by later famous "law makers" (including Moses, Zoroaster, and Jesus, if they ever existed) was their failure to devise "adequate" punishments for violators of their laws. In this regard, the "profit" of Islam, i.e., Muhammad, might be said to have done a better job – although some of his punishments are now considered to be "barbaric" by people who no longer live in clerically caused Dark Ages.

Further, Dear, when you read Hammurabi's laws, please don't forget that the associated customs being described are from a society that existed ~4,000 years ago. Therefore, although you will find some of the group's customs (and, thereby, its laws) "barbaric" (similar to Muhammad's), instead of becoming revolted by the laws, I hope that you'll think about them for a while, to try to discern details about how people lived in the city of Babylon, such a long time ago. In addition, although some of these customs (especially dealing with slavery and the treatment of women) seem barbaric to us, please notice that some of these customs were really quite "enlightened" – as I'll emphasize in the laws that I'll "re-list" below (from the source already referenced and using Hammurabi's numbering system). In a few of these laws, I've added comments in square brackets; someone else (the translator, I assume) added the comments in parentheses.

First, consider some of Hammurabi's laws dealing with administration of the law.

5. If a judge try a case, reach a decision, and present his judgment in writing; if, later, error shall appear in his decision, and it be through his own fault, then he shall pay

twelve times the fine set by him in the case, and he shall be publicly removed from the judge's bench, and never again shall he sit there to render judgment.

That's an amazing law: not only is it a law that many people probably wish were still "on the books", today, but it suggests that Hammurabi dispersed his "rule of law" to be administered by judges. Unfortunately, though, it's not clear (at least to me) how these judges were chosen. And further, if you think about it a little, maybe you'll conclude that this law is a mistake: any society needs competent, honest, and if not unbiased and objective, then at least disinterested judges. Finding such judges is difficult; they will make mistakes; punishing them and removing them for making mistakes, might itself be a major mistake, if better judges are not available.

Next, consider Hammurabi's laws dealing with theft:

6. If any one steals the property of a temple or of the court, he shall be put to death, and also the one who receives the stolen thing from him shall be put to death.

There are other laws dealing with stealing (similar to Moses' law "thou shalt not steal", written about 500 years later), but I find this one especially interesting, because of the severe penalty for those who dealt in goods stolen from "a temple" or "the court" – suggesting that special protection was given to both religion and to the administration of the law – and suggesting collusion between the two organizations.

Some more laws dealing with stealing are:

22. If any one is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death.

23. If the robber is not caught, then shall he who was robbed claim under oath the amount of his loss; then shall the community, and ... on whose ground and territory and in whose domain it was, compensate him for the goods stolen.

The second of these is quite astounding: I guess the nearest that we now have is "theft insurance" – but maybe Hammurabi's method is more "civilized", for with such a method, the entire community would seek to deter robbery. In contrast, today in America there's at least the "popular impression" that some thieves "reason": "We're not stealing from you; we're taking it from the money-grubbing insurance companies."

There is also an interesting series of laws dealing with "property rights", for example:

* Go to other chapters *via*

30. If a chieftain or a man leave his house, garden, and field and hires it out, and someone else takes possession of his house, garden, and field and uses it for three years; if the first owner return and claims his house, garden, and field, it shall not be given to him, but he who has taken possession of it and used it shall continue to use it.

I find this law especially interesting, because it certainly contrasts with the Hebrew's claim (allegedly made by Moses, about 500 years after Hammurabi) that "the land of milk and honey" that they had supposedly left when they traveled to Egypt still belonged to them ("justifying" their slaughtering the inhabitants) – and yet the Hebrews had been gone not just for 3 years but (according to *Exodus 12, 40*) for 430 years! Using that reasoning, Dear, maybe you want to return to Europe to claim what's "rightfully" yours!

