

Yx3 – Lies & Corruption in Genesis 1–3

For this post, in which I'll be suggesting that clerical lies, conspiracies, and corruption were rampant in the production of the Old Testament (OT), I probably should start with explaining my meaning for the words 'lies' and 'conspiracies'. Later, I'll provide examples of what I mean by 'corruption'.

CONSPIRACY SPECULATIONS, HYPOTHESES & THEORIES

According to the Oxford American Dictionary, a conspiracy is: “a **secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful.**” That definition, however, seems inadequate. For example, if a group concocts a secret plan to start a new religion, then today in other than Islamic societies, China, and a few other nations, their plan would be legal, not “**unlawful**”. Further, proponents of the new religion would undoubtedly argue that their new religion wouldn't be “**harmful**”, arguing instead that it would be “beneficial”. Other people, however, argue that all speculations about the supernatural are “**harmful**”. Therefore, the above dictionary definition of 'conspiracy' suffers from a lack of consensus on a meaning for '**harmful**'; like beauty, a conspiracy seems to be in the eye of the beholder!

Further, many people (maybe the majority of people) seem amazingly susceptible to “conspiracy theories”. Perhaps the reason is, as Aristotle said, “**All men by nature desire knowledge.**” I expect that most people would prefer if the “**knowledge**” they acquire had a high probability of being correct, but many people are apparently satisfied if they are given only a reasonable sounding explanation, even if the “**explanation**” is some cockamamie conspiracy “theory” (or better, “speculation”). Similarly, many people (evidently the majority of people in the world) are apparently satisfied with “**explanations**” that contain the meaningless word 'God'.

It's common to call such explanations “conspiracy theories”, but communications would be helped if distinctions were made. As examples:

- There's the “conspiracy theory” that earth scientists, worldwide, are engaged in a gigantic conspiracy to convince the public that greenhouse gases cause global warming. Such a “theory” should be more accurately described as a “conspiracy speculation”; those promoting it should be charged with getting a substantial number of scientists to agree on any controversial proposal; it's as difficult as the proverbial herding of cats! A similar “conspiracy speculation” is that 9/11 was an “inside job”.

- As another example, there's the "conspiracy theory" that the G.W. Bush Administration invaded Iraq for its oil. That "theory" should be more accurately described as a "conspiracy hypothesis". It does summarize some data, but those promoting it should produce more evidence to support their hypothesis.
- And as another example, there's the "conspiracy theory" that the Nixon Administration conspired to cover-up involvement in the Watergate break-in. In this case, enough evidence has been found to justify calling it a "conspiracy theory". That is, similar to theories of evolution, electromagnetism, relativity, quantum mechanics, etc., the conspiracy theory dealing with the Nixon cover-up has a high probability of being true.

Those distinctions made, I'll be proposing (in this and subsequent posts in this blog's Part 2) that the Old Testament (OT) was concocted *via* a collusion perpetrated by Ezra and co-conspirators (under their Persian masters) to foist a Persian-inspired religion and priesthood on the Jewish people. I'll try to provide evidence supporting the hypothesis that Ezra and co-conspirators (which I'll abbreviate to Ezra & C-C) lied, deceived, plagiarized, corrupted, and generally bastardized both historical records and available myths, stories, and songs, with the goal of establishing a revised religion with a revitalized priesthood to rule the Jews, primarily for the benefit of the priests. Some critics will probably call my proposal a "conspiracy speculation" (or maybe a "wild", "crazy", or "cockamamie conspiracy theory"), but I'll attempt to provide sufficient evidence to justify calling it a "conspiracy hypothesis".

Of course, proposing a conspiracy hypothesis is one thing; it's more difficult to demonstrate that a particular conspiracy hypothesis has a high probability of being valid, "beyond a reasonable doubt", especially for such a "wicked conspiracy" as I'm suggesting Ezra & C-C perpetrated. Actually, though, the task I'm undertaking is relatively simple: I don't seek to "prove" the alleged conspiracy "beyond a reasonable doubt" for anyone; instead, I'll try to present evidence and innuendos that may plant seeds of suspicion in readers' minds about strategies, tactics, and methods used by Ezra & C-C. In particular, it seems clear that the Persians wanted a Palestinian province (which paid its taxes and was loyal to the Empire) and that the Jewish priests wanted more power over the Jewish people. Furthermore, I'll show that, in a couple of instances, the Ezra & C-C conspiracy hypothesis proposed does provide predictions, and if archeological evidence confirms the predictions, then Bayes' method can be used to find the increased probability that the hypothesis is true.

Meanwhile, certainly I'm not the first to accuse Ezra & C-C of such a conspiracy. For example, as described by Richard Carrier,¹ the “Christian father” Eusebius of Caesarea (c.263–339), in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*, promotes lying for the cause of Christianity – just as Plato had suggested lying for the welfare of the state and just as the Hebrew priests had done (Eusebius suggests) in promoting their religion. In this quotation from Carrier, he's first quoting Eusebius, who in turn quotes Plato:

That it is necessary sometimes to use falsehood as a medicine for those who need such an approach. [As said in Plato's *Laws* 663e by the Athenian {one of the discussants}:] “And even the lawmaker who is of little use... if he dared lie to young men for a good reason, then can't he lie? For falsehood is something even more useful... and sometimes even more able to bring it about that everyone willingly keeps to all justice.” [Then by Clinias {the other discussant}:] “Truth is beautiful, stranger, and steadfast. But to persuade people of it is not easy.” You would find many things of this sort being used even in the Hebrew scriptures, such as concerning God being jealous or falling asleep or getting angry or being subject to some other human passions, for the benefit of those who need such an approach.

Carrier adds:

So in a book where Eusebius is proving that the pagans got all their good ideas from the Jews, he lists as one of those good ideas Plato's argument that lying, indeed telling completely false tales, for the benefit of the state is good and even necessary. Eusebius then notes quite casually how the Hebrews did this, telling lies about their God, and he even compares such lies with medicine, a healthy and even necessary thing...

LIES versus MISTAKES

There are, of course, different types of lies, and some support can be found for Plato's argument quoted above. What are commonly called “white lies” are those untruths told to benefit someone other than the teller. For example, if in response to a meal prepared by your spouse you say, “**Great meal, wonderful meal, you're a tremendous cook**”, then you might even suffer – by having to endure a similar meal again! In contrast, so-called “black lies” are told primarily to benefit the liar.

