

M2 – Misconceived Morality

Dear: I wouldn't be surprised if you objected to my linking religion to law. From the time you were a baby, you've been taught such concepts as "God is love", "Jesus is the prince of peace", and so on, while being taught nothing about the Law Lie. Therefore, I wouldn't be surprised if your first reaction to the ideas that I want you to consider in this chapter will be something similar to: "Poor old grampa, he just doesn't get it." If this were something similar to your reaction, Dear, my first response would be to plead with you to question what you've been taught. Please, Dear, never underestimate the religious delusions in our society. For thousands of years, religious "image makers" have been working overtime to determine what the gullible public will gobble up.

Yet, in spite of the depth and breadth of the clerics' mistakes, lies, and quackery (some details of which I'll show you in the "excursion" Yx entitled "Your Indoctrination in the Mountainous God Lie"), I admit that the ancient clerics deserve a lot of credit. They cooked up a scheme – they developed a "model" of the universe and of the role of humans within it – that, even today, children and simple-minded adults lap up as if it were warm chocolate milk! It's a deliciously simple scheme: some god-or-other made the universe; just like your own father, he'll punish you if you're bad (immoral) and reward you if you're good (moral); and we [the clerics] are here to tell you the difference – and of course "the good" includes paying us for telling you how to live your lives. (☹)

A MULTIFACETED GOD LIE TO MANIPULATE THE MASSES

But, Dear, if you don't "believe" me, then good! Again, I applaud your skepticism – but also, remember to dig into the data. I'll show you more data in later "excursions". For now, I'll show you just a few statements demonstrating that many ancient philosophers and historians saw through the entire ruse, seeing how priests and politicians used the multifaceted God Lie (for thousands of years!) to "manipulate the masses", i.e., people such as you and me. For example and as I quoted in an earlier chapter, the collusion between priests and politicians was well summarized more than 2,000 years ago by the Greek historian Polybius (~208 – ~126 BCE), who thereby summarized hundreds and even thousands of years of experience:

Since the masses of the people are inconsistent, full of unruly desires, passionate, and reckless of consequences, they must be filled with fears to keep them in order. *The ancients did well, therefore, to invent gods* [italics added] and the belief in punishment after death.

“The ancients”, to whom Polybius was referring, were probably the ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians, who were as ancient to him as the ancient Greeks are to us! Polybius saw clearly, that these “ancients” had *invented* gods to fill the people with *fear*, such as *punishment after death*, to keep the people *in order*.

Approximately 100 years after Polybius, the “historian” (or maybe better, “story teller”) Diodorus of Sicily (or Diodorus Siculus, ~90–21 BCE) said something similar:

The myths about Hades [Hell] and the gods, *though they are pure invention* [italics added], help to make men virtuous.

Approximately 100 years later, Seneca the Younger (Lucius Annaeus Seneca, ~4 BCE – 65 CE), a Spanish-born Roman philosopher, lawyer, orator, tutor, and counselor to the Roman Emperor Nero, also saw through the clerics’ ruse, stating:¹

Religion is regarded by the common people as true, by the wise as false, and by rulers as useful.

Additional examples (showing that ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, lawyers, statesmen, historians, etc., understood perfectly well that a mountainous god lie had been foisted on the people) were assembled by James M. Usher in his 1855 book entitled *The Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment*.² Immediately below, I’ve listed some of Usher’s examples, to which I’ve added the italics and some notes in brackets – and I’ve omitted his references:

¹ Actually, Dear, as you can find at http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Talk:Seneca_the_Younger, that quotation seems to be a misattribution. The true source may be a restatement of what Edward Gibbon wrote in his famous 1776 book *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: “The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful.”

² Available at <http://www.tentmaker.org/books/OriginandHistory.html>.

- Timaeus Locrus, the Pythagorean [~500 BCE] after stating that the doctrine of rewards and punishments after death is necessary to society, proceeds as follows: “For as we sometimes cure the body with unwholesome remedies, when such as are most wholesome produce no effect, *so we restrain those minds with false relations, which will not be persuaded by the truth...*”
- Plato [~428–348 BCE], in his commentary on Timaeus, fully endorses what he says... And Strabo says that “Plato and the Brahmins of India invented fables concerning *the future judgments of hell*” (Hades). And Chrysippus blames Plato for attempting *to deter men from wrong by frightful stories of future punishments...*
- Aristotle [384–322 BCE]: “It has been handed down in mythical form from earliest times to posterity, that there are gods and that the divine (Deity) compasses all nature. All beside this has been added, after the mythical style, *for the purpose of persuading the multitude, and for the interests of the laws and the advantage of the state.*”
- Cicero [106–43 BCE] speaks of them as “*silly absurdities and fables.*”
- Dionysius [of] Halicarnassus [~54 – ~7 BCE] treats the whole matter *as useful, but not as true.*
- Livy, the celebrated historian [59 BCE – 17 CE], speaks of it in the same spirit; and he praises the wisdom of Numa [the “Moses of the Romans”, who claimed to receive his laws from the gods] because he invented the fear of the gods, as “*a most efficacious means of governing an ignorant and barbarous populace.*”
- Strabo the geographer [~63 BCE – ~19 CE], says: “The multitude are restrained from vice by the punishments the gods are said to inflict upon offenders, and by those terrors and threatenings which certain dreadful words and monstrous forms imprint upon their minds... *For it is impossible to govern the crowd of women, and all the common rabble, by philosophical reasoning, and lead them to piety, holiness and virtue – but this must be done by superstition, or the fear of the gods, by means of fables and wonders; for the thunder, the aegis, the trident, the torches (of the Furies), the dragons, &c., are all fables, as is also all the ancient theology. These things the legislators used as scarecrows to terrify the childish multitude.*”
- Seneca [~4 BCE – 65 CE] says: “Those things which make the infernal regions terrible, the darkness, the prison, the river of flaming fire, the judgment seat, &c., *are all a fable...*”
- Plutarch [46–120 CE]... “*fabulous stories, the tales of mothers and nurses.*”
- Sextus Empiricus [~160–210 CE, a physician and skeptic, after whose name we have the word ‘empirical’] calls them “*poetic fables of hell.*”

By the time Christianity started, its leaders understood they were promoting lies – and yet continued to do so. Yet, to the credit of a few Christian clerics, they were knowledgeable enough and honest enough to admit that the entire scheme was a con game. For example, there's the famous statement by the "Church Father" Tertullian (150–225 BCE):

And the Son of God died; it is by all means to be believed, because it is absurd. And he was buried and rose again; the fact is certain because it is impossible.

To show you more examples, I'll quote from Volney's book, which I've referenced in earlier chapters and which I'll be urging you to read:

That we may understand the general feelings of priests respecting the rest of mankind, whom they always call by the name of "the people", let us hear one of the doctors of the church:

"The people," says Bishop Synnesius [Bishop of Alexandria in the fourth century of the Current Era (CE)]... "are desirous of being deceived, we cannot act otherwise respecting them. The case was similar with the ancient priests of Egypt, and for this reason they shut themselves up in their temples, and there composed their mysteries, out of the reach of the eye of the people."

And forgetting what he has before just said, he adds:

"for had the people been [aware of] the secret they might have been offended at the deception played upon them. In the meantime how is it possible to conduct one's self otherwise with the people so long as they are people? For my own part, to myself I shall always be a philosopher, but in dealing with the mass of mankind, I shall be a priest."