Also, there's an amazing series of laws dealing with "veteran's rights", for example:

32. If a chieftain or a man is captured on the "Way of the King" (in war), and a merchant buy him free, and bring him back to his place; if he have the means in his house to buy his freedom, he shall buy himself free; if he have nothing in his house with which to buy himself free, he shall be bought free by the temple of his community; if there be nothing in the temple with which to buy him free, the court shall buy his freedom. His field, garden, and house shall not be given for the purchase of his freedom.

That was quite a long law to quote, but I did so, because it suggests a quite-enlightened treatment of war veterans – in some ways, better than what we have today in this country!

More about community life is revealed by the following laws:

45. If a man rents his field for tillage for a fixed rental, and receives the rent of his field, but bad weather comes and destroys the harvest, the injury falls upon the tiller of the soil.

That law displays quite-enlightened rental and agricultural policies, complete with hints that even in the fertile valley of the Euphrates River, agricultural was a difficult industry.

53. If any one be too lazy to keep his dam in proper condition, and does not so keep it; if then the dam break and all the fields be flooded, then shall he in whose dam the

break occurred be sold for money, and the money shall replace the corn which he has caused to be ruined.

This law reveals much: a strong “work ethic”, a community-wide irrigation system, responsibility of citizenship, the existence of slavery and its use as punishment, and restitution to the community.

In addition, there are laws dealing with finances (and there may be others, but notice that the text for laws 66 through 99 are missing):

102. If a merchant entrust money to an agent (broker) for some investment, and the broker suffer a loss in the place to which he goes, he shall make good the capital to the merchant.

As an investor, sometimes I'd love to have a law similar to that on our books! But, actually, it's unwise: who would want to be a broker under such a law? As a result, money for projects would become available (“our capital market would dry up”), and the community would suffer. Incidentally, Dear, at another website, I found that Hammurabi prescribed interest rates for loans: no more than 20% (per year?) if the loan was in silver, and no more than 33.3% (per year?) if the loan was in grain.

I found this next law especially interesting:

109. If conspirators meet in the house of a tavern-keeper, and these conspirators are not captured and delivered to the court, the tavern-keeper shall be put to death.

Thus, not only were there taverns in Babylon 4,000 years ago (as there was even earlier, as you know if you responded to my encouragement in **Ix** to read the Epic of Gilgamesh), but this law hints that all was not well in Hammurabi's kingdom, with “conspirators” – and the requirements to spy on them. That is, some people must have considered Hammurabi's system sufficiently “unjust” that they would plot its overthrow – a theme that I'll return to in later chapters.

For the next series of laws, I'll just add a few comments:

117. If anyone fail to meet a claim for debt, and sell himself, his wife, his son, and daughter for money, or give them away to forced labor; they shall work for three years in the house of the man who bought them, or the proprietor, and in the fourth year they shall be set free.

Thus, the penalties for bankruptcy were severe, but at least the policy of freeing the “bonded servants” after three years showed some enlightenment – more enlightenment than is revealed in “the laws of Moses” (as I’ll show you in a later chapter).

122. If any one gives another silver, gold, or anything else to keep, he shall show everything to some witness, draw up a contract, and then hand it over for safe keeping.

So, even 4,000 years ago, witnessed “contracts” were very important.

127. If any one “point the finger” (slander) at a sister of a god [a “temple woman”, probably similar to a nun, now commonly “slandered” by calling them “temple prostitutes”], or the wife of anyone, and cannot prove it, this man shall be taken before the judges and his brow shall be marked [by cutting the skin, or perhaps hair].

Thus, there was even a law against slander – and a severe penalty for slander.

130. If a man violate the wife (betrothed or child-wife) of another man, who has never known a man, and still lives in her father’s house, and sleep with her and be surprised [that is, discovered], this man shall be put to death, but the wife is blameless.

And thus, there was a severe penalty (death) for rape (at least for the rape of a girl who was betrothed).

132. If the “finger is pointed” at a man’s wife about another man, but she is not caught sleeping with the other man, she shall jump into the river for her husband.

Apparently the law was that, if whoever jumped into the river drowned, that proved the person’s guilt, whereas if a person could swim (!), then that proved innocence – demonstrating that 1) laws can be dumb, 2) it pays to learn how to swim, and 3) be careful where you jump into a river!