¹ See http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/richard_carrier/NTcanon.html - XV.

And if it should be argued that lies told by clerics (not just Jewish clerics but all clerics) are “white lies”, because the clerical goal is to help the people, then I have two obvious responses:

- 1) Telling people lies about “the supernatural” doesn’t help the people, since no good comes from denying reality (which, sometimes unfortunately, seems to have a natural tendency to refuse to go away!), and
- 2) The primary beneficiaries of priestly lies have always been the priests (obviating their need to work for a living). As Voltaire said:

A clergyman is one who feels himself called upon to live without working at the expense of the rascals who work to live.

In particular, I propose that the purpose of the Ezra & C-C, OT conspiracy was to strengthen the Jewish priesthood, who planned to leech off the Jewish producers (farmers, tradesmen, fisherman, etc.) and I suggest that the strategy that the conspirators employed was to create the OT. As I’ll try to show, the two dominant features of their tactics were to lie and to corrupt older writings.

Maybe I should try to be more explicit about the distinction I’ll try to make between (religious) ‘mistakes’ and ‘lies’. Thus:

- In the time period roughly between fifty and five thousand years ago, when people first concocted ideas of spirits, souls, gods, and so on, most people (almost certainly) weren’t purposefully fabricating untruths (viz., lying); instead, in their ignorance, they were simply mistaken.
- During the past 5,000-or-so years (i.e., throughout history), if such people as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus (if they existed), Muhammad, and Sidney Rigdon (almost certainly the author of the Book of Mormon) claimed to hear messages from “the supernatural”, it would probably be inappropriate to call them ‘liars’; more likely, they had mental disorders (or I’ll use the common word ‘insane’, meaning “not sane”).
- And today, the majority of “modern” people who believe in spirits, souls, gods, sins, prayers, and so on, are probably not lying; instead, in their failures to educate themselves, in their failures to examine the evidence, in their failures to appreciate that beliefs should be held only as strongly as relevant evidence warrants, they simply continue in past errors; therefore, it would be more appropriate to describe such people as ‘failures’ rather than ‘liars’.

As Mark Twain (pseudonym of Samuel Clemens, 1835–1910) wrote in his *Autobiography*:

In religion and politics people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second-hand, and without examination, from authorities who have not themselves examined the questions at issue but have taken them at second-hand from other non-examiners, whose opinions about them were not worth a brass farthing.

An illustration of such failures is available in the comment by “Ted” (Comment #17, posted 24 Nov. 2007) associated with the article² at Black Sun Journal entitled “Refusing to Hide: Dialogue with a 12-year-old Atheist”:

I grew up in an atheist family... and adopted my parents' views, primarily because the explanations offered by my Christian friends didn't make sense. I do remember being ridiculed several times. Once in second grade I was on the bus and we were waiting outside of the school for the morning bell to ring. Someone heard me talking to one of my friends about atheism and they shouted it out to the bus driver. The bus driver stood up and an interesting dialog followed:

Bus Driver: Who wakes your mom up in the morning?

Me: An alarm clock

Bus Driver: Who wakes your dad up then?

Me: The same alarm clock

Bus Driver: Who makes the sun rise?

Me (stumped): ...

Everyone Else: GOD!

Bus Driver: Who makes the wind blow?

Everyone Else: GOD!

Thereby, by persecuting that second grader, the bus driver demonstrated his many failures: failure to study, failure to learn, failure to educate himself, failure to understand that the Sun rises because the Earth spins, failure to understand that the wind blows because of nonuniform heating of the Earth, failure to hold beliefs only as strongly as evidence warrants, and most importantly, failure to honor the little boy's doubt and to appreciate (as given in a Chinese proverb):

² At http://www.blacksunjournal.com/psychology/1127_refusing-to-hide-dialogue-with-a-12-year-old-atheist_2007.html.

Great doubts, deep wisdom; small doubts, little wisdom.

Moreover, the incident on the bus reveals a failure of our society: we have laws to try to protect children from physical and sexual abuse; why do we permit their mental abuse by such morons as that school-bus driver?

And of course it's not just bus drivers and similar brutes:

- In their classes, some teachers promote similar ignorance (e.g., promoting the intelligent-design speculation),
- In their courts, some judges promote praying, the display of the Ten Commandments, and the use of “the Holy Bible” to swear oaths, and
- In America, when will we see an end to politicians’ promoting scientific models developed by the ancient Egyptians?!

As H.L. Mencken said:

Men become civilized, not in proportion to their willingness to believe, but in proportion to their readiness to doubt.

But for now, I'll try to constrain such rants against failures of our society and get back to my meaning for ‘lie’. In contrast to mistakes, insanities, and failures, a ‘lie’ (according to my dictionary) is “**an intentionally false statement; used with reference to a situation involving deception...**” That definition of ‘lie’, however, relies on the incorrect concept that in the “open system” known as ‘reality’, it's possible to determine what's ‘true’ (and similarly, what's ‘false’).

Yet, as I've detailed elsewhere,³ such determinations are possible only in “closed systems”, such as games, pure mathematics, and religions, with their specified, inviolate, “rules of the game.” For open systems (e.g., in reality), in contrast, at best we can determine only the probability that any statement is true, with probabilities necessarily falling in the range greater than zero (“false”) and less than unity (“true”). In reality, we can't be certain of anything (even that claim!): ‘certainty’ implies probabilities of exactly zero (false) or exactly unity (true).

³ At http://zenofzero.net/docs/T1_Truth_&_Knowledge.pdf.

For example, as I've shown elsewhere⁴ and notwithstanding Descartes' conclusion (“I think; therefore I am”), we can't be sure even that we exist: we may be just simulations in a colossal computer game! The probability that we exist, however, seems to very close to unity, roughly to within 1 part in 10^{25} of unity, i.e., 0.9999999999999999999999999999 – if I counted all those 9s correctly!

Meanwhile, the probability of the existence of any god can easily be seen to be extremely small, essentially certainly less than 1 part in 10^{100} and more likely less than 1 part in $10^{1,00}$ (i.e., 0.00000... continue for a total of 999 zeros... 1).⁵ Consequently, anyone who claims with certainty that any god exists (i.e., who claims that the probability of the existence of some god is exactly unity) is either ignorant or a liar, where with the adjective ‘ignorant’ I'd include fools, failures, and the insane.