"A little jargon," says Geogory Nazianzen to St. Jerome...

"is all that is necessary to impose on the people. The less they comprehend, the more they admire. Our forefathers and doctors of the church [quacks!] have often said, not what they thought, but what circumstances and necessity dictated to them."

"We endeavor," says Sanchoniaton, "to excite admiration by means of the marvelous..."

Another example is from even the title of a chapter of a book written by the "Christian father" and "church historian" Eusebius (~264–340 CE):

How it may be Lawful and Fitting to use Falsehood [i.e., Lies] as Medicine and for the Benefit of those who Want to be Deceived.

As Usher wrote in his 1855 book (referenced above):

The object of this *sacred fraud* was to impress the minds of the multitude with religious awe, and command a more ready obedience on their part. Hence [Saint] Augustine [354–430 CE, “the first great Christian philosopher”] says in his *City of God*,

“This seems to have been done on no other account, but as it was the business of princes, out of their wisdom and civil prudence, *to deceive the people in their religion; princes, under the name of religion, persuaded the people to believe those things true, which they themselves knew to be idle fables...*”

Of course this deception continued throughout Europe’s Dark Ages, and it continues to this day throughout the world. For example, there’s the notorious statement attributed to Pope Leo X (1475–1521):

What profit hath not that fable of Christ brought us!

But as you can find on the internet, Dear, there are questions about the reliability of this attribution. There are, however, no questions about a similar comments made by a contemporary of Pope Leo X, namely, by Martin Luther (1483–1546, the leader of the break-away from the Catholic Church, which resulted in the appearance of so many “Christian sects” – as well as Mormonism). He wrote:

What harm would it do, if a man told a good strong lie for the sake of the good and for the Christian church?... a lie out of necessity, a useful lie, a helpful lie; such lies would not be against God; he would accept them. [I wonder if God would agree!]

In his text on political philosophy entitled *Du Contract Social* (which you can find on the internet), the French author Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) summarized and even praised this “manipulation of the masses” as follows, to which I’ve added some italics:

There is a further difficulty that deserves attention. Wise men, if they try to speak their language to the common herd [of people]... cannot possibly make themselves understood. There are a thousand kinds of ideas which it is impossible to translate into popular language. Conceptions that are too general and objects that are too remote are equally out of its range: each individual, having no taste for any other plan of government than that which suits his particular interest, finds it difficult to realize advantages he might hope to draw from the continual privations good laws

impose. For a young people to be able to relish sound principles of political theory and follow the fundamental rules of statecraft, the effect would have to become the cause; the social spirit, which should be created by these institutions, would have to preside over their very foundation; and men would have to be before law what they should become by means of law. The legislator therefore, being unable to appeal to either force or reason, must have recourse to an authority of a different order, *capable of constraining without violence and persuading without convincing*.

This is what has, in all ages, compelled the fathers of nations to have recourse to divine intervention *and credit the gods with their own wisdom*, in order that the peoples, submitting to the laws of the State as to those of nature, and recognizing the same power in the formation of the city as in that of man, might obey freely, and bear with docility the yoke of the public happiness. *This sublime reason... to constrain by divine authority those whom human prudence could not move.*

All of which was succinctly summarized by Emperor Napoleon (1769–1801): “**Religion is excellent stuff for keeping common people quiet.**”

Even today in our society, elected leaders put their hand on the Bible to swear an oath before God to uphold their duties – and the Lie. It’s the same lie that’s been buried under the foundation of every society that has led to ours (including those of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Israel, Persia, Greece, Rome, and of course throughout Europe during the Dark Ages). It’s the same lie (promoted by a collusion between priests and politicians) that’s promoted on our currency (with “In God we Trust”), in our pledge of allegiance (with “One nation under God”), in our courts (with the oath “So help me God”), in politics (with frequent repetition of the phrase “God bless you, and God bless America”), and in most marriage ceremonies (with “What God has put together, let no man put asunder”). Maybe you would begin to appreciate some of the idiocies in such statements, Dear, if in each one you’d substitute for the word ‘God’ the phrase “I dunno”! And maybe you, too, will become angry that you’ve being subjected to such lies.

Actually, though, Dear, I expect that most modern clerics and politicians aren’t so devious and cynical as suggested by the above quotations. For example, I wouldn’t be surprised if the vast majority of clerics (e.g., essentially all Islamic clerics, the large number of Catholic priests who are now preaching in this country and who are from backward countries, and also, most of the “lay clergy” in religions such as Mormonism) are so poorly educated they don’t realize that what they’re preaching is pure bunk. That is, I suspect that many clerics actually are “just” ignorant and “think” that what they preach is “true”.

Similarly for many if not most politicians: they're not elected because of their intelligence [☺], but because they've learned how to get votes from the majority of the people – realizing full well that half the people have below average intelligence and that more than half have been indoctrinated in religious balderdash. Yet, even if it's correct that most clerics are just dumb and most politicians are just out to get elected, those clerics and politicians sufficiently intelligent to climb in the ranks of their respective hierarchies almost certainly have sufficient intelligence to realize that what they're preaching is a pack of lies – but they continue to do, to profit from gaining power over “the people”.

And through it all, Dear, I hope you pity the poor people – and while you're at it, damn the parasite priests and their co-conspirators, i.e., the politicians (including all pharaohs and all kings, and including many recent presidents of this country, as well as many current members of Congress). But of more concern to me, pity the poor children, especially certain grandchildren, on whom this massive fraud has been perpetrated. Thus, Dear, just as you were told that, if you were “good”, Santa Claus would give you Christmas gifts, so, too, you were indoctrinated in the nonsense that if you're “good”, you'll get the greatest gift of all: eternal life in some imagined paradise.

As for how this fraud was perpetrated, Ingersoll summarized it well, and though I've quoted this before, I want to do it again:

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 schoolmaster 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.

Actually, as pointed out by Joseph Wheless in his book *Forgery in Christianity* (referenced in an earlier chapter), “Saint” Augustine (354–430), who along with “Saint” Paul was one the principal founders of Christianity, wrote something similar – writing about “pagan” religions:

The great Church Father, Bishop St. Augustine... was wise to the... mode of its incipience and the manner of its age-long persistence. The priests and the priest-taught, he tells, instilled the virus of superstition into their victims when “small and weak”, when they knew not [how] to resist or healthily to react against the contaminating inoculation; “then afterwards, it was necessary that succeeding generations should preserve the traditions of their ancestors, drinking in this superstition with their mother’s milk.” (Augustine, *City of God*, xxii, 6.)

But, Dear, I doubt if you appreciate the full extent of the Mountainous God Lie – and my doubt arises, because even after being exposed to it for more than 50 years, I hadn’t realized its extent until I began writing this book.

Further, if you think that I “don’t get it”, my response would be that, in fact, I do. I know that, when children and simple-minded adults are confronted with complicated concepts, they prefer to substitute apparent simplicity for real complexity. Concepts such as love, honor, truth, wisdom – as well as many laws – can seem complex, and ever since ancient people first confronted such concepts, they tried to circumvent or simplify the complexities by creating gods of truth, wisdom, law and order, and so on – as I’ll show you with examples as I proceed and in later “excursions”. Similarly, many people in modern times don’t understand the natural human emotion called ‘love’; so, they substitute the silly concept of God.

