

Yx31 – Clerical Quackery 11 – The Concocted Christ

This is the 31st in a series of posts dealing with the history of what I call “the God Lie”, the 11th in a subseries of posts emphasizing “Clerical Quackery”, and the 2nd dealing with clerical quackery involved in the “Concoction of Christianity. In the previous post, I outlined (and provided some references for) how Christianity was concocted from a variety of ingredients, including the Mystery religions, astrological nonsense, wild metaphysical speculations, ubiquitous superstition, and other cultural and political factors. As a continuation of the previous post, my goal for this post is to outline (and provide references for) a specific one of the “other cultural and political factors”, namely (using the numbering system of the previous post):

7. Blatant Conspiracy by a New Breed of Clerics

As the popular Jewish-American comedian Lewis Black recently joked:¹

You don't understand the Jewish people... We Jews understand... We know what we're good at, and what we're really good at is bullshit.

Well, a comedian can get away with such a sweeping generalization (perhaps Black was illustrating his competence in slinging BS!), but whereas I know a lot of Jewish people who excel in science rather than in BS, it would probably be better to restrict the indictment to ancient Jewish clerics and to admit that many people with Jewish ancestry continue to excel at storytelling, e.g., those in the entertainment industry.

The Old Testament (OT) contains a huge number of examples of both storytelling and BS by ancient Jewish clerics: no god created the universe, a snake didn't have a conversation with the first two humans, no one loaded members of all animal species into an ark, the multiplicity of languages didn't result because a tower was built in Babylon, Abraham didn't have a chat with any god or any angels, Lot's wife wasn't turned into a pillar of salt, Joseph didn't enslave the Egyptians, Moses didn't part the Red Sea (or the Reed Sea), Joshua's trumpeters didn't blow down the walls of Jericho, Jonah didn't live for three days inside a whale, and so on. For purposes of this post, a particularly relevant example of clerical BS is the OT's *Book of Daniel*, which I briefly reviewed in the previous post.

¹ See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGrIWOhtj3g>.

Similar to the stories about Moses, which were almost certainly concocted by Ezra and co-conspirators (Ezra & C-C) as commentary on their conditions during their exile in Babylon, the author of *Daniel* commented on then-current (2nd Century BCE) events by constructing fictional tales in a 6th Century BCE historical setting. Perhaps the author of *Daniel* (similar to Plato) had ambitions of being a playwright – and the *Book of Daniel* was his attempt to produce his first successful play!

It's unknown (but doubtful) if many 2nd-Century-BCE Jews believed that *Daniel* described what actually occurred centuries earlier in Babylon – only “mentally challenged” Christians believe such nonsense! But in any case, the author of *Daniel* skillfully managed to convince people about Zarathustra's ideas of an end-of-time when a savior would rule and justice would prevail, i.e., “**the righteous**” (e.g., the martyrs) would be rewarded and “**the evil**” (apostates and ruling Greeks) would be punished. Such is the skill of a competent storyteller (aka BSer).

The example set by the OT's *Daniel* (it was adopted into Jewish canon by the ruling clerics, the Sadducees, and its ideas were promoted with vigor in the Dead Sea Scrolls, presumably written by the Essenes)² appears to have been the template used by later Jewish authors in concocting the Gospels of the New Testament (NT). The Essenes were waiting for a “messiah” (“**the promised deliverer of the Jewish nation prophesied in the Hebrew Bible**”), astrologers appear to have concluded that the end of the Age of Aires / the start of the Age of Pisces would occur during the triple conjunction of Jupiter (Jesus) and Saturn (Yahweh),³ and Jewish storytellers who had essentially memorized the OT started spinning out tales about God's alleged son, Jesus.

The mystery, treachery, and intrigue of the concocted Jesus story would have made Alfred Hitchcock envious – and the blood and gore obviously did make the mentally-challenged Mel Gibson drool. What the vast majority of (simpleton) Christians didn't (and apparently still don't) realize, however, is that such mystery, treachery, intrigue, and blood and gore was (and is!) a humongous pile of BS.

² See, e.g., http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_Sea_Scrolls_-_Origin_of_the_Scrolls.

³ See, e.g., <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix08BiblicalStarMyths.pdf>.

7.1 Did Jesus Even Exist?

Actually, for purposes of these posts, there's no need to review any of the vast literature dealing with whether or not Jesus existed. Interested readers may want to explore on the internet some of the 15,000 Google-hits that the phrase "did Jesus exist" yields.