I agree with my dictionary's definition that a lie is distinguished from a mistake by intent. If someone propagates as “true” an idea that he thinks has a high probability of being true but in reality has a high probability of being false, then he's (simply) mistaken. On the other hand, if a person propagates an idea as “true” that he expects has high probability of being false, and does so primarily for his own benefit (or at least, not for the benefit of the recipient of the propagated idea), then he's a liar.

Thus, parents who propagate “the god idea” with the intent of helping their children (e.g., to gain “eternal life”, “moral direction”, “happiness”, “comfort”, “purpose”, “certainty”, etc.) and clerics who propagate the god idea with intent to similarly help their followers are mistaken: they propagate the god idea out of ignorance, not only ignorance about probabilities but also about the alleged benefits of the god idea.

On the other hand, clerics who propagate the god idea primarily for their own and their institution's benefit (e.g., for remuneration, to avoid working for a living, for power and prestige, etc.) are either ignorant (fools, failures, or insane) or liars: they're ignorant if they truly “believe”, with certainty, that any god exists (since no one but a fool, or someone who fails to take advantage of educational opportunities, or someone who is insane would have zero doubts about the validity of any idea) and more likely they're liars

⁴ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/IIIndoctrinationinIgnorance.pdf>.

⁵ Again, see <http://zenofzero.net/docs/IIIndoctrinationinIgnorance.pdf>.

(since they propagate an idea whose validity they doubt – but they do so, anyway, primarily for their own and their institution's benefit, with benefits to the institution also accruing to them).

And although it's difficult to correctly infer someone else's intention – especially the intentions of people who lived long ago – yet for reasons that I'll try to demonstrate in these posts, I have no doubt that the clerics who wrote (or better, “concocted”) the principal “holy books” of Western culture (the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, the Quran, and sundry other books, such as the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham) intended to deceive, for their own and for their fellow clerics' benefits, and therefore, were liars.

Certainly, all such “holy books” or “sacred scriptures” contain an enormous number of misunderstandings. It would be a challenge to find a single page of “sacred scripture” that doesn't contain erroneous ideas, most of which are so scientifically silly as to be humorous. Elsewhere⁶ I've commented on some such scientific mistakes and provided references where more such errors are detailed.

In this series of posts, though, my goal is different: to demonstrate at least a few of the many cases where historians have found that the authors of such “holy books” deliberately not only fabricated untruths but also, in many cases, did so by deliberately distorting the plagiarized work of others.

In what follows, I'll emphasize cases from the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT) of the Bible, plus cases from the Book of Mormon (BoM) and the Book of Abraham (BoA). I'll mention some cases in the Quran (or Qur'an or Koran) but not many, principally because in their societies, Muslim clerics still have sufficient power that, unfortunately, they aren't thrown into prison for ordering the killing of anyone who seeks to subject the Quran to historical analyses. Consequently, in the case of the Quran, I'm not able to rely on many results from competent historians – and I'm certainly not one of them!

In the case of lies in the Bible, it's hard to improve on Mark Twain's summary:

⁶ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix01Introduction.pdf>.

[The Bible] has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies.

As far as I know, nobody has counted the total number of lies in the Bible, but Twain's estimate is fairly good: “upwards of a thousand” – without specifying how far “upward” (of a thousand) the correct answer lies! Meanwhile, the number of lies in the Quran depends on how they're counted: should one count each alleged communication from Allah to Muhammad as a lie – or count them all together as one enormous lie? In the case of the Book of Mormon, a similar problem arises: one could count the lies that exist on essentially every page or count the entire book as just one humongous lie, since I'll be demonstrating (as others have) that it's a total fabrication, created for the benefit of still another group of con-artist clerics.

In the case of the OT, the Documentary Hypothesis (outlined in the previous post) doesn't address the politically (and religiously) sensitive question: Which parts of the OT simply represent misunderstandings of primitive people and which parts are nothing but priestly fabrications, forgeries, and lies? As Ingersoll said:

Now, they say that this book [the Bible] is inspired. I do not care whether it is or not. The question is: Is it true? If it is true, it doesn't need to be inspired. Nothing needs inspiration except a falsehood or a mistake.

But even for the OT, I'm not going to try to provide a detailed answer to Ingersoll's question “*Is it true?*” Not only have hundreds (if not thousands) of conscientious scholars spent centuries trying to answer that question; I don't have the time, energy, or even inclination to try. In fact, my inclination is to resort to an obvious argument: since we can say, with enormously more certainty than that we exist [probability of about 0.9999999999999999999999999999] that no god exists or has ever existed [probability of about 0.9999999999999999999999999999... (continue for a total of 999, 9s)], then with similarly enormous certainty, we can confidently conclude that all “holy books”, all “sacred scriptures”, are nothing but speculations, mistakes, fabrications, lies, stupidities, hooey, garbage... that belong in the trashcan of human mistakes – save for a few copies, tucked away (e.g., in the “reserve section” of libraries) for future scholars to study, to see how dumb humans once were!

But in spite of my (strong!) inclination to thereby dismiss all “sacred scripture” as so much balderdash, yet in this series of posts, in case some readers aren’t convinced by what I consider to be the “obvious argument” (given above), I’ll try to provide at least some evidence of clerical lies.

LIES IN *GENESIS 1*

Of all the lies that people tell, a compelling argument can easily be made that the most pathetic is to lie to themselves. A case in point is the school bus driver, mentioned above. He lied to himself that he “knows” that “God” makes the Sun rise in the morning and causes the wind to blow. In reality, he “knows” no such thing: he assumes it; he has simply accepted the authority of his parents, his community, or his clerics; he’s adopted a simple model of the universe, comfortable for his simple mind; if he were honest with himself, then when asked why the sun comes up and why the wind blows, he would answer (in the vernacular): “**I dunno.**”

In China, approximately 100 years before Ezra and co-conspirators were “redacting” the OT, Kung the master (i.e., Kung fu tse or, Latinized, Confucius, c. 555–479 BCE) saw what that bus driver never learned:

When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it – this is [the beginning of wisdom].

In Greece, during the time period when Ezra & C-C were fabricating the OT, Socrates (469–399 BCE) similarly saw what that bus driver failed to see (and religious people fail to see):

[T]he most reprehensible form of ignorance [is] that of thinking one knows what one does not know...