But even if you don’t “buy” that explanation, Dear, I don’t need to rely on it to proceed, because it’s not I who claims a coupling between religion and law: the “holy books” of the dominant and dominating organized religions of our culture make this claim!

Immediately, though, I can imagine the objections screamed by “believing” Christians (and Mormons): “The old fool doesn’t know the difference between the law and the gospel!” This old (and sick) argument is that the Jewish “Torah” (which is the first part of what Christians call the Old Testament) is a statement of God’s laws, but the “Gospel” (i.e., the New Testament, where “gospel” is Greek for “good news”) carries the good news that, through Jesus, God has forgiven Christians for their “original sin”, that Christians (and Mormons) can be “saved”, and that, through Jesus, people can gain eternal life.

As I’ve hinted at earlier and will describe in more detail in later chapters, this argument displays such an astoundingly warped sense of justice that it’s difficult to imagine that anyone who utters it is sane:

* Go to other chapters *via*

- That Adam and Eve “sinned” (when their fictitious god specifically excluded from them a knowledge of good and evil),
- That subsequent humans were guilty for the “sins” of Adam and Eve (we weren’t there; how could we be guilty?!), and
- That this “guilt” could be “atoned” by the “sacrifice” of someone who was advertised to be perfectly innocent, i.e., Jesus!

As an illustration of such “logic”, Dear, if ever you commit a crime, then your brother will be guilty until your sister is punished for your crime! This is the “good news” that Christians claim Jesus brought to the world! Well, it may be “good news” for the guilty (and the gullible and the insane and the clerical “lawyers” who’ve made fortunes chasing the resulting ambulances) – but for the rest of us, it’s just plain crazy.

But, Dear, even if you don’t accept my claim that I can thereby dismiss the critics who say there’s a difference between “the law” and “the gospel”, let me use various “holy books” to show you that these books explicitly link religion to law. Immediately below, I’ll show you linkages between religion and law in the dominant religions of our society (i.e., those that rely on the Bible); I’ll delay until later chapters showing you similar linkages in earlier religions (e.g., in the Hindu “bible”, the Vedas).

“HOLY-BOOK” CLAIMS THAT LAWS ARE FROM GOD

In the Bible, the linkage between religion and law first appears clearly in what is essentially the preamble to the “Commandments”, claimed to be given to Moses by God, complete with God’s warning (*Exodus 15, 26*), to which I’ve added the italics and (in all that follows) some notes in “square brackets”:

If only you [the Israelites] will obey the Lord your God, if you will do what is right in his eyes, if you will listen to his commands and keep all his statutes, then I will never bring upon you any of the sufferings which I brought on the Egyptians...

In essence, then, the clerics’ Moses allegedly said: here are the laws (the “commandments” or God’s “statutes”) and here is the punishment if you break them. The lie – and anyone who promotes this story is a liar, a fool, or insane – is to claim that these laws were from any god.

A similar coupling between religion and law is clear in Christianity and Mormonism. For example, one of the first public statements by the cleric's Jesus was reportedly as follows, here taken from *The King James Version* of the Bible (KJV) at *Matthew 5, 17*:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets [i.e., “the laws of the Old Testament”]: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Incidentally, Dear, a ‘jot’ is the Greek letter ‘i’, and in the Hebrew language, a ‘tittle’ is similar to a comma; so, a modern Bible might render the phrase as “not one ‘i’ will be undotted or one comma misplaced”.

In the Book of Mormon (allegedly given to Joseph Smith by one or another angel), Sidney Rigdon plagiarized the above passage as follows (*3 Nephi 12, 17*) – although Rigdon introduced some originality, with his astounding incompetence in English (complete with spelling and punctuation errors, and including a double negative):

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfill; For verily I say unto you, one jot nor one tittle hath not passed away from the law, but in me it hath all been fulfilled.

But Rigdon's incompetence and Smith's conniving aside, the point (according to Christian and Mormon clerics) is that Jesus main “mission” was to “fulfill” the laws of Moses.

How their Jesus supposedly “fulfilled... the law” is the same “good news” that I mentioned a few paragraphs ago and that I'll dig into, in detail, in later chapters. In sum, it's “Saint” Paul's desperate rationalization to try to overcome fear of his own death (by incorporating Zarathustra's ideas into Judaism) and to understand the death of Jesus. In essence, Paul concluded that God is such a tyrant and has such a warped sense of justice that he murdered his own innocent son to absolve those on whom he imposed the death penalty, namely, those who weren't guilty but who were descendants of someone (Adam and Eve) whom God had deceived – by not permitting them to know that “the good” was to obey him! So, according to Paul, the “good news” is that all of us “guilty people” (descendants of Adam and Eve) will be able to live forever – provided, of course, that we don't say that Paul lost his marbles.

But, for now, I don't want to dig deeper into such depravity. Instead, for now, I just want to make the point: it's not my idea, but the clerics', that the essence of Judaism, Christianity, and Mormonism is to promote "God's law". It is, however, a multi-faceted lie, because no laws ever came from any god (there are no gods!) and because the essence of all religions isn't about law, it's about order – especially the order that leads to clerics collecting on their con games!

But be that as it is (!), the third principle religion derived from the Bible, i.e., Islam (the first two being Judaism and Christianity, not counting Mormonism as a "principle religion") is built around the central idea that its "profit" (Muhammad) introduced some additional revisions to "the Law" – and of course he claimed that these revisions were conveyed to him *via* an angel (Gabriel, the Persian "messenger of the gods") direct from God (whom Muhammad called "Al-Lah", meaning "the God"). Thus, from Islam's "holy book", the Koran (or Qur'an):

Those who follow the messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write [i.e., Muhammad – although historians question the claim that he could neither read nor write] whom they will find described in the Torah [i.e., the Old Testament] and the Gospel [i.e., the New Testament]... he [Muhammad] will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make *lawful* for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul... [QS: 7: 157]

As for what Muhammad defined to be "lawful" (of course claiming Allah as his authority), these laws mostly deal with additional food that the people were permitted to eat and which women the men were permitted to "own". Thus, concerning food:

All food was lawful unto the Children of Israel, save that which Israel forbade... [QS: 3: 93]

Unto those who are Jews We forbade every animal with claws. And of the oxen and the sheep forbade We unto them the fat thereof, save that upon the backs or the entrails or that which is mixed with the bone. That we awarded them for their rebellion. And lo! we verily are truthful. [QS: 6: 146]

Muhammad then proceeded to describe what's "lawful" for Muslims to eat. But rather than describe the diet for humans that some giant Jabberwock in the sky allegedly laid down as "the law", let me show you some of God's interest in the sexual exploits of men (according to Muhammad):

O Prophet! Lo! We [i.e., Allah] have made lawful unto thee thy wives unto whom thou hast paid their dowries, and those whom thy right hand possesseth [i.e., slaves] of those whom Allah hath given thee as spoils of war [so, women captured in war can be raped at will], and the daughters of thine uncle on the father's side, and the daughters of thine aunts on the father's side, and the daughters of thine uncle on the mother's side, and the daughters of thine aunts on the mother's side who emigrated with thee, and a believing woman if she give herself unto the Prophet and the Prophet desire to ask her in marriage – a privilege for thee only, not for the [rest of the] believers... [QS: 33: 50].