Yet, in case anyone is interested in my opinion (although they shouldn't be, since it's an uninformed opinion by a non-historian), I'll mention that I expect that there was an itinerant mystic named Jesus who managed to convince a few first-century Jews that he wasn't bonkers – in spite of evidence to the contrary. Among those so convinced seem to be his brother James ("the Just"), Peter (or Cephas, "the rock"), Thomas ("the Contender"), and Jesus's girlfriend, Mary of Magdala (or Mary Magdalene).

If one doesn't accept the possibility that such a Jesus existed, it would then seem necessary to develop elaborate hypotheses to explain the writings by those mentioned (and others) that were found in 1945 at Nag Hammadi,⁴ as well as the *Gospel According to Mary*.⁵ For example, if one assumes that Jesus didn't exist, it would seem difficult to explain such childish arguments as the following, recorded in Chapter 9 of *The Gospel of Mary*:

When Mary had said this, she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Savior had spoken with her.

But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, "Say what you wish to say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas."

Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Savior: "Did He really speak privately with a woman and not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?"

Then Mary wept and said to Peter, "My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I have thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Savior?"

Levi answered and said to Peter, "Peter you have always been hot tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Savior knows her very well. That is why He loved her more than us. Rather, let us be ashamed and put on the

⁴ See, e.g., <http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl.html>.

⁵ Available at, e.g., <http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>.

perfect Man, and separate as He commanded us and preach the gospel, not laying down any other rule or other law beyond what the Savior said.”

And when they heard this they began to go forth to proclaim and to preach.

7.2 Did the New Testament Jesus Exist?

But whether or not Mary Magdalene’s Jesus existed, a separate question is: Did the Jesus described in the NT ever exist? And it’s relatively easy to show that an appropriate answer to that question is: “Don’t be silly! Of course the Jesus described in the NT never existed: he’s a character of childish fiction.” As famously summarized by the theologian, medical doctor, Humanist, and the winner of the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize, Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), in his 1906 book entitled *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*:

There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the life of Jesus. The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the kingdom of God, who founded the kingdom of God upon earth, and died to give his work its final consecration, never had any existence. His image has not been destroyed from without, it has fallen to pieces, cleft and disintegrated by the concrete historical problems which come to the surface one after another....

As a result, there’s a dramatic difference between the Jesus described in the Nag Hammadi (NH) scrolls (written by members of a Christian sect called the Gnostics) *versus* the Jesus of the New Testament (NT).

7.2.1 The NH-Jesus

To begin the comparison between the NT- and the NH-Jesus, consider some characteristics of the NH-Jesus depicted in the *Gospel of Thomas*.⁶ In it, Jesus appears to be a nutcase who thinks he’s light (rather than matter), but he seems to have meant well, and he does provide some sound advice. The following quotations are illustrative (without being too badly contaminated by the verbal dysentery of most of his alleged statements):

Jesus said, “It is I who am the light which is above them all. It is I who am the all. From me did the all come forth, and unto me did the all extend. Split a piece of wood, and I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find me there.”

Jesus said, “If they say to you, ‘Where did you come from?’, say to them, ‘We came from the light, the place where the light came into being on its own accord and established itself and became manifest through their image’... ”

⁶ Available at http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl_thomas.htm.

His disciples said to him, “When will the kingdom come?”

[Jesus said] “It will not come by waiting for it. It will not be a matter of saying ‘here it is’ or ‘there it is.’ Rather, the kingdom of the father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it.”

Jesus said to them, “If you fast, you will give rise to sin for yourselves; and if you pray, you will be condemned; and if you give alms, you will do harm to your spirits.”

In contrast to the NH-Jesus, the NT-Jesus appears to be mostly a contrived character in a childish drama, a little of which I’ll illustrate below.

7.2.2 The NT-Jesus

Importantly for comparison with the Jesus of the NT, there’s nothing in the *Gospel of Thomas* (or in most NH scrolls) about Jesus dying for our sins (to provide us with the opportunity for eternal life in paradise) or about his forming a church – both of which are foundational dogmas of “modern” Christianity. Thus, in contrast to the NH-scrolls, the NT contains wild speculations such as at the *Gospel of John* 3, 16:

“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Another example is the play on words at *Matthew* 16, 18 that all popes have claimed gives them authority over the world:

“And I [Jesus] say this to you: You are Peter [or Cephas, Greek *Kephas*; Aramaic: *Kêfâ*, “rock, stone”; Greek for “rock, stone”, *Pétros*, i.e., Peter], **the Rock**; and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall never conquer it.”