In contrast to such wisdom, such honesty, consider what Ezra & C-C wrote at the start of *Genesis 1* (copied, here, from the New English Bible, not only because it’s easier to read but also because the compilers were careful to provide alternative translations):

In the beginning of creation, when God [Elohim] made heaven and earth, the earth was without form and void, with darkness over the face of the abyss, and a mighty wind that swept over the surface of the waters. God [Elohim] said, “Let there be light”, and there was light; and God [Elohim] saw that the light was good, and he separated light from darkness. He called the light day, and the darkness night. So evening came, and morning came, the first day.

In an earlier chapter,⁷ I commented on some of the many scientific errors in *Genesis 1* and on its many possible origins. Here, I'll ignore the scientific silliness and only briefly list possible sources used by the author (or authors, assumed to be Ezra & C-C). Listing possible sources from progressively more ancient times, they include the following three.

1. The Persian (Zoroastrian) six-period (not six-day!) creation myth (from ~1000 – 600 BCE), which was eventually written in *The Bundahishn* (“*Creation*”) 1, 28, and which includes the same order of creation as in the first genesis myth of the OT:⁸

Of Ohrmazd's [or Ahura Mazda's] creatures of the world, the first was the sky; the second, water; the third, earth; the fourth, plants; the fifth, animals; the sixth, mankind.

2. The Babylonian creation myth Enuma Elish (recorded on clay tablets ~1100 BCE but undoubtedly communicated orally for many centuries), which contains a similar six-periods of creation⁹ (six generations of gods) and which, after the new chief god (Marduk) makes man, even has a seventh period, during which the newly created man is to serve the gods, so they (similar to Yahweh) can rest:

Blood to blood I [Marduk] join,
blood to bone I form an original thing
[out of one of the fallen gods];
its name is Man,
aboriginal man is mine in making.

All his occupations are faithful service,
the gods that fell have rest...

When universal law was set up and the gods allotted their calling, then the Anunnaki [the rest of the gods]... opened their mouths to speak to Marduk: “Now that you have freed us and remitted our labor how shall we make a return for this? Let us build a temple and call it The-Inn-of-Rest-by-Night. There we will sleep at the season of the year, at the Great Festival when we form the Assembly; we will build altars for him [Marduk], we will build the Parakku, the Sanctuary.”

When Marduk heard this his face shone like broad day: “Tall Babel Tower, it shall be built as your desire; bricks shall be set in moulds and you shall name it Parakku, the Sanctuary.”

3. The Egyptian creation myth recorded in the Pyramid Texts ~1500 BCE but undoubtedly from much earlier:

In the beginning, before there was any land of Egypt, all was darkness, and there was nothing but a great waste of water called Nun. The power of Nun was such that there arose out of the darkness a great shining egg, and this was Re [or Ra, the sun god]. Now, Re was all-powerful, and he could

⁷ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix05BiblicalMyths.pdf>.

⁸ Translation available at <http://avesta.org/mp/bundahis.html - chapter1>.

⁹ See http://www.meta-religion.com/World_Religions/Ancient_religions/Mesopotamia/genesis_and_enuma_elish_creation.htm.

take many forms. His [Re's] power and the secret of it lay in his hidden name... if he [Re] spoke other names, that which he named came into being. [Just as Ezra & C-C claimed for their god.]

After five days of making other gods, on the sixth day Re arranged for man to be made:

The mighty Khnem'u fashioned them upon His potter's wheel, and Re breathed into them the breath of life.

Of course, essentially every culture had its genesis myth. One that I find particularly entertaining is the genesis myth of a tribe of African Pygmies, whose chief god is Khonvum. The following description of the myth is copied from Arthur Cotterell's book *A Dictionary of World Mythology*, Oxford University Press, 1986.

“In the beginning was god; today is god; tomorrow will be god”... After the creation of the world, [Khonvum] lowered from the sky to the earth the first men – the Pygmies... [It's neat how the “chosen race” for each god just happened to be of the same stature or color or... of the people who concocted the myth! Of course, not that I'm suspicious about who chose the Pygmies or the Hebrews or... to be “god's chosen people”!] The nightly chore of Khonvum is the renewal of the sun; he collects broken pieces of stars in his sack and tosses armfuls of them at the sun, so it can rise again next morning in its original splendor.

I rather like the above myth: at least the Pygmies identified something for their god to do! In contrast, the meddlesome god familiar in our culture (i.e., the Egyptian god Aton or Adonai or Adonis or El or Yahweh or Jehovah or Allah or ‘just plain’ God) seems to have nothing better to do than meddle in peoples' affairs: the universal busybody!

But that bit of fun aside, notice for the first genesis myth in the OT not only the apparent plagiarisms by Ezra & C-C of earlier Persian, Babylonian, and Egyptian myths but also their blatant lie. They state, in essence and in no uncertain terms: “This is the way creation occurred.” In reality, though, they didn't know it. If they weren't lying to the world, then even worse, they were lying to themselves. But I strongly suspect that they knew they didn't know.

If a reader eager to defend Ezra & C-C responded with something similar to: “But all cultures had their creation myths and all state in no uncertain terms how creation occurred” or “In those ancient days, a person couldn't be expected to be so honest”, then an appropriate response would be: “Not so!”

For example, as Carl Sagan pointed out in his book *Broca's Brain: Reflections on the Romance of Science*, one of the Hindu “holy book”, the *Rig Veda* (129.6) states:

Who truly knows, who can honestly say, where this universe came from and where it will vanish to at the end? Those godlike wise men who claim they know were born long after the birth of creation. Who then could know where our universe really came from? And whoever knows or does not know where creation came from, only one gazing at its vastness from the very roof of the final heaven, only such a one could possibly know. But does even He know?

The exact date of origin of such honesty is unknown, but there's little doubt that it was recorded in the *Rig Veda* approximately 1,000 years before the time of Ezra. As Jawaharlal Nehru (the first Prime Minister of India after its independence from Britain) wrote:

Rig Veda is the earliest book that humanity possesses. Yet behind the *Rig Veda* itself lay ages of civilized existence and thought...

