


O2 – Objectives of the Gods

Dear: Ya gotta admit that some people have accomplished much. For instance, consider the word ‘**duh**’. I congratulate whoever first started using it; it’s a great way to get the reader (or listener) to reconsider what was just written (or said). For example, when I read the article entitled “Will I Be Happy?” [which was published in the May 1987 article of the Mormon “magazine” *Ensign* and written by Elder James E. Faust (of the Quorum of the Twelve “Apostles” of the Mormon Church)], then when I encounter Faust’s statement, “No gift bestowed upon us is so precious as children. They are proof that God still loves us...”, I can’t think of a better response to such stupidity than **duh**. Has he considered the reality that already there are too many children in the world? Has he considered the possibility that “God’s love” is actually sexual lust? Has he... aw... never mind. Just **duh**.

Further, think of the advances made with “happy faces” (or “smilies” or “smileys”) and similar “punctuation” (i.e., “emoticons”). The practice seems to have started with the “computer age”, when people would type smileys as :>), or similar. Now, in this word processor, if I omit the “nose”, > , then the result immediately jumps to a happy face, as I’ll now demonstrate by typing a “:” followed by a “)”, without a space between them: ☺! Similarly, if I type a “frown”, :>(, without the “nose”, then immediately this word processor yields: ☹! But it’s even better in the word processor contained within the e-mail “package” in my Netscape “browser”: in it, not only can I get “happy faces” and “frowns” (in color, no less!), but a bunch of others, including “winks” ;>), “startled”, “embarrassed”, and more. But the nearest they give to ‘**duh**’ is a “confused face” – which I can’t show you in this word processor ().

So, maybe I could create a new symbol to mean ‘**duh**’, such as a “diamond symbol”, suggesting a gaping mouth: ◆ . Nah, that doesn’t do it. How about ‘◆uh’? Nah, still doesn’t do it. How about building a face around it: :>◆ ? Hmm, maybe not too bad. Maybe a “curled up” forehead, too?):>◆ . Hey, that’s better. And then maybe add some italics, to make it appear that the person’s head is cocked a bit:):>◆ . So then, when you read further in the above-referenced article by “Elder” Faust that “The scriptures clearly and consistently condemn all sex relations outside of legal marriage as morally wrong. Why is this so? It is so because God said so.” Then, I could respond with):>◆ – but I admit that ‘**duh**’ is better.

Yet, sometimes a single word or symbol isn't enough. For example, suppose you were reading the article in the May 1992 issue of *Ensign* entitled "Our Moral Environment" by "Elder" Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Mormon Church, and there came across:

No greater ideal has been revealed than the supernal truth [now there's something for you: a "supernal truth"!] that we are the children of God, and we differ, by virtue of our creation, from all other living things... No idea has been more destructive of happiness, no philosophy has produced more sorrow, more heartbreak and mischief; no idea has done more to destroy the family than the idea that we are not the offspring of God, only advanced animals, compelled to yield to every carnal urge.

I mean, when someone promotes such stupidity, maybe a single "**duh**" is insufficient; maybe one must add "**But, but, but...**" (or similar) or even spell out the obvious objection: Well, of course "we are not the offspring of God, only advanced animals", but who in hell (or anywhere else!) ever proposed that humans are "compelled to yield to every carnal urge"? I mean, if people do that, they end up with too many children – NOT "proof that God's still loves us"!

Further, given that I've never even heard of anyone proposing such stupidity, then how can "Elder" Packer possibly suggest: "No idea has been more destructive..."? I mean, if nobody ever proposed it, then how could it be so "destructive"? Mind boggling! So, then, there's another "emoticon" that I wish someone would create: "mind boggling" – which is different from '**duh**'. But I'll leave that as an "exercise for the reader" – cause it's time that I got on with my "main message" for this chapter.

And actually, the "main message" is just a continuation of the point that I began to make in the previous chapter. It's to say that, if you ever want to see how absurd all religions are, Dear, then just keep asking the question (and keep trying to get an answer to the question!): *what's the objective?* And notice that the important question is not *what's the objective of the clerics?* – 'cause their objective is obviously to avoid working for a living! Instead, the important questions are:

- 1) *What's the objective (or objectives) of God (or the gods)?* and
- 2) *What purpose (or purposes) do the gods propose that people pursue?*

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Dear: I strongly encourage you to seek answers to the above questions. Further, no one should object to anyone seeking answers to such questions, because even if someone has “bought into” the clerics’ con game, it’s still necessary to know not only 1) God’s purpose but also 2) God’s purpose for people. Thus, all clerics (as far as I know) advocate (and have always advocated) that the purpose of humans is to serve their god or gods, and to do so, obviously it’s necessary to know what the god or gods want! Therefore, Dear, whether you count yourself among “the faithful followers” or among “the free thinkers” (or even if you find yourself on the fence between them), I strongly encourage you to investigate such questions.

But be forewarned, kid: the task is huge! For example, in the “excursion” **Qx** (dealing with “the Quagmire of Revealed Religions”), I go through the principal “holy books” of our culture in all their gucky details, in part to try to identify what the clerics claim their god wants. Thereby, I’ll show you all I could find about both God’s purported purpose(s) and his proposed purpose(s) for people. To do the task completely, however, would take far more than the ~20 chapters of **Qx**! In contrast and in kindness to you (!), for this chapter, I plan to try to show you just a partial summary of what I found.

Yet, whereas it wouldn’t be the first time (☹) that you ignored sound advice from your wise old grandfather (☺), let me add here that, if you want to explore some of this on your own, you might want to start by typing into an internet search engine the words “search” + “Bible” – and then later, as separate investigations, type “Koran” (or “Quran” or “Qur’an”), “Book of Mormon”, and titles of whatever other “holy books” that might interest you. When such words lead you to websites that provide capabilities to search through the relevant “holy books”, then search with such words as “purpose”, “goal”, “objective” or “aim”. Based on my experiences, however, I’m afraid that you’ll become quite disappointed in the results – for reasons that I’ll now try to illustrate.