142. If a woman quarrel with her husband, and say: “You are not congenial to me,” the reasons for her prejudice must be presented. If she is guiltless, and there is no fault on her part, but he leaves and neglects her, then no guilt attaches to this woman, she shall take her dowry and go back to her father’s house.

Well, it’s not a very generous divorce settlement, but at least divorce was permitted.

144. If a man take a wife and this woman give her husband a maid-servant, and she bear him children, but this man wishes to take another wife, this shall not be permitted to him; he shall not take a second wife.

Apparently, then, a wife was primarily a manager of the household, including manager of her husband's sex life! As I'll show you in detail later, the Bible shows that this "special arrangement" of wives giving their husbands maid-servants (without any consideration of the wishes of the maid-servant!) was practiced by the founder of the "Abrahamic religions" (including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Mormonism), in that his wife, Sarah, gave him the Egyptian slave girl Hagar to be raped by Abraham.

148. If a man take a wife, and she be seized by disease, if he then desire to take a second wife he shall not put away his wife who has been attacked by disease, but he shall keep her in the house which he has built and support her so long as she lives.

Wow! Would that we had such a law! In contrast, a girl friend of mine when I was in grade school developed MS when she was in her thirties, and subsequently her husband abandoned her (and their children).

There is also a series of laws that can be summarized as "an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth", of course similar to what's in the Bible, which was patched together more than 1,000 years later! For example,

- 196. If a man put out the eye of another man, his eye shall be put out.
- 197. If he breaks another man's bone, his bone shall be broken.
- 200. If a man knocks out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out.

And then, there's an amazing series of laws dealing with various professions, including the medical profession, "barbering" (which seems to be more "branding" than what we would call "barbering"), construction, ship building, sailing, various "skilled artisans" (making pottery, rope, etc.), and so on. These laws reveal how substantially more advanced were the Babylonians than the Israelites who Moses allegedly led out of Egypt, about 500 years later.

Some of these "professional laws" deal with charges for various services. For example, for saving an eye, the specified medical fee was ten "shekels" for an upper-class man, five shekels for a freed man, and two for a slave. You can get some idea of the value of ten shekels from the law that states if a man strikes a fee-born pregnant women who subsequently loses her child from the blow, then he must pay her ten shekels.

Other laws deal with malpractice, for example, for medical malpractice, e.g.,

218. If a physician make a large incision with the operating knife, and kill him, or open a tumor with the operating knife, and cut out the eye, his hands shall be cut off.

This is another example of a law of questionable value (as with the laws about judges who make mistakes and about “bankers” who make poor investments): it’s rather surprising to me that, in Ancient Babylon, “doing one’s best” wasn’t considered “good enough” – one had to “do good”!

Similarly, for construction “malpractice”, there are (among other laws):

229. If a builder build a house for someone, and does not construct it properly, and the house which he built fall in and kill its owner, then that builder shall be put to death.

230. If it kills the son of the owner, the son of that builder shall be put to death.

Again, I wonder about the wisdom of these laws dealing with various professions, severely punishing judges, bankers, physicians, and builders for mistakes. Perhaps the root problem in those days (~4,000 years ago!) was inadequate training for such professions, and these harsh laws were needed to weed out charlatans, frauds, and quacks – save, of course, for the clerics!

But, Dear, although I hope you find Hammurabi’s laws as interesting as I did, my main purpose in going down this trail was (and still is!) to show you more about why belief in god is “even worse policy.” That is, what I want you to consider, now, is another aspect of Hammurabi’s code, namely, the aspect dealing with where he claimed he obtained the laws. In a later chapter, I’ll ask you compare Hammurabi’s claim with the clerics’ claim about where Moses obtained his laws.