Actually, though, the above-quoted honesty in the *Rig Veda* is surrounded by drug-induced (specifically, Soma-induced) misunderstandings, mysticism, and lies, putting in question Nehru's claim of “ages of civilized existence and thought.” For example, the first five lines of the same *Hymn CXXIX, Creation*, from The Tenth Book of the *Rig Veda* (the lines quoted above being lines six and seven) are:

1. THEN was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it. What covered in, and where? and what gave shelter? Was water there, unfathomed depth of water?
2. Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal: no sign was there, the day's and night's divider. That One Thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever.
3. Darkness there was: at first concealed in dark knew this All was indiscriminated chaos. All that existed then was void and formless: by the great power of Warmth was born that Unit.
4. Thereafter rose Desire in the beginning, Desire, the primal seed and germ of Spirit. Sages who searched with their heart's thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent.

5. Transversely was their severing line extended: what was above it then, and what below it? There were begetters, there were mighty forces, free action here and energy up yonder.

When the priest that composed those first five lines came down from his Soma-induced “high”, it would have been interesting to hear his explanation of how “Desire” managed to appear in “the void”. I wonder if he would have been honest and replied: “I dunno.”

I presume it was a different Hindu priest who (almost certainly also on a Soma “high”) decided that he “knew”. Thus, in the same Book Ten of the *Rig Veda*, *Hymn CXC, Creation* states:

1. From Fervor kindled to its height Eternal Law and Truth were born: Thence was the Night produced, and thence the billowy flood of sea arose.
2. From that same billowy flood of sea the Year was afterwards produced, Ordainer of the days [and] nights, Lord over all who close the eye.
3. Dhatar, the great Creator, then formed in due order Sun and Moon. He formed in order Heaven and Earth, the regions of the air, and light.

Such musings are, unfortunately, characteristic of all mystics: unlike the rest of us, they needn’t slog through the tediousness of studying data, formulating succinct hypotheses (that summarize the data, are consistent with tested principles, and have predictive capability), testing predictions against new experimental results, and so on. In short, mystics don’t need to apply the scientific method to gain knowledge – at least, so they claim. Instead (so they claim), they “just know.” Stated differently, not only are they ignorant and liars, they’re lazy.

But although mystics are ignorant, lazy, and liars (even to themselves), those attributes, alone, might be tolerable. The attribute that becomes intolerable, however, is their resulting attitude. As Robert Ingersoll (1833–1899) wrote:

Whenever a man believes that he has the exact truth from God, there is in that man no spirit of compromise. He has not the modesty born of the imperfections of human nature; he has the arrogance of theological certainty and the tyranny born of ignorant assurance.

That’s the attitude adopted by Ezra & C-C (and of all clerics who concocted all “holy books”): they claim to be in possession of “the Truth”, and all who disagree with them are, if not evil, at least damned. As Mark Twain said:

* Go to other chapters *via*

Man is the religious animal. He is the only religious animal. He is the only animal that has the True Religion – several of them. He is the only animal that loves his neighbor as himself and cuts his throat, if his theology isn't straight. He has made a graveyard of the globe in trying his honest best to smooth his brother's path to happiness and heaven.

What a difference between such ignorant certainty and honest doubt! Few religious people, it would seem, appreciate the wisdom expressed by Pharaoh Akhenaton (c.1353 – c.1336 BCE):

The wise man doubteth often, and changeth his mind; the fool is obstinate, and doubteth not; he knoweth all things but his own ignorance.

But then, even Akhenaton apparently succumbed to his own cockamamie theory (his speculation) about God (aka Aton): he's commonly called the world's first monotheist. In turn, Akhenaton's idea led to the ridiculous speculations about God described by Zarathustra, which were later incorporated in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Mormonism and which, still today, pollute the world.

Throughout history, however, there have been doubters – evidence for which can be seen even in the theists' "sacred scriptures" and "holy books", all of which damn those whom the theists label as doubters, infidels, nonbelievers, atheists, and similar "badges of honor". Although throughout history the damn theists have tried to silence the doubters (e.g., by killing them) and to destroy their recorded thoughts, a few jewels have survived. Some illustrations from Ancient Greece are the following.

But as for certain truth, no man has known it, nor will he know it – neither of the gods nor yet of all the things of which I speak. And even if by chance he were to utter the final truth, he would himself not know it, for all is but a woven web of guesses.
[Xenophanes (c.570 – c.475 BCE)]

Everything has a natural explanation. The moon is not a god but a great rock and the sun a hot rock. [Anaxagoras, imprisoned and sentenced to death for such "blasphemy" in about 450 BCE]

About the gods, I am not able to know whether they exist or do exist, nor what they are like in form; for the factors preventing knowledge are many: [including] the obscurity of the subject, and the shortness of human life. [From Protagoras' book *On The Gods*, which resulted in the first known instance of official "book burning" (by Greek clerics), in 415 BCE, and his exile.]

When I look upon seamen, men of physical science, and philosophers, man is the wisest of all beings. When I look upon priests, prophets, and interpreters of dreams, nothing is so contemptible as man. [Diogenes (412–323 BCE)]

Moreover, even in the Bible's first genesis myth, there's a hint of another "contemptible" aspect of Ezra & C-C's conspiracy. Why (any rational person would probably ask) did they end their silly creation myth with the following?

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their mighty throng. On the sixth day God [Elohim] completed all the work he had been doing, and on the seventh day he ceased from all his work. God [Elohim] blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on that day he ceased from all the work he had set himself to do.

Did Elohim tire from uttering the names of things to make them appear (or from snapping his fingers creating them, or whatever)? Isn't it a bit insulting to suggest that an omnipotent god gets tired?! Or were Ezra & C-C just mimicking the *Enuma Elish*: if Marduk could rest after creating man, then so could Elohim!

Yet, strong hints of the clerics' conspiracy appear in the fourth commandment (e.g., *Exodus 20, 8*), where Yahweh allegedly says:

Remember to keep the sabbath day holy. You have six days to labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God...

So, does that mean that God or Yahweh or Elohim (or better, the conspiring clerics) are promoting an enlightened policy for laborers of the world? Finally for the farmers, fisherman, fighters, and so on, will there be relief in the form of a six-day workweek?

Not bloody likely! Farmers need to work as the weather and crops demand; fisherman, too, would be well-advised to fish when the fish are running and weather permits; and thank you very much, but I hope that the fighters (fighting fires, crimes, invaders, disease, illnesses, whatever) will be on call whenever they're needed (and I'll be quite content if all such groups of workers have even months on end with little to do).