To start, let me show you, first, some results from searches of the Bible. If you want to search similarly, Dear, then you might want to use the “search engine” at “The Bible Gateway” (at www.bible.gospelcom.net and which I used to generate the results shown below) to search through the “New International Version” of the Bible (or any of the several other versions listed). If you do, then you’ll find least useful is to search for the word ‘objective’: for me, not a single “match” or “hit” occurred! Next less useful is ‘aim’, which gave me four “hits”, but two deal with aiming arrows, one

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deals with the aim of “an unmarried woman or virgin” (namely, “to be devoted to the Lord”, whatever that means), and the other advises Christian “brothers” to “aim for perfection”, but neglects to define ‘perfection’!

Continuing in the Bible, for “goal” there are seven “hits”, which state (in essence): 1) on the third day, the clerics’ Jesus will reach his goal, 2) our goal is to please “him” (neglecting to mention how), 3) we would be foolish to try to attain our goal by “human effort” (neglecting to mention that humans have no other option!), 4) an incorrect match!, 5) the goal “to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (which probably means the goal is to get eternal life), 6) “the goal of this command is love”, and 7) “you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls”. Thus, according to these Christian ideas (there were no “matches” for ‘goal’ in the Old Testament), the “goal” of people is “salvation” of their “souls” (viz., get to heaven) and at least one goal of the clerics’ Jesus is to get people to “love” (neighbors and enemies, but not themselves, strawberry milkshakes, or other “worldly things”). God’s goal (if he has one) isn’t mentioned – though don’t give up yet, because by continuing the search, it may yet be possible to find God’s “purpose”!

Thus, more progress finally seems possible using the word ‘purpose’. If I counted them correctly, the Bible uses the word ‘purpose’ a total of 59 times. Most of these 59 uses, however, contain no information either about God’s purpose or about God’s purpose for humans; instead, there are many references just to “my [God’s] purpose”, God’s “mighty purpose”, and similar (without telling us what HIS purpose is), as well as many references to the purposes of various things (such as the fat from dead animals) and the purposes of other (typically “godless”) people. If all such “useless” references to the word ‘purpose’ are ignored, then what remains are the following (in italics, quoted directly from The Bible Gateway, and after each of which I’ve added a “bullet” with my interpretation of the stated “purpose”).

Exodus 9, 16: But I have raised you up {Or [have spared you]} for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

- God raises someone up (the pharaoh) so that God can show his power? Why does he want to display his power? Didn’t he make the universe? Isn’t that “power” enough? Why does he want to display his power to

ant-like humans? What does he want, a cheering section? Is this part of the “jealous” bit? Is he in competition with other gods to determine which one of them has the biggest fan club? This does not compute!

1 Chronicles 23, 5: Four thousand are to be gatekeepers and four thousand are to praise the Lord with the musical instruments I have provided for that purpose.

- So, in addition to wanting a cheering section or fan club, he also wants a band to play for him, as at a college football game? He even provides “musical instruments”? Somebody’s gotta be kidding!

Psalms 33, 10: The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

- Whatever purposes people might have, these will be thwarted?! Is that why he destroyed the Tower of Babylon? Is that why he created all the confusing languages? Are people not to have purposes – beyond cheering for god or playing in the band that promotes the cheering? Really? Is this god for real?!

Isaiah 48, 14: The Lord’s chosen ally will carry out his purpose against Babylon; his arm will be against the Babylonians...

- Apparently one of God’s purposes was to cause the Babylonians trouble (details of which are given in *Jeremiah 49, 50, 51*).

Jeremiah 15, 11: The Lord said, “Surely I will deliver you for a good purpose; surely I will make your enemies plead with you in times of disaster and times of distress.”

- A “good purpose” for humans is to make “their enemies plead”?!

John 7, 1: After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life.

- Thus, at least one purpose of Jesus was apparently to stay alive – at least for a little while.

Acts 2, 23: This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men {Or of those not having the law (that is, Gentiles)}, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

- So, apparently one of God's purposes was to kill his (alleged) son!

2 Corinthians 5, 5: Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

- In the sentence prior to the above quotation, Paul describes the essence of this "very purpose" as "so that our mortal part be absorbed into life immortal." So (at least according to Paul) God's purpose is for us to have eternal life, but if this is the case, then it's rather surprising that God then seems to be so incompetent at accomplishing this (alleged) goal. If God really wants people to live forever, then why doesn't he just snap his fingers or whatever?

Ephesians 2, 15: ...by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace...

- Although this "purpose" is hard to understand without reading the context, Paul's point seems to be that God's purpose was to eliminate distinction between Gentile and Jew, thereby to break down the "enmity" between them. If one can judge the results from the past 2,000 years worth of data, apparently God rather seriously failed to accomplish this (alleged) purpose of his.

Now, Dear, if you're rather discouraged that none of the above adequately describes either God's purpose for himself or his purpose for people, then please be patient. Shortly I'll show you a way around this problem. First, though, let me show you results from similar attempts to learn the objective, aim, goal, or purposes of God (or Allah = Al Lah = "the god") as given in the Koran and in the "holy books" of Mormonism (which, as you know, include the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham, and the Doctrine and Covenants, which I'll abbreviate to D&C).

If you search the Koran at the website <http://www.hti.umich.edu/k/koran/>, then just as in the Bible, you'll find zero "matches" for the word 'objective'.

There are many references to ‘end’, but essentially all of them relate to time durations. There are a few exceptions, such as (from *The Romans*, 30, 10) “Then evil was the *end* of those who did evil...” (which seems rather self evident!), but none reveals either God’s purpose or his purpose for people (save that people are to be “good”, which then needs to be defined). In addition, the Koran yields six “matches” for ‘purpose’ and seven for ‘goal’. Of these, those that might provide some guidance for discerning God’s objectives are listed below (as copied from the above reference, and after each of which I’ve added some “bulleted” comments).