Toward that goal, below I’ll show you some of the “preamble” to Hammurabi’s laws, where he shows his invocation to his prime “gods” (Anu, Bel, and Marduk). This is the same technique used by the clerics who wrote the Old Testament, having Moses invoke his god, Yahweh (misspelled by Christians as Jehovah). In Hammurabi’s preamble, please notice, also, his stated goal of his laws: “to further the well-being of mankind” – which we might hope would have been the goal of all laws ever written!

Yet, the skeptic in me thinks that Hammurabi's greater goal was to dupe his subjects, so that they wouldn't revolt and, thereby, so that he could maintain his power (and his underlying principle that "might makes right"). Support for my skepticism can be seen in his "epilogue", where he writes

If a succeeding ruler considers my words... If this ruler do[es] not esteem my words... May Bel, the lord, who fixeth destiny, whose command cannot be altered, who has made my kingdom great, *order a rebellion* [italics added] which his hand cannot control...

That is, Hammurabi seemed to have known well both that "might makes right" and that "rebellion" was always waiting in the wings to usurp his "might".

But more toward my point, in the "preamble" to his laws Hammurabi states the following [to which I've italicized some phrases (for reasons to be explained in a later chapter), added some punctuation, and included notes in "square brackets"; someone else (the translator?) added the notes in parentheses].

When Anu the Sublime (King of the Anunaki [which probably means "King of the gods"]) and Bel (the lord of Heaven and earth, who decreed the fate of the land) assigned to Marduk (the over-ruling son of Ea, God of righteousness) dominion over earthly man and made him great among the Igigi [the host of gods], they called Babylon by his illustrious name [maybe that means that cities were "male" – whereas, nowadays, cities are commonly considered "female"!], made it great on earth, and founded an everlasting kingdom in it, whose foundations are laid so solidly as those of heaven and earth.

Then Anu and Bel called by name me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land to destroy the wicked and the evil-doers [President G.W. Bush still uses the descriptor "evil-doers"!]; so that the strong should not harm the weak, so that I should rule over the black-headed people [does that suggest that Hammurabi wasn't "black headed"?] like Shamash, and enlighten the land, to further the well-being of mankind [which, actually, is a wonderful goal!].

Hammurabi, the prince, called of Bel am I, making riches and increase [as is demonstrated in my resume, which follows!]:

- Enriching Nippur and Dur-ilu beyond compare, sublime patron of E-kur;
- Who reestablished Eridu and purified the worship of E-apsu;

- Who conquered the four quarters of the world, made great the name of Babylon, rejoiced the heart of Marduk, his lord, [and] who daily pays his devotions in Saggil;
- The royal scion whom Sin [the Moon god] made;
- Who enriched Ur;
- The humble [riiiiight!], the reverent, who brings wealth to Gish-shir-gal;
- The white [not “black headed”? racist?!] king, heard of Shamash,
- The mighty, who again laid the foundations of Sippara;
- Who clothed the gravestones of Malkat with green;
- Who made E-babbar great, which is like the heavens;
- The warrior who guarded Larsa and renewed E-babbar, with Shamash as his helper;
- The lord who granted new life to Uruk, who brought plenteous water to its inhabitants, raised the head of E-anna, and perfected the beauty of Anu and Nana;
- Shield of the land, who reunited the scattered inhabitants of Isin;
- Who richly endowed E-gal-mach; the protecting king of the city, brother of the god Zamama;
- Who firmly founded the farms of Kish, crowned E-me-te-ursag with glory,
- [Who] redoubled the great holy treasures of Nana,
- [Who] managed the temple of Harsag-kalama;
- The grave of the enemy, whose help brought about the victory;
- Who increased the power of Cuthah;
- [Who was] made all glorious in E-shidlam, the black steer, who gored the enemy;
- [Who is] beloved of the god Nebo,
- Who rejoiced the inhabitants of Borsippa, the Sublime;
- Who is indefatigable for E-zida;
- The divine king of the city;
- The White, Wise [proud and racist!];
- Who broadened the fields of Dilbat;
- Who heaped up the harvests for Urash;
- The Mighty, the lord to whom come scepter and crown, with which he clothes himself;
- The Elect of Ma-ma;
- Who fixed the temple bounds of Kesh,
- Who made rich the holy feasts of Nin-tu;
- The provident, solicitous, who provided food and drink for Lagash and Girsu,
- Who provided large sacrificial offerings for the temple of Ningirsu;
- Who captured the enemy,
- [Who is] the Elect of the oracle
- [Who] fulfilled the prediction of Hallab,
- Who rejoiced the heart of Anunit;
- The pure prince, whose prayer is accepted by Adad;
- Who satisfied the heart of Adad, the warrior, in Karkar,
- *Who restored the vessels for worship in E-ud-gal-gal;*
- The king who granted life to the city of Adab;
- The guide of E-mach;