So what's with the new policy? Why are farmers told to let their crops be ruined by rain or frost or whatever, the fisherman told to ignore the fish run and not to secure their boats from an approaching storm, the fighters told to "cease and desist" once per week – on "the holy day"? It couldn't possibly

be, could it, that the damnable clerics want a guaranteed, captive audience, once per week, to collect the booty from the fools who fall for the clerics' ruse? I strongly suspect that the Jewish clerics were just plagiarizing the Babylonian priests' idea (from the *Enuma Elish*, quoted above) that man was created to serve the gods – and the priests would consume what the gods didn't want!

LIES IN *GENESIS 2 & 3*

Next, consider the (different) creation myth that's given in *Genesis 2 & 3*. In this story, not Elohim ("God") but Yahweh ("the Lord God") "breathed into [Adam's] nostrils the breath of life" (similar to how the Egyptian god Re put life in his clay man), placed him in the Garden of Eden "to till and care for it", forbade him from eating "from the tree of knowledge of good and evil", took one of the man's ribs and "built up the rib... into a woman", leading Adam to declare of Eve: "from man was this [woman] taken." Of course, all of that's a pack of lies: whoever wrote such nonsense was a liar, claiming to know what couldn't be known, but lying apparently with a number of purposes, consistent with the priesthood's conspiracy.

The reader can be fairly confident that the writer was a man (in spite of what I quoted in the previous post, suggesting that "J" might possibly have been a woman). In fact, evidence suggests that the writer was not only a male but also a male chauvinist, since one of his (and the co-conspirators') goals was apparently to continue to subvert all women.

Thus, for one, the writer who concocted the silliness that the first woman came from a man's body did his best to subvert the reality that males come from women's bodies (i.e., their mothers'). As I outlined in an earlier chapter,¹⁰ the writer ("J") promoted his conspiracy by plagiarizing and distorting the Sumerian myth about *Nin-ti* ("the lady of the rib" or "lady of life"), which in Hebrew became *Havva* ("life"), which in English first became *Hevah* (as in the Persian cosmology), and in more recent editions of the Bible is 'Eve'. As I'll show in later posts, the writer of this portion of the Bible engaged in many more such plagiarisms and distortions of earlier myths.

¹⁰ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix05BiblicalMyths.pdf>.

The writer also tried to demolish any remnants of earlier religions in which females [such as Isis, Inanna, Ishtar, Ashtar, Eostre or Eastre (whom we still honor every Easter!), and Freya (whom we still honor every Friday!)] were worshipped as goddesses. From what one of the new clerics (Jeremiah) repeatedly wrote (at *Jeremiah 7, 18; 44, 17–19; and 45, 25*), the reader can gain a glimpse of what the clerics were fighting. For example, at *Jeremiah 7, 18* is the claim that Yahweh conveyed the following message:

Do you [Jeremiah] not see what is going on in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? Children are gathering wood, fathers lighting fires, women kneading dough to make crescent-cakes in honor of the Queen of Heaven...

How that fits in with the fight against older, maternalistic religions by the new breed of clerics promoting a patriarchal religion is rather complicated, probably best explained by someone who has spent much more time studying the subject than I ever want to, e.g., Amy Pavolvik. To the quotation of her writing (given below),¹¹ I've added a couple of notes.

One of Noah's descendants, Nimrod, "began to be a mighty one in the earth... And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel..." (*Genesis 10, 8-10*) Nimrod led the people in their defiance of God [Yahweh] as they erected the tower of Babel. "Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and of great strength of hand... He also said he would be revenged on God, if he would have a mind to drown the world again, for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! [Although that's inconsistent with the Babylonian myth, *Enuma Elish* (quoted above) in which the tower was built as a sanctuary for the gods.] And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers!" (The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus, Whiston, Kregel Publications, 1960, 1978, p. 30, quoted in Sutton, William Josiah, *The New Age Movement; And The Illuminati 666*, The Institute of Religious Knowledge, 1983, p. 17, 18)

The stories of Nimrod's life, conquests, and death were passed on in the worship of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. The Egyptians called him Osiris, and the Romans called him Mars.

How did this come about? Nimrod and his wife Semiramis began to be thought of as gods, as the sun and moon personified. When Nimrod died, Semiramis taught the people that his spirit now resided in the sun, that by morning he arose to bless the earth, and by evening he disappeared to fight with evil spirits under the earth. The... post-deluvians [post-flood people] were told to worship and give offerings to the sun each morning. The first day of the week was set aside for worship of the sun

¹¹ Quotation is from <http://calledtobeseparate.com/falsegods.html>.

[“Sunday”] while the other weekdays were assigned to other celestial entities [e.g., “Monday” = the Moon’s day; “Saturday” = Saturn’s day, and even more such in languages such as French and Italian].

When Semiramis became pregnant, she claimed that her child had been miraculously fathered by the sun god Nimrod. Tammuz, as the baby was named, was born December 25. His birthday was held in esteem as the rebirth of the sun. After all, the winter days were just beginning to lengthen on December 25. It became an annual celebration. [As it was, much later, for Mithras and, of course, for Jesus.]

According to legend, Tammuz’s wife, Ishtar, was the “Queen of Heaven”. The Hebrews called her Ashtoreth, and the Greeks and Romans, Venus.

Tammuz was killed by a wild boar. One legend says that the whole world mourned after his death, and Ishtar searched for him in the under-world. At the end of this mourning, Tammuz was believed to have become the new sun god.

Forty days were yearly assigned to fasting and mourning for Tammuz, at the end of which came Ishtar’s festival. To honor this “Queen of Heaven,” the worshippers offered food and wine to the rising sun on the hilltops. Cakes were baked, marked with a cross. “Our lord is risen!” they declared on this day...

Actually, though, I speculate that there’s more skullduggery, here (in *Genesis*), which will take a while to explain. In summary, I suspect that some later “redactor” (Ezra?) made matters even worse – made the story in *Genesis 2 & 3* even more ridiculous – by altering the original text. Specifically, I suspect that the original author (“J”) concocted the story that Yahweh told Adam not to partake of fruit from “the tree of knowledge” – without the added phrase informing the reader that it was knowledge “of good and evil”, which Ezra & C-C later added (for reasons that I’ll suggest).