The Cow 2.115: *And Allah’s is the East and the West, therefore, whither you turn, thither is Allah’s purpose...*

- So, whatever God’s purpose is, it’s everywhere.

The Clans 33.5: *...that which your hearts do purposely (blame may rest on you)...*

- So, if you follow your own purpose (as dictated by your “heart”, e.g., fall in love?), then “blame may rest on you”.

The Divorce 65.3: *...whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him; surely Allah attains His purpose...*

- So, another of God’s purposes is to get people to trust HIM; I trust that HE knows that trust must be earned.

The Family of Imran 3.14: *The love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and well bred horses and cattle and tilth, is made to seem fair to men; this is the provision of the life of this world; and Allah is He with Whom is the good goal (of life).*

- God is the “good goal (of life)” – whatever that means!

Ta Ha 20.50: *Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it (to its goal).*

- Which, for humans, is what? – besides trusting in Allah!

Finally for this method, let me do the same for the “holy books” of Mormonism, which can be searched at the Mormon “home page” at www.lds.org. As with the Bible and the Koran, there are no “matches” for the word ‘objective’ in any Mormon “holy book”. There are three “matches” for ‘aim’, but all are in the Mormon’s “Bible Dictionary” and none help to identify God’s aim. There are also three “matches” for ‘goal’, but only in “Study Helps” (or Aids), which are neither of much help nor claimed to be “revealed truths”. Finally, though, there are many “matches” for the word ‘purpose’, and those “matches” that are somewhat informative are listed below (with my “bulleted comments” following each).

Alma 37, 7: And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and by very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls.

- Although this doesn’t describe God’s “great and eternal purposes”, it does suggest that one of his minor purposes is “the salvation of many souls.” Unfortunately, though, God neither mentioned why he wanted to save souls (except that he apparently wants a cheering section) nor provided a single shred of evidence that souls exist. It then follows that people must “believe” and “have faith”, which then means that, in his cheering section, he doesn’t want anyone who evaluates data and hypotheses before reaching decisions. That’s consistent with the statement that “the Lord doth confound the wise”, for it’s generally accepted to be wise to evaluate before reaching a decision and to do otherwise, dumb. Thus, God apparently wants in his cheering section only “faithful”, “believing”, and thereby, unwise people.

Alma 37, 18: For he promised unto them that he would preserve these things for a wise purpose in him, that he might show forth his power unto future generations.

- Apparently, then, and just as in the Bible (unsurprisingly), one of God’s purposes is to display his power. Just why HE wants to do that, however, continues to be unclear (save as a salve for HIS admitted jealousy).

Mormon 5, 14: ...that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved [viz., Jesus] his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant...

- This suggest that the oft-described “great and eternal purpose” of God is simply to give the Israelites a place to live. That’s not a very impressive “great and eternal purpose” for the ruler of the universe! Shucks, I’d be more than willing to give them all of Utah. Couldn’t God just zap up another world for them, or (if that’s too tough for him) how about another continent, or for cryin’ out loud, couldn’t he at least provide each of them with a BMW – or something a little more impressive than a place to live?

D&C 42, 71: And the elders or high priests who are appointed to assist the bishop as counselors in all things, are to have their families supported out of the property which is consecrated to the bishop, for the good of the poor, and for other purposes, as before mentioned...

- From this is can be inferred that one of the purposes of the people is to pay their tithes to the Mormon Church, with the money to be used in part to support the families of “the elders or high priests”. It seems rather amazing that God would assign this purpose to the people. Is there any chance that this assignment was made, instead, by the “elders and high priests” – for their own purposes?!

D&C 104, 59: For the purpose of building up my church and kingdom on the earth, and to prepare my people for the time when I shall dwell with them, which is nigh at hand.

- So, apparently one of God’s purposes is to build up the Mormon Church – but then, again I wonder: what’s the chance that this purpose was actually specified by the leaders of the Mormon Church, rather than by creator of the universe? I mean, after all, if God can zap a whole universe into existence, couldn’t he have taken another nanosecond or so to build the Mormon Church as big as the “elders and high priests” wanted? Or is there a chance that... Ah, well, you know the rest.

D&C 104, 68: And all moneys that you receive in your stewardships, by improving upon the properties which I have appointed unto you, in houses, or in lands, or in cattle, or in all things save it be the holy and sacred writings, which I have reserved unto myself for holy and sacred purposes, shall be cast into the treasury as fast as you receive moneys, by hundreds, or by fifties, or by twenties, or by tens, or by fives.

- So, if a person can believe (as claimed) that this is a message direct from God (rather than from some con artist), apparently an important purpose for people is to send money to the Mormon Church, where the Church leaders can count it *by hundreds, or by fifties, or by twenties, or by tens, or by fives*. Apparently, God doesn't want any one-dollar bills sent to the Mormon hierarchy; nothing smaller than a fiver, thanks anyway.

Now Dear, if all the above (from all the “holy books” of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Mormonism) is all that there is to describe either God's objective (aim, goal, purpose) or God's purpose for people, then I suspect that you're rather disappointed. Certainly, I am: I would have expected more from the creator of the universe! That is, Dear, if some god had the capability to create this universe (rather than it creating itself via a symmetry-breaking fluctuation in a total void, leading to the Big Bang), then couldn't this god have spent a few picoseconds longer to tell us what he or she was up to and what people were supposed to do (besides praise him)?

But wait a bit. Maybe the situation isn't so bad as I've sketched. Thus, as unfortunately happens all too frequently in science (and in life), when one seeks knowledge, care is needed to ensure that the method of inquiry doesn't introduce bias in the answers obtained. For example, in the above, the method of inquiry was to use internet “search engines” to find “matches” for words such as ‘objective’, ‘goal’, ‘aim’, and ‘purpose’. In contrast, Dear, watch the following sentence.