Thus, Allah, **HIM**self, said that men could rape their slaves (e.g., women taken as “spoils of war”) and gave special privileges to Muhammad, when it came to which women he could absorb into his harem – apparently including a six-year old child, when he was fifty four! Not, of course, that I question who actually concocted this law, with its special privileges for Muhammad, for who am I to call Muhammad a liar. Instead, I'll just repeat what his child bride (Aisha) said to him (according to *al-Siyuti* v.6, p.629):

Verily [Muhammad], your lord is ever quick to fulfill your whims and desires.

Yet, Dear, although you (and Aisha) might easily scoff at the idea that God dictated such laws to Muhammad, I urge you to apply similar skepticism to what has been foisted on you. For example, look into details of how the ‘profit’ Joseph Smith lived: although he didn't match the pedophilia of Muhammad (who married Aisha when she was six, treated her as a sex toy until she was nine, and then had sex with her), yet Smith had sex with one of his three or four dozen wives when she (Helen Kimball) was only fourteen.

More to the point about “the Law Lie”, I'd urge to look into details of the “commandments” in the Bible. If you do (for example, if you take the “excursions” **Qx** and **Yx**), I certainly expect that you, too, will conclude that the contention is preposterous that these “commandments” (or “laws” or “moral absolutes”) were communicated to anyone from any god. Instead, all the Bible's “commandments” are simply part and parcel of a power grab by parasitic priests. To begin to illustrate what I mean, consider the claimed “moral absolutes” known as the Bible's “Ten Commandments”.

EVALUATING THE “TEN COMMANDMENTS”

No sane person can accept the Bible’s Ten Commandments as “moral absolutes”, because they’re riddled with idiocies. To show you what I mean, below I’ll quote three versions of the Ten Commandments, first from the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible (given in *Exodus 20*), then from the Book of Mormon (BoM, given in *Mosiah 12 & 13* [with some notes added in “square brackets”], and then from the New English Bible (NEB). Notes in “squiggly brackets” {such as these} are from footnotes in the NEB text. At places in the quotations, I’ve added the Latin word *sic* (meaning “so, thus”), to indicate (as is common) that “the quotation is exactly as it stands in the original”. After presenting the three versions of each Commandment, I’ll add a few comments and/or questions for your consideration.

Commandment #1:

KJV: I am the Lord thy God, which [sic] have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods [sic] before [sic] me.

BoM: I am the Lord thy God, who [sic!] hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other God [sic] before [sic] me.

NEB: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other god {or gods} to set against me [sic].

What I would have you consider, Dear, is derived from the question: if there’s only one god (who reportedly created the universe), then what’s the point of commanding people not to worship any other god (“before” or “against” this one god)? Why not command followers to believe in only one god? It would then logically follow that this one god would be the only god worshiped. Instead, from Commandment #1, the conclusion follows that, “in fact”, many gods exist, but that this god (Yahweh or Jehovah) demands that he (or she? or it?) be recognized as “Numero Uno”, “the top god”, or (sorry) “the top dog”!

In fact, the resulting confusion about how many gods there are (or were) has caused enormous strife between and among different religious groups. For example and as I’ll show you in **Yx**, after the Jews were defeated by the new Babylonian Empire (in turn, later defeated by the Persians), the Jewish clerics (who then modified their religion to conform to the Persian religion) had their chief god, Yahweh, kill off all the other gods (described in the Bible in *Psalms 82*). But killing all the other gods must have been rather hard

to do, since all gods were (☺) notorious for being immortal! Later, Christian clerics confused the issue even more by saying that, somehow, their Jesus was both God's son and also God; in fact they claim that three (God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit) are one. In contrast, Muslim clerics maintain that there always was just one god (Al-Lah), while Mormon clerics propose that, after "good people" die, they all become gods! As a minimum, these different data-less speculations cause confusion; in reality, they have caused enormous strife, with each group demonstrating that it's quite willing to kill the horrible people (i.e., the "infidels") who don't believe such wild speculations.

Commandment #2:

KJV: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth [as if the ground is floating on water?!]: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

BoM: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing in heaven above, or things [sic] which are in the earth beneath... or which are in the water under the earth... [In the 1800s, Sidney Rigdon thought that there was "water under the earth"?!] Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

NEB: You shall not make a carved image for yourself nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship {or be led to worship} them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous god. I punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me. But I keep faith with thousands {or for a thousand generations} with those who love me and keep my commandments.

Dear: are you really prepared to go along with this commandment? "Thou shalt not make... any likeness of any thing..."? Do you really agree to create no "likenesses": no drawings? no paintings? no carvings? no sculptures?

As you can find on the internet, such an interpretation constrained all religious Jews from becoming artists, sculptors, and similar, until 1844, when some council of rabbis decided to interpret this Commandment differently from what's obvious. But then, I imagine they were forced to re-interpret the obvious, because whereas a written description of something (e.g., your dog) attempts to give a likeness of him (using words), then it's clear that Commandment #2 also forbids anyone from writing anything descriptive about God! That would mean the clerics violated Commandment #2 by writing their "holy book"! And you can bet that they then scrambled to reinterpret its meaning!

But even ignoring such silliness, Dear, do you really "buy into" this Commandment? God doesn't want you to worship any "graven images" because why? God's jealous?! Not because such worship wouldn't be good for you, but because HE's jealous? The all-powerful creator of the universe becomes jealous if ant-like humans worship statues? The all-good, omnipotent, omniscient God has such a pathetic weakness as to be jealous?

In Commandment #10 (below), God allegedly told humans not to "covet" (e.g., not be jealous) – and yet, God admits he's jealous? Of what? That ant-like humans recognize some other god? What is this: a popularity contest among the gods? And if the Commandment not to covet (e.g., covet fans or admirers or believers) is required of humans, then shouldn't God, HIMself, also follow it? Is the giant Jabberwock in the sky a giant hypocrite: "Do as I say; not as I do"?

Further, Dear, suppose you did have the audacity to create a drawing or paint a picture or carve some image, and suppose you did "take a liking" to your creation, then what? God will punish you for breaking HIS commandment? Oh no: not just that! The giant Jabberwock informs us (at least, so we're told in the Bible) that HE will punish the children for the sins of the fathers [and mothers?] to the third and fourth generations!

Really? I hope not, Dear, because if so, then I guess I "otta" make a confession. I'm sorry to report, Dear, that, on occasion, I have painted and carved. Oh, I agree that my productions were sins, i.e., they weren't very good! So now, "second generationer", I'm afraid that you're gonna get punished for my sins, as will your children and your children's children.

And of course I agree that there's no justice in that. Of course I agree that only the guilty should be punished for their crimes, but who am I to question the judgment of the giant Jabberwock in the sky. I'm afraid the plan is that, for eternity, you're gonna get your toenails pulled off (or whatever) because of my poor paintings. On the other hand, maybe this Commandment #2 is all hoey, cooked up by some crazy clerics to make sure their followers didn't start paying some other clerics who were running some other con game. But that's just a thought that needs evaluation.

Yet, it isn't a totally idle thought: as I'll show you in **Yx**, after the Jews were overrun by the Babylonians and the Jewish clerics were later taught the Persian religion (Zoroastrianism, which is the essence of the later part of the Old Testament and all of the New Testament), then we're told that, "lo and behold", the giant Jabberwock in the sky changed Commandment #2. Thus, in *Ezekiel 18, 19*, we're told of the (Persian) revision:

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

Which makes one wonder: exactly which version of the Commandments does the giant Jabberwock in the sky (and the clerics and politicians down here on earth) want us to obey? Are more revisions yet to come? And oh, by the way, Giant Jabberwock: what's this (in the above quote) about immortal souls dying? I thought that 'immortal' meant "non-dying". Have you considered using a dictionary before you come out with another edict?!