- The princely king of the city,
 - The irresistible warrior,
 - Who granted life to the inhabitants of Mashkanshabri, and brought abundance to the temple of Shidlam;
 - The White [racist?] Potent, who penetrated the secret cave of the bandits, saved the inhabitants of Malka from misfortune, and fixed their home fast in wealth;
 - *Who established pure sacrificial gifts for Ea and Dam-gal-nun-na,*
 - Who made his kingdom everlastingly great;
 - The princely king of the city, who subjected the districts on the Ud-kib-nun-na Canal to the sway of Dagon, his Creator;
 - Who spared the inhabitants of Mera and Tutul;
 - The sublime prince, who makes the face of Ninni shine;
 - Who presents holy meals to the divinity of Nin-a-zu, who cared for its inhabitants in their need, provided a portion for them in Babylon in peace;
 - The shepherd of the oppressed and of the slaves;
 - Whose deeds find favor before Anunit,
 - Who provided for Anunit in the temple of Dumash in the suburb of Agade;
 - Who recognizes the right, who rules by law;
 - *Who gave back to the city of Ashur its protecting god;*
 - Who let the name of Ishtar of Nineveh remain in E-mish-mish;
 - The Sublime, who humbles himself before the great gods [but not before anything else!];
 - Successor of Sumula-il;
 - The mighty son of Sin-muballit;
 - The royal scion of Eternity [which, I guess, is about as close as one can come to being God Almighty HIMself!];
 - The mighty monarch, the sun of Babylon, whose rays shed light over the land of Sumer and Akkad;
 - The king, obeyed by the four quarters of the world;
- Beloved of Ninni, am I.

When Marduk sent me to rule over men, to give the protection of right to the land, I did right and righteousness in... and brought about the well-being of the oppressed.

Now, Dear, I know that the above was a lot to read, but I hope you did read it, if for no other reason than because it's probably the oldest resume ever written – and I essentially guarantee you that, never again, will you read such a glorious resume: obviously written by someone who was madly in love with his own image (i.e., a narcissist) and obsessed with his great importance (a megalomaniac, from the Greek word *megas* meaning 'great').

In addition, though, notice how “devout” Hammurabi was: I gave up counting how many gods to whom he claimed “devotion”, but they included not only the principal gods but also all the gods of all the cities. That is (as I'll show you in a later chapter), just as each of the twelve tribes of Israel

* Go to other chapters *via*

had its own god in addition to one or more principal gods (such as Yahweh), in Hammurabi's time, each city had its special "protector" god.

Also, Dear, please consider the amazing "Epilogue" for his laws that Hammurabi wrote. In the quotation that follows, I've added the comments in square brackets; someone else added the notes in parentheses; also, in a few places, I've added italics.

Laws of justice that Hammurabi, the wise king, established. A righteous law and pious statute did he teach the land. Hammurabi, the protecting king am I. I have not withdrawn myself from the men whom Bel gave to me [nor abandoned] *the rule over whom Marduk gave to me*. I was not negligent, but I made them a peaceful abiding-place. I expounded all great difficulties; I made the light shine upon them. With the mighty weapons that Zamama and Ishtar entrusted to me, with the keen vision with which Ea endowed me, with the wisdom that Marduk gave me, I have uprooted the enemy above and below (in north and south), subdued the earth, brought prosperity to the land, guaranteed security to the inhabitants in their homes; a disturber was not permitted.