Rather than looking for “matches” for particular words, what could (or even “should”) be done is to read all the “holy books”, line by line, to see if we can determine what God wants, both for HIMself and for us. Notice, Dear, that in the previous sentence, not only did I suggest a different method of inquiry but also I did it without using any of the words I used in any of my searches. Therefore, to determine if the “holy books” of our culture contain information about what God is “up to” and what He “wants us to do”, there's really no option but to tackle the enormous task of reading all these “holy books”, line by line, with great care. But as I mentioned already, that's an enormous undertaking, which I'll try to lead you through (if you wish to take the “excursion”) in **Qx** (dealing with “The Quagmires of Revealed Religions”). In this chapter, instead, let me show you just a few results from such an undertaking.

Of these results, perhaps of most interest are the few cases reported to be direct quotes from God HIMself, either of what HIS desire is or what HE desires that humans do. For example, almost at the start of the Bible, in *Genesis 1, 26-29* (as quoted below from The New English Bible), God reportedly provides a purpose for humans, without using any of the words that I used in my searches.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image and likeness to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all wild animals on earth, and all reptiles that crawl upon the earth... Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it, rule over the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, and every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

In the King James Version of the Bible, the corresponding statement – allegedly made by God – about “the purpose of humans” is given as:

“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

In the Mormon’s Peal of Great Price (*Moses 2, 28*), unsurprisingly (☹), Rigdon has God state the objective for humans as in the King James Version of the Bible.

Therein, in either of the forms given above, we have clear statements (or “alleged statements”) of three of God’s assigned purposes for humans (even though the words ‘objective’ or ‘purpose’ weren’t used – and therefore, they weren’t found in my “search”):

1. “Be fruitful and increase...”; that is, apparently a prime purpose of humans, according to God (or whoever wrote Genesis), is to increase the population,
2. “Fill the earth and subdue it...”; that is, increase the population until the Earth is full (whether that means 10 billion people or 100 billion or... is unclear) and as appropriate, dam the rivers, stop tornados and hurricanes, somehow eliminate volcanoes, quell earthquakes, etc., and
3. “Rule over... every living thing.” Apparently, at least according to God (or whoever wrote Genesis), it doesn’t matter how we rule, just rule (or “have dominion”): cut down the forests, harness the horses, and if you want, beat the dogs, kill all the cats, and so on.

Now Dear, perhaps these three objectives seem rather “bland” and shouldn’t upset anyone very much. Besides, rather conveniently, these three objectives are consistent what our DNA molecule had “planned”, anyway! But, Dear, please think again – and remember that our brains our now sufficiently developed that, if appropriate, we can rewrite boss-molecule’s “software” – and sometimes even manipulate its “hardware”.

Thus, with the possibility of nuclear war now substantially diminished (at least, such a war between the US and the USSR) and the probability rather small that a large asteroid will hit the Earth (and maybe within a few decades, humans can force this probability to drop to essentially zero), then, Dear, what do you think is the biggest problem facing mankind? Regional wars? Terrorism? Global warming? Associated famines with shifts in climate? Associated spreads of communicable diseases? Environmental pollution? Depletion of natural resources? Drastic decreases in biodiversity?

Maybe you can add additional items to that list, but here is the problem that I think subsumes all those listed: the population explosion. Dear, please think about it. If the human population of the Earth were a much more reasonable size, for example, ten percent of its current value (i.e., fewer than a billion people), then I think that problems such as regional wars, terrorism, global warming, depletion of resources, etc., would drastically decrease if not essentially disappear. Stated differently, humans must defuse this population bomb: we should dramatically reduce the number of humans that we are asking this poor old Earth to carry.

Meanwhile, billions of humans continue to follow the objective allegedly prescribed by the god of the old Hebrew shepherds (or written by the clerics who were in the process of converting the Israelites to the Persian religion): “be fruitful and increase, fill the earth...” This happens to be the same prime objective that the DNA molecule specifies. But with our minds we can now say: “Hey – wait a minute; let’s be reasonable; let’s use our heads; let’s keep the population at a reasonable level; let’s implement some reasonable birth-control procedures.” I trust that this seems reasonable – and I trust that, if you think about the options available in China, then even the Chinese government’s forcing citizens to have no more than one child per couple is reasonable and responsible.

In contrast, Dear, think about the idiot Pope, who is the “spiritual leader” of (read it and weep!) more than a billion people! This fool is committed to what some silly clerics, ~2,500 years ago, imagined was their fictitious god’s prime directive: “be fruitful and increase”. As a result, this stupid Pope says to his followers, in effect: “Birth control is forbidden (I’ll kick you women out of the Church if you don’t submit to your husbands and have more babies); abortions are totally wrong (have one, and you’re heading for eternal damnation in hell); just keep popping out those babies.” The leaders of Islam and Mormonism promote similar stupidity; again, it’s “belief” gone berserk!

In contrast, some small credit is due some of the clerics leading some Christian sects. Maybe they realized the stupidity of God’s assumed purpose for humans to “be fruitful and multiply” (as given in the King James Version of the Bible). Or maybe these con artists concluded that they couldn’t keep their con game going in face of the obvious need to curb population growth. Whatever the reason, they decided to adopt new policies. Now, to be sure, the latter was no small trick – but never underestimate how slippery a good con artist can be! How they slipped through this one was to read a new interpretation of “God’s” injunction to “rule... over every living thing”. Their unjustified (but welcome!) conclusion was that “God” requires us to rule wisely, which then meant that birth control was okay.

But as much as I welcome their different interpretation of God’s alleged purpose for humans, it points to what has been an absolutely horrible problem for at least the past 2,000 years: God’s assigned “objectives” for humans are open to interpretations! In God’s incompetence (or could it possibly be the incompetence of the old fools who wrote the Bible?), God was unable to convey (simply, clearly, and concisely) what he wanted humans to do! As a result, literally thousands of different religious sects emerged (such as the Cambellite Baptists, a sect that evolved via Sidney Rigdon into Mormonism), led by people who were certain that finally they, and they alone, had deduced the “true meaning” of one or another quirk in the Bible.