Commandment #3:

KJV: Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

BoM: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

NEB: You shall not make wrong use of the name of the LORD your God; the LORD will not leave unpunished the man who misuses his name.

I copied the quotes exactly, Dear, using 'LORD' in the quotes from the KJV and the NEB (because that's the way it appears in these books, i.e., all capital letters) but using 'Lord' in the quotation from the Book of Mormon (because that's the way it appears in the BoM), to make an obvious point.

Thus, Dear, I'm sorry to report that the Book of Mormon obviously makes wrong use of the Lord's (whoops, the LORD's) name, so I'm afraid that the Lord (whoops, LORD) "will not hold [all Mormons] guiltless", for misusing his name. Sorry about that, Dear, but it looks like you just finished zapping three or four generations that follow you!

Of course, again there's the possibility that all of this nonsense was designed by some clerics trying to hoodwink their followers into treating their imagined God with "reverence", to ensure that their collection plates would be filled. But I suppose that's another decision, Dear, that you'll need to make for yourself, from your own evaluation. Shucks, it might even stimulate someone to challenge God:

"Lord (whoops, LORD), if I may be so bold as to speak to you directly, exactly what do you mean by taking your name 'in vain'? For example, suppose I saw how much evil all the clerics of the world have done and continue to do, by claiming that they could speak for you and proposing a bunch of asinine commandments in your name. Then suppose (of course, as a totally hypothetical example, not meaning to take anybody's name in vain) that I then proceeded to 'damn' all the clerics of the world, calling them a bunch of God-damn fools. Then, in this case, would I be taking your name 'in vain'?"

"Or are you more concerned with direct insults to you? – being as jealous as you reportedly are (although I wonder if someone was taking your name 'in vain' by describing you as 'jealous'). Thus, again as a totally hypothetical example, solely to get the rules straight, suppose I said:

'God, you're a fool for being jealous. I mean: what's to be jealous about? Did another God make a better universe? Did another God not screw his world up so badly, not needing to kill off his first productions in a worldwide flood? Even if so, you're still foolish to be jealous, because nobody down here knows that the other God is more competent than you.'

"So then, God, tell me: was that using your name in vain? Or would you prefer that everyone did as the Jews do: never mention your name? Or does that make you even more jealous? Do I hear you whine: 'How come all the other gods get called by their names, but the Jews never call me by mine?'"

"In fact, when you get right down to it, God, perhaps you'd kindly explain just exactly what you mean by 'in vain'? Do you mean that using your name is useless (i.e., its use is 'in vain'), because you're not listening? Or is using your name useless ('in vain') because you don't exist? Does that mean that the whole 'god-business' is a ruse, a con game, cooked up by crafty clerics to avoid working for a living? Hmm... then it would follow that ANY use of your name would be in vain. I see."

Commandment #4:

KJV: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

BoM: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; But the seventh day, the sabbath of the Lord thy God, thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth; and the sea, and all that in them is [Rigdon omitted the part about God getting tired and then taking a break on the seventh day!]; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

NEB: Remember to keep the sabbath day holy. You have six days to labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; that day you shall not do any work, you, your son or your daughter, your slave or your slave-girl, your cattle or the alien within your gate; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and on the seventh day he rested. Therefore, the Lord blessed the sabbath day and declared it holy.

“Most interesting, God old sport, but if you don’t mind a little more direct communication, I wonder if you could enlighten me a little. I’m a bit perplexed by a few points:

- First, tell me: were you or were you not tired after your six days’ effort? If you were, I then wonder why snapping your fingers (or whatever) to create the universe wore you out so badly. How is it that someone who’s ‘all powerful’ (‘omnipotent’) gets tired so easily?
- Second, I wonder if you have given the whole matter sufficient thought for the modern world. For example, what about people in the medical profession? Do you mean that they’re not to save someone on ‘the sabbath’? What about people who fight fires? What about members of the police force? What if the electric power goes out or the natural gas stops flowing on the hottest or coldest day of the year, which also occurs on one of your ‘sabbaths’? Should old people just be left to freeze to death or die from heat exhaustion? I mean, it’s one thing to say that my cattle aren’t supposed to work on the sabbath day (I don’t have any cattle, anyway), but I really question the wisdom of shutting down the emergency rooms at the hospital, the police and fire departments, and so on. Let me put it this way: whereas, apparently, you’re quite willing to submit revisions to your commandments, how about giving this one a little more thought and then submitting a revision for our consideration?

- Third, I wonder about your thoughts on the modern idea of a five-day work-week (or other schedules, such as four, 10-hour work days per week, or the schedule that leads to 80 hours of work every two week with every second weekend a three-day weekend). In this Commandment that's alleged to be written in your name, it's stated quite clearly 'Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work...', so does that mean that all people who work a five-day week are horrible sinners, destined to get their toenails torn off (or whatever) for eternity? And I guess that my question boils down to: what do you mean by 'work'? What do you mean by 'labor'? If a man 'works out' on your sabbath, is that working? Suppose he has fun 'working' in his garden; is that 'working'? Further, why don't women get even a single day off? Suppose she's the 'bread winner' of the family and her husband is the 'home maker'; then, who gets to 'goof off' on your sabbath? And for that matter, what about all your clerics? Do they work or not? What are they supposed to do on your sabbath? Goof off? Hmmm – good thinking!
- And fourth, what exactly do you mean by making the seventh day 'holy'. After each day's worth of creating stuff, you reportedly described your creation as 'good'. Now you tell every one to similarly work six days; I assume you think that would also be 'good'. But then you want us to 'goof off' on the seventh day (except, apparently, the women, who weren't included in your list of people and cattle that were to 'goof off'); so, is 'goofing off' better than working? Do you mean that 'Joe six pack' has it right: sit around all day on the sabbath, drinking beer, watching a ball game on TV? Then, is the especially 'holy person' one who doesn't work on any day? Such as the clerics? In fact, what's the chance that this special day was invented by the clerics, to make sure everyone was in attendance to fill up their collection plates? Would you mind dropping back down, soon, to straighten this out?
- And while you're at it, maybe you'd like to straighten out another little matter. You allegedly told us that 'on the sabbath... your slave or your slave-girl' needn't work. But I wonder if you might want to revise this statement, to somehow suggest that people should do their own work and not own slaves. I mean, while you have the people's attention, wouldn't it be a good idea to... Ah, well, just something for you to think about, in case you'd like to leave the impression that you're a nice god, rather than a god-damn fiend."

Commandment # 5:

KJV: Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

BoM: Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

NEB: Honour your father and your mother, that you may live long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

Notice, Dear, that finally with Commandment #5, we're getting down to something practical. A summary of the first four Commandments is: every seventh day, everyone is required to pay the clerics for running their con games. But here, with Commandment #5 (and for the rest of the Ten), we're starting to deal with some rules for how people should deal with other people rather than clerics. [And yes, Dear, I realize that, as written, that sentence has another interpretation – that's why I didn't change it!]