The great gods have called me. I [similar to the stories about Jesus, 2,000 years later!] am the salvation-bearing shepherd, whose staff is straight; the good shadow [there being both "good" and "evil" shadows or spirits!] that is spread over my city; on my breast [or "in my heart"] I cherish the inhabitants of the land of Sumer and Akkad; in my shelter I have let them repose in peace; in my deep wisdom have I enclosed them. That the strong might not injure the weak, in order to protect the widows and orphans, I have in Babylon, the city where Anu and Bel raise high their head, in E-Sagil, the Temple, whose foundations stand firm as heaven and earth, in order to bespeak justice in the land, to settle all disputes, and heal all injuries, set up these my precious words, written upon my memorial stone, before the image of me, as king of righteousness [similar to the title later given to various gods!].

The king who ruleth among the kings of the cities am I. My words are well considered; there is no wisdom like unto mine. [Not that I'm predisposed to bragging!] By the command of Shamash, the great judge of heaven and earth, let righteousness go forth in the land; by the order of Marduk, my lord, let no destruction befall my monument. In E-Sagil, which I love, let my name be ever repeated; let the oppressed, who has a case at law, come and stand before this my image as king of righteousness; let him read the inscription, and understand my precious words: the inscription will explain his case to him; he will find out what is just, and his heart will be glad, so that he will say:

"Hammurabi is a ruler, who is as a father to his subjects, who holds the words of Marduk in reverence, who has achieved conquest for Marduk over the north and south, who rejoices the heart of Marduk, his lord, who has bestowed benefits for ever and ever [amen!] on his subjects, and has established order in the land."

When he reads the record, let him pray with full heart to Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanit, my lady; and then shall the protecting deities and the gods, who frequent E-Sagil, graciously grant the desires daily presented before Marduk, my lord, and Zarpanit, my lady.

In future time, through all coming generations, let the king, who may be in the land, observe the words of righteousness that I have written on my monument; let him not alter the law of the land that I have given, the edicts that I have enacted; my monument let him not mar. If such a ruler has wisdom, and be able to keep his land in order, he shall observe the words that I have written in this inscription; the rule, statute, and law of the land that I have given; the decisions that I have made will this inscription show him; let him rule his subjects accordingly, speak justice to them, give right decisions, root out the miscreants and criminals from this land, and grant prosperity to his subjects.

Hammurabi, the king of righteousness, *on whom Shamash has conferred right (or law) am I*. My words are well considered; my deeds are not equaled; to bring low those that were high; to humble the proud, to expel insolence. If a succeeding ruler considers my words, which I have written in this my inscription, if he do not annul my law, nor corrupt my words, nor change my monument, then may Shamash lengthen that king's reign, as he has that of me, the king of righteousness, that he may reign in righteousness over his subjects.

If this ruler does not esteem my words, which I have written in my inscription, if he despises my curses, and fear not the curse of God, if he destroy the law that I have given, corrupt my words, change my monument, efface my name, write his name there, or on account of the curses commission another so to do, that man, whether king or ruler, patesi, or commoner, no matter what he be, may the great God (Anu), the Father of the gods, who has ordered my rule, withdraw from him the glory of royalty, break his scepter, curse his destiny.

- May Bel, the lord, who fixeth destiny, whose command can not be altered, who has made my kingdom great, order a rebellion which his hand can not control; may he let the wind of the overthrow of his habitation blow, may he ordain the years of his rule in groaning, years of scarcity, years of famine, darkness without light, death with seeing eyes be fated to him; may he (Bel) order with his potent mouth the destruction of his city, the dispersion of his subjects, the cutting off of his rule, the removal of his name and memory from the land.

- May Belit, the great Mother, whose command is potent in E-Kur [the Babylonian Olympus], the Mistress, who harkens graciously to my petitions, in the seat of judgment and decision (where Bel fixes destiny), turn his affairs evil before Bel, and put the devastation of his land, the destruction of his subjects, the pouring out of his life like water into the mouth of King Bel.