The resulting animosities between and among different religious groups, each convinced that only they knew “the truth”, that only they were “on the road to glory”, that only they would “gain salvation of their immortal souls” have been absolutely horrible, out to and including murdering “unbelievers”

and waging war against “the infidels”. Would that it could be said that humans couldn’t possibly be that stupid! Would that God’s objective for humans could be re-interpreted to be something similar to just:

“Figure it out for yourselves, ya bunch of dimwits! Evaluate! If you can’t do that on your own, then forget about ever getting into heaven, ‘cause on the Pearly Gates, I’ve posted a sign with a picture of fools like you, with a line through it, meaning ‘No dimwits allowed’!”

But let me set that aside for a while and turn to other objectives allegedly assigned to people by God. Thus, in *Genesis 2, 15*, there’s:

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and care for it...

Wonderful! According to some unknowledgeable old cleric (or some silly old shepherd who concocted this myth), the purpose for humans, as assigned by his imagined God, is to till and care for gardens – which, come to think of it, is rather strange: surely a shepherd would claim that the goal was to herd sheep! Did the Hebrew clerics just copy this myth from another culture – or does it mean (as I suspect) that they rather liked the Babylonian farmers supplying them food?!

In any event, Dear, I guess you should abandon any thoughts about being a doctor or engineer or artist or whatever else you might be thinking of becoming. Instead, according to God HIMself, you’re supposed to be a farmer. And of course I know that, during the history of this country, the fraction of the total population that can make a living as farmers has dropped from more than 97% to less than 3%, but it says right here in the Bible that our purpose is to be farmers. So, Dear, unless you reject the idea that there is a God who defines your purpose, then... duh.

And, Dear, if you think that I seem to be digging awfully hard to find what God’s purpose is, either for himself or for us, then you’re right! Thus, in contrast to what one might have hoped (and even expected), it’s very difficult to deduce from some of HIS seemingly off-hand comments what we’re supposed to do! Further, don’t we have some innate right to know? That is, if God made humans, then wasn’t HE under some “moral obligation” – out of common decency! – to have taken the time (a few nanoseconds, at most) to explain to his creations why he created us?

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Actually, I would have been satisfied if God just said something similar to the following (which I once saw hinted in a really good movie, whose title I've unfortunately forgotten):

“Look, I have an idea for a new kind of foot, but before I try out my design on another planet and with a higher life form, I thought I'd just test it out here on this miserable little planet Earth. So, consider yourselves prototypes; do whatever you please; I don't give a damn; I'm just interested in the performance of this new foot!”

Yet, the task of identifying both God's purpose and his purpose(s) for people isn't quite so bad as depicted above. Thus, it's possible to identify in the Bible other “purposes” for humans, especially if one accepts the reasoning that if God gave us some commandments and told us to obey them, then he simultaneously is giving us some purposes – the main one being: obey!

Now, in an earlier chapter, I went through the first ten commandments, and though I admit that those dealing with human interactions aren't too bad as general “rules of thumb”, certainly they're inadequate as “moral absolutes.” That is, Dear, generally one shouldn't kill, lie, steal, cheat, and so on, but nowadays, there are probably at least a million pages of law codes that force judges and juries to evaluate the circumstances of specific crimes.

Further, Dear, if you choose to go through the details in the “excursion” **Qx**, you'll see that some of the details in the other (603?) “commandments” are absolutely bizarre (such as the commandment to wear underpants when your praying!), while others are absolutely horrible (such as how to beat your slaves to death and how to sell your daughter into slavery). That is, Dear, if God's assigned purpose for humans is to obey the commandments, they my summary response to God is: “Blow it out your ear!”

Stated differently (and as I tried to show you in the **M**-chapters), it's astoundingly stupid to suggest that the Bible is the source of our society's moral principles. Choosing the Bible (or similar “holy books” such as the Koran or the Book of Mormon) as a source-book for any society's moral code is like a society two or three thousand years in the future finding one of our books describing our traffic laws and choosing it as the source-book for “moral absolutes”.

What craziness! What these old “law givers” (such as Minos, Manu, and Moses) really said was “obey” the laws. And generally, Dear, that’s still a good idea. But upon reading these old traffic laws of Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, and Joseph Smith, the damnable clerics of our culture saw that they could get a free ride, if only they could get the people to obey long-since obsolete traffic laws! Talk about a speed trap! Talk about a great way to fleece the public! But it should be illegal.

As an example of a 2500-year old traffic law that’s highly inappropriate for today’s highways, consider again the claim that God told humans: “Be fruitful and increase...” Thousands of years ago, this “traffic law” was probably quite appropriate (at least for shepherds – not for people living in crowded river valleys!). Its moral value for the Hebrew shepherds might have been judged to be quite high, because the population of shepherds was probably so low that there was a possibility (e.g., with a major drought) that they wouldn’t survive. But now, with far too many humans on Earth (by at least a factor of 10), for Catholic, Islamic, and Mormon clerics to cling to this “traffic law”, encouraging large families, opposing birth controls, describing abortion as immoral, etc., is the height of stupidity. What such idiots are advocating (i.e., to continue to “obey” this 2500-year-old traffic law) is not only stupid, but to act in such a manner would be immoral, causing potentially severe damage to the dual survival goals of every person on Earth – save for the clerics, of course, who have the potential to increase their power over still more people.

But all the above is from just the first few pages of the Bible, and thereby, Dear, perhaps you can get a hint of a major problem that I encountered while writing this chapter for you. The problem is that there are a huge number of absolutely stupid and absolutely horrible statements in the Bible (and in the other “holy books” of our culture) that allegedly convey God’s purpose for humans. To solve this problem (i.e., to make progress on this chapter and yet to try to show you more of the stupidities and horrors of other assumed objectives for humans as allegedly dictated by God), I created **Qx**. As you’ll see there, I used more than 20 chapters to show you just some of these stupidities and horrors!! And thus my solution to the problem is, in this chapter, to show you just the barest few examples of these stupidities and horrors, to show you a few of my conclusions, and then, to leave the details for you to examine, if you desire, by taking the “excursion” **Qx**.