Not entirely incidentally, although the NT-Jesus praises Peter for his response to the question “**Who do you say I am?**” (namely, e.g., at *Luke* 9, 21: “**God’s Messiah**”), leading to Jesus proclaiming Peter as “**the rock**” on which the Christian church would be built, yet in the NH’s *Gospel of Thomas* (v.13), Jesus was apparently so disappointed in Peter’s response (namely, “**You are like a just messenger**”) that Jesus ignored his response!

What therefore seems to have occurred ~2,000 years ago is that the two groups of mystics (the Gnostics and a group that followed Peter) were competing (for control over converts), and until the Roman emperor Constantine (c.274–337 CE) made Christianity the empire’s “state religion” in 324 CE, giving the Catholic Church “the power of the sword”, then as

seen by comparing the NH gospels with the NT gospels, it was initially a “war of words” (or, more accurately, a war of BS) between the two groups.

Further, as for the claim by Peter’s group (in the NT) that “**on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall never conquer it**”, that may yet be seen to be another of the NT’s failed prophecies, since this “rock” may soon be drowned by the pedophilia of its priests (and thereby, some good may yet come from such evil), for as Jesus allegedly said (*Luke 17, 2*):

“It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone round his neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble.”

As for the NT’s depiction of Jesus, it may contain a kernel of a historical Jesus, but the structure concocted around the kernel is like the layered leaves of an artichoke, appropriately described (it would seem) as:⁷ “**a perennial thistle originating... around the Mediterranean.**”

The layered leaves of the Jesus artichoke would choke a horse. They include:

- The silly idea of a ghost impregnating the “virgin Mary”,
- Jesus’ birth marked by a star (undoubtedly a literary construct, probably representing the triple conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn that astrologers used to identify the start of the Age of Pisces),⁸
- His being lost and then found in the temple when he was 12 years old, saying (*Luke 2, 49*), “**Did you not know that I was bound to be in my Father’s house?**” (since, with Jesus as Jupiter, with its 12-year period of rotation about the Sun, he would necessarily return to the same “house” of the Zodiac),
- With Jesus as the Sun being followed by 12 apostles (one for each of the signs of the Zodiac),
- His feeding of the multitude with a few loaves of bread and two fishes (i.e., Pisces), “**the lamb of God**” being “**crucified on the cross**” (at the end of the Age of Aries, the ram),
- Being dead for three days (as the Moon is, every month), and then rising from the dead (as the Sun does after the winter solstice and for millennia was worshiped for doing so).

⁷ From <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artichoke>.

⁸ See, e.g., <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix08BiblicalStarMyths.pdf>.

The resulting “Mediterranean thistle” has been described in detail by hundreds of competent authors during the most recent more-than-a-century; therefore, rather than my engaging in the effort of trying to describe the resulting “thistle” in detail, below I’ll simply quote three such authors.

7.3 The Mythical Christ

My first example is from the Egyptologist Gerald Massey (1828–1907) who wrote the following for his 1887 lecture *The Historical Jesus and the Mythical Christ*.⁹

In presenting my readers with some of the data which show that much of the Christian History was pre-extant as Egyptian Mythology, I have to ask you to bear in mind that the facts, like other foundations, have been buried out of sight for thousands of years in a hieroglyphical language, that was never really read by Greek or Roman, and could not be read until the lost clue was discovered by Champollion, almost the other day! In this way the original sources of our Mytholatri and Christology remained as hidden as those of the Nile, until the century in which we live...

Secondly, although I am able to read the hieroglyphics, nothing offered to you is based on my translation. I work too warily for that! The transcription and literal rendering of the hieroglyphic texts herein employed are by scholars of indisputable authority. There is no loophole of escape that way. I lectured upon the subject of Jesus many years ago. At that time I did not know how we had been misled, or that the “Christian scheme” (as it is aptly called) in the New Testament is a fraud, founded on a fable in the Old!

I then accepted the Canonical Gospels as containing a veritable human history, and assumed, as others do, that the history proved itself. Finding that Jesus, or Jehoshua Ben-Pandira, was an historical character, known to the Talmud, I made the common mistake of supposing that this proved the personal existence of the Jesus found portrayed in the Canonical Gospels. But after you have heard my story, and weighed the evidence now for the first time collected and presented to the public, you will not wonder that I should have changed my views, or that I should be impelled to tell the truth to others, as it now appears to myself; although I am only able to summarize here, in the briefest manner possible, a few of the facts that I have dealt with exhaustively elsewhere...