There’s a big difference between fruit from “the tree of knowledge” and fruit from “the tree of knowledge of good and evil”! In contrast to the case of this new “tree of knowledge of good and evil”, for thousands if not tens of thousands of years, people used fruit from “the tree of knowledge” [i.e., fruits from trees (as well as leaves and roots from plants) that produced hallucinations] to gain “knowledge of the spirit world.”

A brief explanation might be useful. As I reviewed in an earlier chapter,¹² the idea that the world was full of spirits seems to have developed in stages. Thus, after primitive humans became aware of their own shadows (affixed to

¹² At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix02SpiritsSoulsandGods.pdf>.

themselves, but seemingly not of themselves), their reflections in pools of water (another “I” staring back), and possibly most importantly, dreamt (as even my dog seems to do!), dreams in which a “shadow” or “refection” of themselves could detach from their bodies and engage in a variety of activities (walking, hunting, copulating...) – although no doubt their companions assured them that they remained where they were, asleep – people probably concluded that they possessed a separate “spirit”, which could be set free when they dreamt – and when they died. Extension of that idea probably led to ideas about “spirits” of the people’s ancestors roaming nearby, entering their heads (as memories) and perhaps (imagined) to be seen or heard, maybe especially during nights.

The spirits of especially powerful ancestors (e.g., tribal chiefs) were probably imagined to be especially powerful spirits (the first gods), continuously available to help guide and protect the tribe. In time, such ideas apparently led to thoughts about spirits existing in everything, including rivers, the wind, “sacred” groves and caves, etc., i.e., to animism, which my dictionary defines as “[the belief in supernatural powers that organizes and animates the material universe.](#)”

Further, with knowledge of flora that would likely shame many modern botanists, primitive people (especially tribal “medicine” men and women or shamans) probably knew which plants and their fruits were hallucinogenic [recently called ‘entheogens’, literally meaning “[generating god within \(the user\)](#)”].¹³ No doubt different tribes in different regions would use different plants, just as in recorded time the Bwiti of Africa used the root bark of Iboga, Ancient Egyptians used the blue lotus, Greeks used kykeon, Siberians used fly araric mushroom (which may also be the Soma of the Hindus), cannibus was common in Germanic culture, and some Native Americans still use the peyote cactus. Ingesting such entheogens, primitive people “thought” that they entered “the spirit world” – as many “modern” people apparently still “think” (using the word ‘think’ extremely loosely).

Maybe the best example of the resulting drug-induced mysticism is from the “sacred scripture” of the Hindus. For example, in the Hindu’s *Rig Veda* there are 1,463 references to the entheogen Soma: on average, that’s approximately two references to Soma on every page! Illustrative (from *Hymn IV, Indri*, p. 2) is:

¹³ See, e.g., <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entheogen>.

Come thou to our libations, drink of Soma; Soma-drinker thou!

This holiest of “holy books” of Hinduism, the *Rig Veda*, could be called an ode to drinking Soma juice! In fact, an entire hymn (*XCI, The First Book*) is devoted to Soma, which is also recognized as a god. As Stephen Naylor summarizes in *Encyclopedia Mythica*:¹⁴

As a drink, Soma is the ambrosia of the gods. It was due to this influence that they could rise above all obstacles to achieve their goals. [The god] Indra was a great drinker of the substance; before his confrontation with Vitra, he drank rivers of it to gain the strength needed to overcome the fearsome dragon. Agni also consumed it in large amounts. Soma was what gave the Vedic gods their immortality. It was also a drink for mortals, a golden-hued nectar which was derived from the Soma plant, which may be a species known as *ephedra vulgaris* to botanists. This drink brought hallucinations and ecstasy to those who consumed it. It helped warriors to overcome their fears in battle, and it helped poets to become inspired to create. Soma was a bridge between the mortal world and that of the gods. This drink is the same as Haoma in Persian mythology.

It is, I think, particularly significant that Ezra’s bosses, the Persians (who were Zoroastrians) thus indulged in “fruit from the tree of knowledge”. Thus, I expect that, when the Zoroastrian priests “proof-read” Ezra & C-C’s proposed OT, they demanded changes!

That is, I expect the original author (“J”) of *Genesis 2* (which seems to have been written in about 800 BCE) was probably attempting to stop the people from using hallucinogens. Depending on the reader’s proclivity for “conspiracy theories”, the original writing could be interpreted either as the priests’ concern for their community, promoting the message “Don’t do drugs!”, or as the priests saying, in essence: “All future communications with the supernatural are to go through us priests.”

I suspect that, when the Persian priests proof-read Ezra & C-C’s production and saw that “God” said “Don’t do drugs!”, the Zoroastrian priests objected, in essence saying: “That’s wrong! God would never tell people not to use our wonderful Haoma!” So, I speculate, Ezra & C-C probably proposed a compromise: to change – to corrupt – what “J” had written to what now exists in the OT, with Yahweh telling Adam not to eat from “the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”

¹⁴ At <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/s/soma.html>.

But that expected compromise led to nonsense. Thus, for one, if Adam didn't know (and couldn't know) the difference between good and evil, then he wouldn't know either that it was "good" to obey orders (e.g., the order not to eat from the tree of knowledge) or that it was "evil" not to obey orders. Second, the statement makes no sense, because good and evil (and all shades in between) have meaning only with respect to some objective.

Now, the author ("J") claims that Yahweh did assign a goal for Adam ("to till and care for [the Garden]"), but consider poor old Adam's plight: without knowledge of what was good vs. evil, he couldn't possibly "till and care for [the Garden]"! Thus, how was he to know, for example, that it would be "good" to weed the garden of "bad" plants, to make sure all the "good" plants had sufficient water, to appropriately prune certain trees, and so on, and that it would be "evil" to till the soil when the wind was excessive, to cut down all the trees, or to set fire to the whole place? All such decisions require knowledge of what was good and evil in accomplishing his assigned goal, but Yahweh forbade him from learning the difference between good and evil! It's crazy!

In fact, it's even worse than crazy: the whole story of *Genesis 2 & 3* collapses in absurdity. *Genesis 2* starts with Yahweh breathing life into Adam ("Thus the man became a living creature") and creating Eve from Adam's rib, and closes with two naked people who "had no feeling of shame toward one another", because they hadn't eaten fruit from "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" and therefore didn't know it was naughty to be naked – even in front of one's own spouse?! The picture that the author apparently would have us imagine is that Adam and Eve were like two innocent little bunny rabbits living happily in lush surroundings.