* Go to other chapters *via*

For example, right near the start of the Bible is the first hint of something horrible, which later in the Bible becomes abundantly clear, namely, the clerics' claim that it's acceptable for leaders to cover up their mistakes with lies and to rule by fear. In particular, God reportedly said (*Genesis 2, 18*):

You may eat from every tree in the garden, but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for on the day that you eat from it, you will certainly die.

Now, clearly it was God's mistake to put such a tree in the Garden of Eden (especially since, according to myth, he knows everything, and therefore, he knew what would happen – and even knew that he would need to kill essentially every living thing in the flood). To cover up his mistake, the myth then reveals that God lied (stating that, if Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, then “on the day that you eat from it, you will certainly die”, which obviously didn't occur, i.e., it was a lie). Further, the almighty ruler of the universe proposed to rule by putting fear in puny little man, rather than, for example, choosing to rule by example, with reason, and with love.

This same quotation advocates another immorality: suggesting that humans shouldn't know the difference between right and wrong, i.e., that they shouldn't be able to discern morality. Thus, God's message was:

You may eat from every tree in the garden, but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...

Now, of course that was a great idea for the clerics: if the people couldn't decide what's right vs. wrong for themselves, then that pretty-well guaranteed life-long free-loading for the clerics, telling the people what's right and what's wrong.

But, Dear, that's a horribly immoral concept. If people can't judge for themselves what's best for their dual survival goals, then the people are no better than animals – or actually even worse, for even animals are capable of distinguishing what's immediately right vs. wrong for their and their offspring's survival. To suggest that it was “the original sin” of humans to gain the capability to make moral judgments (about not only current but future acts) is absolutely, astoundingly idiotic – and any cleric who now preaches such an idiotic idea, that people shouldn't make moral decisions by themselves, is preaching pure, unadulterated evil.

In fact, this same quotation suggests even a worse immorality (worse than it's permissible for leaders to lie and to use fear to cover up their mistakes, and worse than the idea that followers aren't to know the difference between good and evil). The additional immoral (and even, more immoral) suggestion is that followers are to just obey. No matter the order, just obey! No matter if it's a stupid order, obey. No matter if you don't understand the order (because you don't know the difference between right and wrong) obey! No matter if Hitler orders that you murder six million Jews, obey! How could the clerics be so stupid and so immoral!

Meanwhile, Dear, maybe you're beginning to see why I created the excursion **Qx**. What I just finished doing, with the previous few pages, is show you just a single additional "policy" advocated in the Bible. Maybe you then see why it takes me more than 20 chapters to get through the principal "holy books" of our culture!

Yet, let me now show you another of the alleged purposes for people as dictated by the clerics' imagined God, to hint not just at the stupidity and immorality of the clerics, but at some absolute horrors, in fact, pure evil. This alleged purpose is given in *Judges 3, 2*, dealing with the slaughter by the Israelites of all those who were peacefully living on their own land (land that the Hebrews had abandoned hundreds of years earlier to live in the more productive country of Egypt):

These are the nations [listed later in the text] which the Lord left as a means of testing all the Israelites who had not taken part in the battles for Canaan, *his purpose being to teach succeeding generations of Israel, or those at least who had not learnt in former times, how to make war...*

I put some of that in italics, Dear, to try to ensure that you read it carefully: God's purpose was to teach the Israelites how to make war! He left some peaceful inhabitants in the land, so that later Israelites would have some people left on whom to practice killing. And if your response is "My God!", then, Dear, my response would be "No".

But, Dear, even beyond such stupidities (such evils), even if you accept (which I certainly hope you don't!) that God's prime purposes assigned to people are to provide him with a cheering section, to "be fruitful and increase", to "till and care for gardens", to obey a bunch of obsolete traffic laws, and to practice killing other humans, still there's the question that I started to address earlier in this chapter but couldn't find a useful answer in

any of the “holy books” of our culture using just the search word “purpose” (or similar), namely: What’s God’s purpose? What’s His goal? What’s He trying to do? I mean, it’s one thing for people to do just exactly as the Commandments dictate (just as any good slave follows orders), but you know that, sometime or other, a slave will encounter a situation in which he’ll need to think for himself, and it’s very difficult for a slave to make a sensible decision if he don’t know that what his master (God) really wants.

Therefore, Dear, I trust that you agree that a perfectly sensible thing to do is to check the “holy books” of the religion in which you’ve been indoctrinated since you were a baby, to try to determine God’s purpose for Himself. But as you can see in **Qx** (and **Yx**), the task of identifying God’s (reported) purpose for himself is even harder than identifying God’s (reported) purpose for humans!

But there are a few exceptions. For example, even some of God’s (alleged) Commandments spell out both his purpose for humans, e.g., “You shall have no other god before me...” and his own purpose “...for I, the Lord you God, am a jealous god.” Thereby, it seems clear (at least according to the Bible) that God’s purpose in creating humans was for his own benefit – so that he’d have a cheering section.

Run that one by again: God’s purpose (according to the Bible) was to create a cheering section?! You think there must have been a communication error? But here it is again, at *Jeremiah 13*, 11:

For, just as this girdle is bound close to a man’s waist, so I bound all Israel [in the north] and all Judah [in the south] to myself, says the Lord, so that they should become my people to win a name for me, and praise and glory...

So, at least according to the Hebrews, not only did God want a cheering section, HE choose a team (of course the holy Hebrews!) to be his champions, “to win a name for me” – and therefore he left a few assorted peoples around to slaughter, just so the Israelites could practice killing?! You think – you hope – that somebody’s kidding?