As you might expect, I have fewer complaints with this Commandment #5 (and with the rest of the Ten) – but still, I'd advise you to replace all of them with: **use your brain as best you can**. Thus, Dear, generally it's a good idea to honor your parents, i.e., take due regard for their desires. And the reason is obvious: under normal circumstances, no one except you will try harder to help you than will your parents. Therefore, give due deliberation to their advice. That doesn't mean, however, that you should always do as they recommend: even ideal and intelligent parents have had a set of "life experiences" different from yours; their views and values are different from yours; you must do your own evaluations and make your own decisions.

Further, the above recommendations to "honor your parents" are appropriate only for "normal circumstances". For all circumstances, all children should use their brains as best they can. For all circumstances, children shouldn't just "honor" their parents but "evaluate" them. Unfortunately, parents in many cases deserve zero "honor" or "respect". What if the father abandons his children or is an alcoholic who physically abuses his wife and children? What if the mother is a drug addict? What if... and so on. That is, Dear, the "moral absolute" to "honor the father and mother" is dumb: honor them only if they deserve to be honored! **Use your head!**

Further, Dear, notice what the clerics are promising (if you will "honor your father and your mother"). They don't promise that you'll get to heaven (or whatever), but "that you may live long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you." Yet, even this offer is apparently limited: many kids honor their parents, but the kids are killed in an accident, die from some disease, or similar. What then of God's promise?

In addition, think about what might be meant by "the land which the Lord your God is giving you." How can any land be given to anyone? A few handfuls or a few truckloads of land can be given to a person, but not much

more, and certainly not a whole country. In general, land can't be given to people: people don't own land, they own only rights to use a plot of land – with these “rights” defined by other people. As someone else said: “People don't own the land; the land owns the people.” Thus, even if you obey this commandment (this “moral absolute”), the promised payback is bogus.

Instead of such nonsense, why couldn't the stupid clerics have written something reasonable, such as:

“Children, normally you should listen to your parents' advice, not only because they're more experienced than you but also because no one besides you will try harder to help you in your pursuit of your goals. But in general, children, just use your brain as best you can – and should you be in doubt, then ask your old grandfather with the beard: he's the one whom you should always honor.”

[Sorry, Dear, I sorta slipped that last part in – but it seems to me to be a better commandment than all the others listed!]

Commandments #6 – # 10

KJV: Thou shalt not kill [sic].

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness [sic] against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

BoM: Thou shalt not kill [sic].

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness [sic]...

Thou shalt not covet...

NEB: You shall not commit murder [sic].

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not give false evidence [sic] ...

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, his slave, his slave-girl, his ox, his ass, or anything that belongs to him.

“Surely my grandfather isn't gonna complain about these!” exclaimed the grandchild. “Wanna bet?” responded the grandfather!

Dear: Of course these “rules” are generally okay, but as “moral absolutes”, they’re absolutely asinine. For example, if someone is coming at you with a knife, then forget about any crap about “Thou shalt not kill.” Grab your gun and blow his brains out! (Or actually, Dear, don’t take time to aim at his head; aim at the largest target: his upper body or “torso”.)

And actually, Dear, I suspect that the group that wrote the New English Bible saw the stupidity in “Thou shalt not kill” and therefore modified it to “You shall not [viz., thou shalt not] commit murder.” But as a “moral absolute”, “Thou shalt not murder” is just as idiotic, because it leaves wide open the question: When is killing ‘murder’? or When is murder justified? Answering such questions requires a huge body of law, examination of all appropriate evidence, and substantial evaluations. Thus, in either form (“Thou shalt not kill” or “You shall not commit murder”), Commandment #6 is a pathetic oversimplification, appropriate only for people with the mentality of clerics – not for reasonable humans living in the real world.

Similarly for the next three “commandments”. According to my dictionary, ‘adultery’ is “voluntary sexual intercourse between a married man and a woman not his wife, or between a married woman and a man not her husband.” Such voluntary sexual relations are the business only of the husband and wife; there can be a thousand-and-one reasons why adultery is not only agreed upon by a married couple but even encouraged. The rest of us should mind our own business – and the clerics of the world should mind their own god-damn business.

As for “Thou shalt not steal”, it, too, should be replaced by “**Use your brain as best you can.**” And while using your brain as best you can, Dear, questions dealing with stealing that you’ll probably need to evaluate include: What are the bases for the claims of ownership? Did someone previously steal what rightfully belongs to the accused “thief”? What are the circumstances? Is a father stealing food for his starving children from a landlord who gained control of the land by fraud or corruption? That is, Dear, this commandment is meaningless until a huge number of circumstances are investigated to determine the meaning of ‘steal’.

And similarly for “Thou shalt not bear false witness”. Dear: life isn’t that simple. If a potential murderer asks you if you know the location of his intended victim, then if it’s safe for you, by all means “bear false witness”. How can any religious Jewish person, for example, continue to put any

“faith” in this commandment? When the Nazi SS troopers were searching for Jews hidden in Germany, would the rabbis have “an informant” say: “I can not bear false witness; I can not give false evidence; the Jew for whom you’re looking, so you can kill him, is hiding in that person’s house.”

On a less dramatic scale, Dear, even if the dinner you just ate was the crummiest meal you ever had, there are circumstances when you should “bear false witness”: if your mother is “stressed out” and feels that she’s a failure, do try to ease her burdens and to cheer her up; do tell her that it was a great meal. The point is, “bearing false witness” or “lying” is sometimes the better moral choice; i.e., *use your brain as best you can; try to be kind, with keenness; try to make sure that when you lie it’s not primarily for your own benefit.* As the poet William Blake wrote ~200 years ago:

*A truth that’s told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent.*

For example, Dear, consider the clerics’ Jesus. For the moment, give the crazy Christian clerics the benefit of the doubt: assume that he really did think that he was the son of god (rather than the illegitimate son of the Roman soldier Pandera). Then, should he have told what he considered to be “the truth” (i.e., that he was the son of “the good god” that made light and not “the bad god”, Yahweh, who made mass)? Should he have told this “truth” when, as he reportedly said, he knew that the consequences would be the disintegration of innumerable families? While wondering about the answer, Dear, please read Blake’s couplet again.

I’d ask you, further, to consider the question: When is it acceptable and even commendable to lie? According to my dictionary, the most common meanings of the verb ‘lie’ are “to say something that is not true in a conscious effort to deceive somebody” or “to give a false impression.” As I’ll show you in **Yx**, in ancient Persia the rule was: never lie. In most modern societies, however, it’s acceptable and sometimes even commendable to lie – when the purpose of the lie is, not to benefit yourself, but to benefit someone else. Thus in our society, the “acceptability” of a lie depends on the liar’s goals. [Lying, however, can be quite dangerous, because the liar is assuming an astounding (and highly unlikely) capability to foresee all possible consequences of the lie.]

And if you don't see what I mean, Dear, then let me ask you a question:
Was it right for your parents to lie to you, telling you about Santa Claus?

"I dunno. What do you think?"

That's my grandchild: amazingly competent at ducking a question by asking another!
Okay, so maybe I didn't ask the question well. Tell me, then: on a scale from -10 to +10 (from really bad to really good), where would you place the "moral value" of parents telling their children that Santa Claus delivers presents to good little boys and girls, when the parents know that it's all a lie?

"Are you asking me what's the moral value of telling lies?"

Child: you're not gonna get away with that again! Okay, then, what's your opinion about the moral value of telling lies?

"It depends."

Child!

"Well, it does! It depends on the intent and on the consequences."

Oh? Do tell.