- May Ea, the great ruler, whose fated decrees come to pass, the thinker of the gods, the omniscient, who maketh long the days of my life, withdraw understanding and wisdom from him, lead him to forgetfulness, shut up his rivers at their sources, and not allow corn or sustenance for man to grow in his land.
- May Shamash, the great Judge of heaven and earth, who supporteth all means of livelihood, Lord of life-courage, shatter his dominion, annul his law, destroy his way, make vain the march of his troops, send him in his visions forecasts of the uprooting of the foundations of his throne and of the destruction of his land. May the condemnation of Shamash overtake him forthwith; may he be deprived of water above among the living, and his spirit below in the earth.
- May Sin (the Moon god), the Lord of Heaven, the divine father, whose crescent gives light among the gods, take away the crown and regal throne from him; may he put upon him heavy guilt, great decay, that nothing may be lower than he. May he destine him as fated, days, months and years of dominion filled with sighing and tears, increase of the burden of dominion, a life that is like unto death.
- May Adad, the lord of fruitfulness, ruler of heaven and earth, my helper, withhold from him rain from heaven, and the flood of water from the springs, destroying his land by famine and want; may he rage mightily over his city, and make his land into flood-hills (heaps of ruined cities).
- May Zamama, the great warrior, the first-born son of E-Kur, who goeth at my right hand, shatter his weapons on the field of battle, turn day into night for him [viz., a solar eclipse], and let his foe triumph over him.
- May Ishtar, the goddess of fighting and war [in former times the goddess of love!], who unfetters my weapons, my gracious protecting spirit, who loveth my dominion, curse his kingdom in her angry heart; in her great wrath, change his grace into evil, and shatter his weapons on the place of fighting and war. May she create disorder and sedition for him, strike down his warriors, that the earth may drink their blood, and throw down the piles of corpses of his warriors on the field; may she not grant him a life of mercy, deliver him into the hands of his enemies, and imprison him in the land of his enemies.
- May Nergal, the mighty among the gods, whose contest is irresistible, who grants me victory, in his great might burn up his subjects like a slender reedstalk, cut off his limbs with his mighty weapons, and shatter him like an earthen image.
- May Nin-tu, the sublime mistress of the lands, the fruitful mother, deny him a son, vouchsafe him no name, give him no successor among men.
- May Nin-karak, the daughter of Anu, who adjudges grace to me, cause to come upon his members in E-kur high fever, severe wounds, that can not be healed, whose nature the physician does not understand, that he cannot treat with dressing, which,

like the bite of death, can not be removed, until they have sapped away his life. May he lament the loss of his life-power.

- And may the great gods of heaven and earth, the Anunaki, altogether inflict a curse and evil upon the confines of the temple, the walls of this E-barra (the Sun temple of Sippara), upon his dominion, his land, his warriors, his subjects, and his troops.
- May Bel curse him with the potent curses of his mouth that can not be altered, and may they come upon him forthwith.

Well, Dear, you've gotta admit that the above is a beauty of a curse! But more to the point of this chapter, the above illustrates much of the Law Lie promoted by ancient leaders, much later to include Moses.

Yet, in spite of my obvious criticism of Hammurabi, some defense is appropriate. Maybe it's too harsh to say that he lied, because clearly he was totally convinced of the existence of these almost innumerable gods – even overwhelmed by them! Therefore, given what was quite likely his honest conviction that all these gods existed, then perhaps it's too harsh to say that he lied when he claimed that his laws were given to him by the gods. For all I know, he may have convinced himself that, when he conceived a particular law, the conception was actually a communication from one or another god.

But, Dear, I repeat: it's still a lie – in the sense of being an incorrect conclusion based on inadequate data. If I told you that, today, the sun actually rose in the west (rather than its usual procedure) and this evening it will set in east, then you might be polite and tell me that I'm just mistaken. Or you might say, "that couldn't be true!" And if I became sufficiently obnoxious, demanding that you accept my assessment, then I suspect that eventually you'd become sufficiently frustrated with me to yell: "No, Grampa, that's a lie!"