But then, even Jeremiah (quoted immediately above) seems to question God’s answer (as given above). Thus, at *Jeremiah 29*, 11 there is: “I alone know my purpose... says the Lord...” Similar is found in the New Testament (*Romans 11*, 34), where Paul states: “Who knows the mind of the

Lord?” And in the Mormon’s Pearl of Great Price (*Moses 1*, 30), Sidney Rigdon wrote that Moses asked God: “Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest [sic] them?” To this question, Rigdon imagined that God answered: “For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.” That is, Dear, although God may have some goal, HE ain’t gonna tell anyone!

And actually, Dear, here is where the thicket gets even thicker. For example, in Ancient Greece, the poet Pindar (c. 518 – c. 438 BCE) saw the essence of the problem (and the clerics’ con games), long before the Old Testament, New Testament, Koran, Book of Mormon, and similar nonsense were written. Pindar concluded:

It is not possible with mortal mind to search out the purposes of the gods.

I dearly hope, Dear, that you appreciate the significance of Pindar’s statement. If it’s correct (and as I demonstrated to you in the prior paragraph, the three “holy books” used for your indoctrination are entirely consistent with Pindar’s conclusion), then it means that, notwithstanding the claims of all con-artist clerics to the contrary, there never has been and there never will be any guidance from any god about how to live your life. Instead, all guidance that you will ever hear from the clerics about “God’s purpose” is solely from the clerics – and of course, their main objective is to fill their collection plates, so that they won’t need to work for a living. That is, Dear, the “holy books” of all “revealed religions” actually reveal absolutely zilch about any god or any god’s purpose; instead revealing an absolutely mind-boggling amount of clerical stupidity and greed.

Further, Dear, there’s something more that I hope you’ll consider carefully. In his book *Atheism, The Case Against God* (quoted here from Aiken’s collection), George H. Smith makes the following stunningly significant statement about God’s purpose, to which I’ve added the italics and bold type.

The necessity of employing means to accomplish an end is the consequence of limited power; *therefore, God cannot be said to employ means in any sense.* Extending this argument, we also realize that God cannot be said to act in any manner, because actions are required only of a being who must resort to some means in order to accomplish a given end. ***Nor can God be said to have any kind of purpose, because “purpose” entails unfulfilled desires or goals – and these concepts cannot apply to an omnipotent being.***

Come on, kid, read that quotation again – and think about it! Just as Aristotle concluded (as I showed you in Chapter Ie, dealing with “proofs” of God’s existence), if God is as claimed (omnipotent, omniscient, and omnio-whatever-else), HE or SHE or IT can’t have a purpose! [Where’s that “duh symbol” when you need it?!]

And please, Dear, don’t just parrot the nonsense that some stupid clerics palmed-off on you about God wanting to “test” people, to determine who is “worthy”, or similar. How dare anyone say that God “wants” anything! That would mean that he (or she or it) isn’t perfect! Why for that insubordination, somebody’s gonna get their toenails not only torn off for eternity, but... Sorry, Dear, sometimes I get carried away.

But could God have a purpose for people? – who knows why, maybe just to while away eternity, cause doncha know, it can get awfully boring during eternity, especially when you already know everything, so there’s nothing new to learn – oops, I guess I get my toenails ripped off for that one, since apparently it’s not nice to suggest that God is bored out of its skull. That is, just as Aristotle saw, God spends eternity doing the best possible thing, thinking – and thinking about the best possible thing, that is, about himself – contemplating his navel – or whatever.

Sorry, Dear, but again, how could God possibly have a purpose for people? That would mean that HE, SHE, or IT would also have a purpose, i.e., to give people a purpose. And thus, Dear, maybe you can agree with Aristotle’s conclusion: God is necessarily stuck with contemplating HIS, HER, or ITS navel (or whatever) for eternity!

Consequently, Dear, the next time someone suggests to you that “God wants you to...”, then rather than responding with “Duh”, how about trying the response that you recently used on me (dealing with another subject), i.e., “NOT!” Try it again: “God want you to...” “NOT!” “Huh?” the other person will respond. To which you might want to screw up your cantankerousness (which I sometimes get the impression is not too difficult for you, ☹) and add: “How dare you suggest that God wants something? How dare you insult God like that?!”

Or, Dear, if you don’t desire to be quite so cantankerous as your old grandfather (even though it may be genetic ☺), you could try your

“sweetness and light” routine. Thus, when someone suggests that he or she knows what “the Lord” wants, then maybe you’d like to quote “Saint” Paul (the founder of Christianity and therefore, Mormonism), from *Romans 11*, 33. That is, respond with something similar to:

“How can you know what the Lord wants? Saint Paul said:

O depth of wealth, wisdom, and knowledge in God! How unsearchable his judgments, how untraceable his ways! Who knows the mind of the Lord?

“I mean, aren’t you being rather presumptuous by stating that you know what the Lord wants? Does anyone know? Can anyone know? Are you sure that God wants anything? Aren’t you insulting God by suggesting that He wants anything? Isn’t that taking the Lord’s name in vain?”

On the other hand, Dear, if you want to keep peace in your family and your mother says that the Lord wants you to clean up your room, then maybe you should just... and keep the ‘duh’ (or the NOT!) to yourself!

And if, Dear, in response to all the above, you’re thinking something similar to “It couldn’t be this bad,” then let me respond that I promise to show you (in **Qx** and **Yx**) that it’s actually far, far worse. The essence of the clerics’ con game seems to be as follow. As far as I’ve been able to tell, from all the data I’ve seen, no organized religion has ever arisen (and certainly not Judaism, Christianity in each of its various forms, Islam in its many versions, as well as assorted silliness such as the Shakers, the Moonies, and the Mormons) for which its clerics didn’t claim that:

- 1) All earlier and/or competing religions are in error,
- 2) The clerics of all competing religions are nothing but a bunch of conniving con artists,
- 3) Only they (the clerics of the new, “true” religion) know the purposes of god (or the gods), and
- 4) Only they (the clerics of the new, “true” religion) have authorization, direct from the gods and goddesses (or god), both to tell the people their purposes and to collect commissions for “services rendered”.