"Well, if you tell a lie to try to benefit yourself at someone else's expense (such as telling the lies that you didn't eat the chocolate bar and that your brother did), then that has a pretty low moral value (maybe a -7). But if you tell a lie to try to help someone else (such as telling people they look really good today when they don't), then that can have a pretty high moral value (maybe a +3)."

How come only a +3?

"Cause the moral value of any act also depends on the consequences."

How so?

"Grampa: don't play dumb!"

Who's playin'? Tell me why telling people they look good, when they don't, only scores a +3 on your moral scale?

"Cause it depends on the consequences: if the person really doesn't look good, but looking good is important for whatever the person plans to do, then the consequences of your lie can be to hurt?"

For instance.

“Well, for instance, suppose that the person is a girl going to a party. Suppose she tries on a green sweater, and asks you how she looks. If you say she looks good in her green sweater, when it’s really not right for the party, then your telling a lie won’t help her. Instead, say something like: ‘Well, green looks good on you, but for the party, I think you’d look better in pink.’”

How’d a little skunk like you get so smart?

“Would it make you happy if I said ‘it’s in my genes’?”

Child! But, if you’re so smart, then tell me: what’s the moral value of trying to make other people happy?

“Well, that’s usually pretty high – maybe a +8. But as my grampa used to say (when he was smarter), ‘ya gotta use your head’.”

Well, I’ll let that snide comment pass for a while and move on to ask you what you mean: Why isn’t making others happy always the right thing to do?

“Well, it depends on what is meant by ‘happy’: sometimes it’s better, in the long run, to make a person sad in the short term, so they’ll be happier in the long run.”

Say what?

“Well, for example with that girl and her green sweater. She might have been planning all day to wear her green sweater and was happy doing it. So, you’d make her unhappy to tell her the truth that the green sweater wasn’t right for the party, but in the longer run, at the party, she’d be happier.”

And how do you know that?

“Oh, sure, you don’t. But as my grampa used to say: ‘Ya gotta use your head. The best you can do is the best you can’.”

Well, then, if you’re so smart, how about answering my original question?

“Which was?”

Oh, you’re not gonna get away with that! What’s your opinion about the moral value of your parents telling you that there’s a Santa Claus?

“If I answer that question, then you’re just gonna ask me about the moral value of their telling me there’s a God. How dumb do you think I am? Who’s grandchild do you think I am? Do you think that he’s a complete idiot?”

Okay, if I can't get anywhere with that one, let me turn to maybe the worst of the idiocies in these "Commandments", i.e., #10's: "Thou shalt not covet..." including thou shalt not covet your neighbor's slave. Dear: please DO covet your neighbor's slave – so you can set him or her free!

More generally, Dear, there's nothing wrong with 'coveting' (which means: "to want ardently... long for with envy"). Dear: if your neighbor has a bucket of water and you haven't had any liquid for a week, I absolutely guarantee you, not only that you'll "covet" your neighbor's water, but that there's absolutely nothing wrong with such coveting! The "moral question" is not if you covet something, but why – and more importantly, what you intend to do about it. It's not immoral to think; it's not immoral to have emotions; morality deals with acts!

A BASIC MORAL CHOICE

As I've tried to show you in earlier chapters, Dear, the morality of any act is merely a measure of how the act promote our goals. Thereby, always the most moral act for you (a +10 on a scale that runs from -10 to +10) is to use your brain as best you can; in a word, **Evaluate!** Thereby, morality has nothing to do with any gods or any other "supernatural source". As I'll begin to show you in the next chapter, the result of such stupidity (especially the idiocy that morality is dictated by some giant Jabberwock in the sky) has resulted in what I call "a god-awful mess of muddled moralities".

Of course the clerics of our culture claim that there's no muddle. As far as they're concerned, some giant Jabberwock in the sky occasionally drops down to Earth to relay, in various "revelations", his "commandments" for how people are to behave. Such "commandments", according to the con-artist clerics, are "moral absolutes", not to be evaluated, not to be tampered with, not to be... anything – except, obeyed!

And of course I totally disagree – not only with the clerics' claim that their "laws" were provided by "divine revelation" but also with their claim that any of their "laws" are "moral absolutes". Even in the case of commandments dealing with 'kindness' and 'love', although I generally agree that such concepts provide a fairly good basis for interactions among people (and dolphins!), yet I urge you, Dear, to practice **kindness with keenness** and **love within limits**.

As another example, when Christian and Mormon clerics repeat the commandment to “love one’s enemy”, I hope (and trust), Dear, that you’ll not only question anyone’s attempt to force you to feel an emotion through any commandment but also define appropriate limits for your love. Further and similarly, as I tried to show you above, the “Ten Commandments” of our culture shouldn’t be treated as “moral absolutes”: thou shalt not kill except... thou shalt not bear false witness except... and so on. In fact, Dear, during my whole life the only “moral absolute” I have ever encountered is: always use your brain as best you can, i.e., **Evaluate!**

Meanwhile, you’ve been taught otherwise. Ever since you were a baby, you’ve been taught that morality was defined by the creator of the universe, and that this giant Jabberwock in the sky (the original symmetry-breaking quantum-like fluctuation in a total void?!) relayed his (its?) proclamations about morality *via* “divine revelation” through various “profits” (whoops, prophets), as recorded in the “revealed wisdom” of the “holy books” of your church. Never once, however, have you been provided with even the tiniest shred of data to support the wild speculations that any giant Jabberwocky in the sky told anybody anything! Further, Dear, if you’ll invest the time to investigate the history of these wild speculations (some of which I’ll show you in **Yx**), I hope you’ll see that such claims were colossal mistakes by primitive people, mistakes that have been perpetuated and perpetrated into the present by fools and liars (and worse) – commonly known as priests and politicians.

And actually, Dear, you can see their perversions more clearly if you make an additional comparison between the Bible’s “Commandments” and my recommended “personal moral imperative”, **Evaluate!** Before starting the comparison, however, I want to remind you of something that I mentioned in an earlier chapter (**E**): if ever you’re asked to reduce your grandfather’s entire book to a single word, I hope you’ll summarize it with the word **Evaluate!** Now, Dear, I want to challenge you to do something. First, though, cover up what follows with something (your hand, a piece of paper, or whatever), and expose it only as you read – beginning NOW!

Okay, now I challenge you to reduce the entire Bible (and, for that matter, the Koran and the Book of Mormon, also) to a single word. Try to identify the single word that conveys the essence of any “holy book’s” entire message, just as I claim that the single word **Evaluate!** conveys the essence of this book. Have you done it?

I wonder if you chose the word ‘love’. And yes, of course that’s what the Christian and Mormon clerics would want you to choose. But, Dear, please think again. For example, think about how the clerics’ Jesus conveyed his message of love:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great **commandment**. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself...”

I trust that you noticed the word that I put in bold type!

So then, please think again about the single word that best summarizes the entire Bible (not just the New Testament) as well as the Koran (if you’ve read it) and the Book of Mormon. And if you can’t think of a single word other than “commandment”, then let me give you my opinion. My opinion is that the single word that best summarizes the entire Bible – and, in fact, all “holy books” – is **Obey!**

Do you agree? If you don’t, do you at least see some justification for my opinion? Even the clerics’ Jesus “injunction” to love is given as a commandment. Then, there are the Ten Commandments. In fact (if someone else counted them correctly), there’s not just 10, but a total of 613 commandments. And what is central message of any commandment?