Well, Dear, similarly for me. All my life I have experienced a deluge of claims that "the Commandments" (i.e., the Bible's "thou shalt not this, that, and the other thing") are "laws" proclaimed by God HIMSELF. For years – even decades – I tried to be polite, responding to whoever was making the claim that they must be mistaken. But, Dear, the claims continue, and I'm "sick and tired" of responding to them politely. So now, Dear, similar to a certain grandchild's impatience, I plan to yell: "No, damn it, it's a lie!"

But especially, Dear, please again notice Hammurabi's use of the "law lie". In his preamble, he states:

...then [the gods] Anu and Bel called by name me, Hammurabi [sure they did!] the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil-doers [that is, I got my laws directly from the gods]; so that the strong should not harm the weak [and, hypocrite that I am, I could rule by "might makes right"!]....

Thus, Dear, Hammurabi clearly states two parts of the "law lie" that no doubt he would have claimed was "truth" from "ancient times": 1) leaders rule by authority of the gods, and 2) the laws come from the gods – the same two parts of the "law lie" that Moses reportedly perpetrated, about 500 years later. In later chapters, I'll show you that hundreds of years later, Manu in India and Minos in Crete did the same. In an attempt to bring some order to their societies, they created a set of laws (which, incidentally, were not nearly so advanced as Hammurabi's). And as all leaders had done for thousands of years before Hammurabi (and as most leaders did for thousands of years after him!), these leaders claimed that their laws were given to them by their gods. In fact – or at least in myth – Minos was said to be the son of his god (Zeus), and after his death, Minos' job was to judge the dead. And three thousand-or-so years later, people told my grandchildren the same lie. But, Dear, all data point to the obvious conclusion that all such claims are lies.

Well, Dear, although I've obviously taken up a lot of space with Hammurabi's laws, I hope that you see how fundamental they are to a part of my response to a certain, beautiful and intelligent four-year old granddaughter who asked me why I didn't believe in God. I said I'd respond when you're older. Earlier in this book, I tried to explain my summary response: "Because belief in god (any god) is bad science." Now, I can begin to explain the other part of my response: "Because belief in god is even worse policy."

As I'll try to show you in later chapters, one aspect of the "even worse policy" is that narcissistic megalomaniacs have frequently used the God Lie to dupe and ravage the people. Although data support the idea that some narcissistic megalomaniacs didn't bolster themselves with the God Lie (e.g., Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung), yet in chain of infamy that stretches from before Hammurabi (e.g., the Pharaohs of Egypt) through

* Go to other chapters *via*

Moses, Darius “the Great”, Alexander “the Great”, Julius Caesar, “Saint” Constantine (“the butcher Emperor”), Muhammad, popes and kings of Europe’s Dark Ages, Hitler, as well as various “bit players”, such as Joseph Smith (“the American Muhammad”) and Brigham Young of Mormon infamy, most narcissistic megalomaniacs crammed the God Lie down the people’s throats – and cut the throats of those who refused to swallow it.

Even when leaders weren’t quite so horrible, the Law Lie has caused other terrible social policies. For contrast, consider the enlightened social policy that Abraham Lincoln described so well: “Government [and laws] of the people, by the people, and for the people.” That’s the ideal to which humans have been struggling, ever since they came down from the trees: that laws *for the people* are created *by the people* for the benefit *of the people*. Yet, the damn clerics (as primitive legislators) perpetrated the lie that laws were created *by the gods* – neglecting to mention that this lie was *for the benefit of the clerics*. That is, throughout history, a horrible number of clerics (including current-day clerics of Islam and of the “Christian Right” – or better, the Christian “Reich”) have sought government of the people, by the gods, for the benefit of the clerics.

But enough generalities for now; I’ll show you details in later chapters. Meanwhile, Dear, there’s a detail that you’ve apparently been avoiding: Get some exercise!