And thus, Dear, surely these data, alone, should make you wonder if your own religion isn't just one more phase of the same con game that's been running for at least the past 5,000 years.

And if you're again thinking "It couldn't be this bad", I again must respond, "Actually, it's far, far worse." In fact, Dear, based on only the difference in what I have summarized here and what I will show you in **Qx** and **Yx**, I don't exaggerate by saying that it's at least an order of magnitude worse than what I've shown you here. Yet, I would agree with you that it's almost unimaginable that clerics could have been (and still are) so evil.

But showing you all that is a task for later chapters, and to end this one, let me return to the "message from the gods" that was conveyed to me by that black and white "duck" (or night hawk or whatever it was), which, as I mentioned at the start of the previous chapter, flew around me (and over me) when the moon was setting and the sun was rising. If I were in the mood and had some capabilities as a poet, I might be able to convey this "true message from the gods" in a poem. And in case some day you find yourself searching for some material for a poem, Dear, let me sketch some ideas and symbolism that's obviously available.

As for symbolism, how about the following?

- The big circle in which the "duck" flew, clearly indicated the **O**'s in **o**penly and **h**onestly seeking **o**bjectives behind **o**pinions.
- The black and white coloring of the bird symbolized the black and white of "holy books", the clerics' stupid "black versus white" views of morality, good vs. evil, "truth" vs. error, and even their usual choice of "colors" for their silly attires!
- The setting moon symbolized all the religious followers of the world (holding tight in their orbits, locked to keep their face toward their gods, creating no light of their own, dead to the world, lifeless, only reflecting the light from elsewhere, and some of them obviously lunatics), while the dawning sun symbolizing rising humanists or "Brights" (rising in strength throughout the world, providing light on their own, supplying the world with warmth and energy, soon to shine so brightly that the moon will no longer be visible)!

As for meanings in the symbolism, here are some that seem obvious:

- No god has ever sent any sign to any human, but Mother Nature has – and some of these signs can be quite difficult to interpret;
- Most animals desire food, and if ever a priest leaves you after you refuse to fatten him, then wait a bit: like a certain black and white bird, any cleric who preaches any black vs. white view of morality will almost certainly circle back again, to try again to leech off your productivity;
- The moon will almost certainly always be with us, as will some lunatics (schizophrenics and other neurotics, such as narcissists and egomaniacs), holding fast to their religions;
- On occasion, the lunatics may even, briefly, eclipse the sun: spreading their darkness across a wide strip of humanity, such as is now occurring in many Muslim countries and even in parts of this country (with the Christian fundamentalists in parts of the South known as “the Bible Belt” and with the Mormons in parts of the West, especially in Utah);
- But each day and after each eclipse, the sun’s light will reappear; humanists are on the rise; the lunatics will wax and wane; the brightness of the humanists will last for at least another billion years. To succeed, all we need do is remember our prime objective: survival of ourselves, our extended families, and our values, in particular those values derived from trying to help humanity advance and intelligence to expand.

And then, there’s the true meaning of the message from that bird. Just as the case for all messages ever claimed to be “from the gods”, the message wasn’t from any gods, but from Mother Nature. The objective of the duck (or night hawk or whatever it was), conveyed in it’s big **O**, was solely that its DNA molecule wanted to continue to live. On its first pass, perhaps it saw something that I had that it thought it could eat (maybe my hat!), and knowing that the good was to live and that to live it had to eat, it returned. It was out early in the morning, foraging for food, struggling to survive. Its objective was its dual survival goals, of itself and its family. And for that bird, no clerics had confused it with their silliness about any gods: all its values were based on its dual survival goals.

Similarly, Dear, what I want to show you in the remainder of this book (after I finish with the foolishness of all religions) is that the only sound basis for all human values is our dual survival goals, of ourselves and our extended families – extended out to include all life. In fact, I want to show you that an alternative statement of the only sound basis for all human values is to try to help intelligence continue and to expand. But showing you that requires still more “introductory material”, which I’ll start to describe in the next series of chapters. Then, in **V** (for Values) I hope you’ll see the obvious: *the only intelligent objective of intelligence is to promote intelligence.*

From what I’ll try to show you, Dear, what I hope you’ll see is that all religions are just opinions, derived from models of this universe (and our place within it) developed by primitive people in the infancy of the development of the human intellect and with inadequate data and incompetent analysis capabilities. Then, I want you to consider my opinion that to base opinions on other than reliable data is to be traitorous to all humanity.

But before showing you that, Dear, I want to provide you (in **P** and **Q**) with data that I hope you’ll agree are sufficient to support the following conclusion. It starts from my assessment (which is little more than the definition of the word ‘opinion’, i.e., an evaluation of an idea) that all religions are just opinions. I then add two assessments that have “stood the test of time”, one from “the father of modern medicine”, Hippocrates (c. 460 – 400 BCE), who arguably could be described as the world’s first great scientist, and the other from his contemporary, Socrates (469 – 399 BCE), who arguably could be described as the Western World’s first great humanist. Hippocrates wrote:

“There are in fact two things, science and opinion; the former begets knowledge, the latter ignorance.”

Socrates said:

“There is one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance.”

Combined with the concept that all religions are just opinions, these two statements yield: “Science is good; religion is evil.” But maybe better would be something closer to

* Go to other chapters via

Trying to gain new knowledge is good; claiming that you already know “the way, the truth, and the light” is evil.

Or maybe just modify Socrates’ statement to: “There is only one good, willingness to learn, and one evil, refusal.”

In any case, Dear, before I encourage you to choose to learn more, to try to gain new knowledge, to try to help intelligence expand (as I will in chapters from **R** through **Z**), first I want to show you (in the **P** and **Q**-chapters) some data that display the ignorance, i.e., the evil, perpetrated by the clerics of all religions. And though I hope that you’re one of the “good people” who’s still willing to learn more, I also hope that already you’ve learned that you also need to get more exercise!