But that picture was ruined by Ezra & C-C's assumed redaction. If Adam and Eve didn't (and couldn't) know the difference between good and evil, then they wouldn't know that it was "good" even to eat. Rabbits, in contrast, know that it's "good" to eat – and "evil" to be eaten (e.g., by some "bad" coyote); that it's "good" to live and "bad" to die; in short, that "the good" is to live! In fact, that's the fundamental characteristic of all life: knowing that it's "good" to try to continue living. Rocks, in contrast, don't know that it's good to live. Therefore, the story was ruined by Ezra & C-C's assumed redaction to placate the Persian priests.

* Go to other chapters via

In sum, it all becomes a damnable lie. Yahweh didn't give Adam and Eve life. Without the knowledge of good and evil, without the knowledge that the fundamental good is to live, then like a couple of mannequins, Adam and Eve were as lifeless as the sand and clay from which they were allegedly made.

Instead, in reality, it was Mother Nature (viz., evolution) that gave life both its purpose and its knowledge of good and evil: that the purpose of life was to live and, therefore, that “the good” was to try to continue living; at the genetic level, that it was “good” to “**go forth and multiply**”.

For humans, in particular, with our prime advantage being our larger brains, “the good” is to try to solve our problems as intelligently as we can. As Socrates said: “**There is only one good, knowledge** [or willingness to learn] **and one evil, ignorance** [or refusal to learn].” By Socrates' standard, then, science is good and religion is evil – although, rather than insisting on applying Socrates' standard, maybe we would make more progress trying to get the religious fools of the world to smarten up if we intelligently applied M.M. Mangasarian's summary:

Religion is the science of children; science is the religion of adults.

But returning to the proposed “conspiracy hypothesis”, it's apparent from the above that a prediction is available. The prediction is that, if a version of Genesis 2 & 3 is found that predates Ezra & C-C, that version will describe just the “**tree of knowledge**”, without the additional phrase “**of good and evil**”. Then, whether the prediction is validated or not, Bayes' method¹⁵ can be used to estimate the change in the probability that the conspiracy hypothesis is valid.

Meanwhile, and finally for this post, consider the claim in *Genesis 3* in which the serpent allegedly talks Eve into eating fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and then God [Yahweh] punishes the lot of them. Unfortunately, this story contains even more idiocies! Elsewhere,¹⁶ I've commented on the many Babylonian, Sumerian, Egyptian, and even African origins of the myth; here I'll focus just on its idiocies.

¹⁵ E.g., see http://zenofzero.net/docs/T2_Truth_&_Understanding.pdf.

¹⁶ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix05BiblicalMyths.pdf>.

One might think that Yahweh’s punishment of the serpent (for tricking Eve) would be for the serpent to lose his ability to talk, but in case the reader didn’t know, snakes can still talk (at least, according to the OT!) – although I’ve found that it’s rare to hear them talk, because they laugh so much. That is, previously, before the serpent tricked Eve, snakes apparently had many legs – much like a centipede. The other day I heard a snake say:

That stupid Yahweh! Can you imagine how much trouble it was putting on all those socks and shoes and tying all those shoelaces? And he thought he was punishing us by removing our legs, so we could zoom around on our bellies! S-S-S-S-S. [That “S-S-S-S”, common for snakes, is how they laugh.]

Eve’s punishment for learning the difference between good and evil (without which, she couldn’t live!) was, in part, “**You shall be eager for your husband, and he shall be your master.**” Of course, that’s more of the same male-chauvinist crap from the priests, but it’s worse – so much so, that I don’t understand how any even-half-way-intelligent female would have anything to do with such a god (or with anyone who promoted such a god): not only is he stupid, he’s evil, with an inability to comprehend even the simplest concept of “fairness”.

Eve did nothing wrong: it was impossible for her to know that she was to obey Yahweh’s order (since “HE” didn’t permit her to know the difference between good and evil, e.g., that it was “good” to obey his orders). And then, the idiot Yahweh not only punishes her for her non-crime, he simultaneously punishes all women who will ever live! My great, great, great... granddaughters are condemned to be slaves (to their husbands) because of the non-crime of their great, great, great... grandmother Eve?

That corrupts the essence of justice! If it’s God’s idea of justice, then how can any woman have anything to do with him?! We should hear, from all the woman of the world yelling at all clerics of all Abrahamic religions, “**Blow it out your ear!**” – or more fitting for more refined ladies (as someone else said): “**You go Yahweh and I’ll go mine.**”

And Adam’s punishment? Well, besides having a wife who was eager to have sex with him (Some punishment! What was the crazy cleric “J” thinking? Was he a homosexual?), Adam’s punishment was well summarized by Ayn Rand:

* Go to other chapters *via*

[The Doctrine of Original Sin] declares that [man] ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge – he acquired a mind and became a rational being. It was the knowledge of good and evil – he became a moral being. He was sentenced to earn his bread by his labor – he became a productive being. He was sentenced to experience desire – he acquired the capacity of sexual enjoyment. The evils for which [the clerics] damn him are reason, morality, creativeness, joy – all the cardinal values of his existence.

In his 1872 book *The Gods*, Robert Ingersoll summarized:

If the account given in Genesis is really true, ought we not, after all, to thank this serpent? He was the first schoolmaster, the first advocate of learning, the first enemy of ignorance, the first to whisper in human ears the sacred word liberty, the creator of ambition, the author of modesty, of inquiry, of doubt, of investigation, of progress and of civilization.

Finally, Genesis 3 ends with something to think about:

He [Yahweh] said, “The man has become like one of us [i.e., one of us gods, there being many gods, doncha know] knowing good and evil; what if he now reaches out his hand and takes fruit from the tree of life also, eats it, and lives for ever?” [We can’t have that! Humans aren’t to live forever like us gods!] So the Lord God [Yahweh] drove him [Adam] out of the Garden of Eden... He cast him out, and to the east of the Garden of Eden he stationed the cherubim and a sword whirling and flashing to guard the way to the tree of life [as the constellation Perseus, i.e., this is all part of a silly, plagiarized, astrological tale].

So, given the undoubtedly “literal truth” of the “Holy Bible”, with nothing to be added to it or taken away, maybe the reader would want to tell promoters of Christianity, Islam, Mormonism, etc. to put a lid on their trash: clearly their God doesn’t want humans to live forever.