Obey!

And thus the “moral choice” for a certain grandchild – as well as for everyone else in the world: whether **to obey** the rules dictated by various giant Jabberwocks in the sky (as translated by a bunch of con-artist clerics, with many significant difference in their different translations) or to figure out the rules yourself, using your brain as best you can i.e., **to evaluate**.

TO JUST OBEY IS TO BE “ON THE WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY”

Finally, Dear, in case you need to be urged which choice to take, let me mention that those who choose **to obey** rather than **to evaluate** have found themselves to be (and are still finding themselves to be) “on the wrong side of history”: the days of “just following orders” are (thankfully!) gone. For example, at the Nuremburg trials of Nazis, the world saw that “I was just obeying orders” was an inadequate defense. And let me add that, after Hitler

and his Nazis and his murder-camps, I don't understand how any sane Jewish person (or how any sane person) could continue to promote obeying orders – or continue to obey orders – of alleged spokesmen of an alleged giant Jabberwock in the sky.

Moreover, Dear, such people are “on the wrong side of history”, because unless these stupid people smarten up, the history of people in this world may end: humanity may yet be eliminated by “a war to end all wars”, between those who follow the old Persian religion (the Jews, Christians, and Mormons) and those who follow the new Persian religion (the Muslims). Thus, all current Muslims in Iran (including those in power, threatening to “destroy the West”) are descendants of Persians who (under duress) abandoned their own religion, and if such idiots get nuclear and worse weapons, then the “final solution” may finally occur.

And I'm sorry to feel the need to add, Dear, that history has shown that it's doubtful that clerics will relinquish power without urging violence against “the heathens”, “the pagans”, “the unbelievers”, “the infidels”, and “the atheists”, such as your grandmother and me. Therefore, expect them to continue their hate campaigns and violence against those who chose to evaluate rather than obey, because we threaten the economic viability of their con games. With science undermining their silly, prehistoric views that various giant Jabberwocks in the sky made this universe, expect them to “fight to the death” to defend their claims that their particular giant Jabberwock defines morality – because if they should yield on this idiocy, then nothing will remain of their damnable con games.

Yet, if humanity manages to continue, eventually the clerics will lose control, for as Einstein said:

A man's ethical behavior should be based effectually on sympathy, education, and social ties; no religious basis is necessary. Man would indeed be in a poor way if he had to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death.

But again, Dear, don't expect clerics to permit the return of “moral authority” back to the people, where it belongs, because as I'll try to show you in **Yx**, a clear lesson from history is that “morality” for the clerics really means “authority”.

Thus, throughout history, there have been absolutely horrible atrocities perpetrated by clerics of various persuasions, from the reported slaughter of innocents by Jews leaving Egypt, to the torture and murder of heathens by Christians, from the slaughter of infidels by Muslims, to the recent attacks by Islamic terrorists, and from the murder of a wagon train of men, women, and children (just a few miles from where I live) by Mormons, to the recent rapes of little boys by priests. As the author Salman Rushdie recently said (who was sentenced to death by clerics for criticizing Islam):

Fundamentalism isn't about religion; it's about power.

But showing you even a little of what Rushdie meant, showing you even some of the long history that has led to the “Mountainous God Lie”, is major undertaking, as I'll demonstrate with the “excursions” **Qx** and **Yx**.

Again, Dear, please think of the “moral absolutes” preached by the majority of clerics in our society, even the less innocuous “moral absolutes”, such as “thou shalt not kill”, “thou shalt not steal”, and so on. All of these “moral absolutes” are just a bunch of “rules of thumb” that, in general, are too dumb to be of practical value in the real world – plus, most importantly for the clerics, they're a bunch of tricks to con people out of their money!

CLOSING COMMENTS

Other cultures have adopted other “moral absolutes” – many of which are similar to those in our “Judeo-Christian culture” – and many of which are better. For example, consider the “Ten Commandments” advocated in Buddhism – in its original form a “philosophy” rather than a “religion” (i.e., the Buddha showed no interest in “the gods”). Recall that the Buddha was born ~560 BCE, about 100 years before Ezra, who in turn appears to be the principal author (or editor or “redactor”) of the Old Testament. I've taken the following quotation from the book *Isis Unveiled* by H. P. Blavatsk (Theosophical University Press Online Edition, Vo. 2, p. 164), which you can find on the internet. In what follows, I'll insert Blavatsk's footnote into his text using “square brackets”.

If we turn to the *Pratimoksa Sutra* and other religious tracts of the Buddhists, we read the ten following commandments:

1. Thou shalt not kill any living creature.
2. Thou shalt not steal.
3. Thou shalt not break thy vow of chastity.
4. Thou shalt not lie.
5. Thou shalt not betray the secrets of others.
6. Thou shalt not wish for the death of thy enemies.
7. Thou shalt not desire the wealth of others.
8. Thou shalt not pronounce injurious and foul words.
9. Thou shalt not indulge in luxury...
10. Thou shalt not accept gold or silver...

“What shall I do to obtain possession of Bhodi? (knowledge of eternal truth)” asks a disciple of his Buddhist master. “What way is there to become an Upasaka?” “Keep the commandments.” “What are they?” “Thou shalt abstain all thy life from murder, theft, adultery, and lying,” answers the master. [*Pittakatayan, Book iii, Pali Version*]

As Blavatsk points out, this latter injunction is essentially the same as was reportedly said by the clerics’ Jesus (*Matthew 19, 16-18*), approximately 500 years after the Buddha:

“Good master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life?” asks a man of Jesus. “Keep the commandments.” “Which?” “Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,” is the answer.

Now, although the above “Ten Commandments” of the Buddha are, in my opinion, a vast improvement over those of the Bible (because the above make no reference to some “jealous god” and punishing “for the sins of the father to the third and fourth generation”), yet some of the Buddha’s Commandments are also rather dumb. For example, if some mosquito, rattlesnake, cougar, or shark “thinks” that they’re safe around me, then they’ve got “another think coming”! Also, I’d be lying if I said that I thought it was never a good idea to lie, that I wouldn’t want a Hitler dead, that I don’t want some luxuries (such as a comfortable bed), or that I wouldn’t accept gold or silver for services rendered!

Further, as I’ll show you in later chapters, other ideas promoted by the Buddha are both wiser and dumber. Similarly, some of the ideas promoted by the clerics’ Jesus are quite reasonable, but others are amazingly dumb.

And therefore, Dear, guess what: it's up to you to decide what 'morality' is gonna mean for you.

In summary, Dear, I hope you're beginning to see the mess that clerics have made with the concept of morality. In the past, for the clerics who "thought" that the objectives were as given in their "holy books", then "the good" was to do whatever promoted their absurd objectives, including slaughtering those humans who thought otherwise. For the clerics who saw that it was all a con game, instead of having the "moral absolutes" that they claim, they then have absolutely zero "moral absolute" – save whatever the con artists want to dream up, because they think it'll sell. That is, the real "moral absolute" of all con-artist clerics is: keep the coffers full! And the real "moral absolute" that they preach is "obey", in particular, "keep putting your money in the coffers".

Dear: I'm certain not only that the Ten Commandments are for twits but also that the closest that humans have yet come to finding any "moral absolute" is "use your brain as best you can", i.e., **Evaluate!** And if you'd act morally by using your brain as best you can, then I'm sure you'd see that it's time to get some exercise!