According to the Babylonian *Gemara* to the *Mishna* of Tract “Shabbath,” this Jehoshua, the son of Pandira and Stada, was stoned to death as a wizard, in the city of Lud, or Lydda, and afterwards crucified by being hanged on a tree, on the eve of the Passover. This is the manner of death assigned to Jesus in the *Book of Acts*...

⁹ From http://gerald-massey.org.uk/massey/dpr_01_historical_jesus.htm.

The “blasphemous writings of the Jews about Jesus,” as Justin Martyr calls them, always refer to Jehoshua Ben-Pandira, and not to the Jesus of the Gospels. It is Ben-Pandira they mean when they say they have another and a truer account of the birth and life, the wonder-working and death of Jehoshua or Jesus. This repudiation is perfectly honest and soundly based. The only Jesus known to the Jews was Jehoshua Ben-Pandira, who had learnt the arts of magic in Egypt, and who was put to death by them as a sorcerer. This was likewise the only Jesus known to Celsus, the writer of the “True Logos,” a work which the Christians managed to get rid of bodily, with so many other of the anti-Christian evidences...

When the true tradition of Ben-Pandira is recovered, it shows that he was the sole historical Jesus who was hung on a tree by the Jews, not crucified in the Roman fashion, and authenticates the claim now to be made on behalf of the astronomical allegory to the dispensational Jesus, the Kronian Christ, the mythical Messiah of the Canonical Gospels, and the Jesus of Paul, who was not the carnalized Christ. For I hold that the Jesus of the “other Gospel,” according to the Apostles Cephas [Peter] and James, who was utterly repudiated by Paul, was none other than Ben-Pandira, the Nazarene, of whom James was a follower, according to a comment on him found in the *Book Abodazura*. Anyway, there are two Jesuses, or Jesus and the Christ, one of whom is repudiated by Paul.

But Jehoshua, the son of Pandira, can never be converted into Jesus Christ, the son of a virgin mother, as an historic character. Nor can the dates given ever be reconciled with contemporary history. The historical Herod, who sought to slay the young child Jesus, is known to have died four years before the date of the Christian era, assigned for the birth of Jesus.

So much for the historic Jesus. And now for the mythical Christ. Here we can tread on firmer ground.

The mythical Messiah was always born of a Virgin Mother – a factor unknown in natural phenomena, and one that cannot be historical, one that can only be explained by means of the Mythos, and those conditions of primitive sociology which are mirrored in mythology and preserved in theology. The virgin mother has been represented in Egypt by the maiden Queen, Mut-em-ua, the future mother of Amenhept III some 16 centuries BCE, who impersonated the eternal virgin that produced the eternal child...

Massey goes on to show how the Christian clerical authors copied Egyptian ideas in the creation of their fable about Jesus the Christ.

A point that I emphasized in an earlier chapter¹⁰ is that the date (otherwise arbitrarily) chosen for the alleged birth of “the fisher of men” was the

¹⁰ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ix07StarStories.pdf>.

astrologers' exact date for the beginning of the Age of Pisces (the fish) and the end of the Age of Aries (the ram or lamb), which accounts both for the “**death of the lamb of god** (Aires)” on the (astrological) cross and why this mythical/astrological Jesus is called *ICHTHYS*, allegedly an acronym for *Iesous Christos, Theou Uios, Soter* (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior), but actually, it's the Greek word for ‘fish’. It also explains why “modern” Christians display fish decals on their car bumpers. Massey adds:

Nothing is more certain, according to honest evidence, than that the Christian scheme of redemption is founded on a fable misinterpreted; that the prophecy of fulfillment was solely astronomical, and the Coming One as the Christ who came in the end of an age, or of the world, was but a metaphorical figure, a type of time, from the first, which never could take form in historic personality, any more than Time in Person could come out of a clock-case when the hour strikes; that no Jesus could become a Nazarene by being born at, or taken to, Nazareth; and that the history in our Gospels is from beginning to end the identifiable story of the Sun-God, and the Gnostic Christ who never could be made flesh. When we did not know the one it was possible to believe the other; but when once we truly know, then the false belief is no longer possible...

My second example is from the ex-Presbyterian pastor M.M. Mangasarian (1859–1943) who wrote the following in his 1909 book *The Truth about Jesus – Is He a Myth?*¹¹

Let us place ourselves entirely in the hands of the evidence. As far as possible, let us be passive, showing no predisposition one way or another. We can afford to be independent. If the evidence proves the historicity of Jesus, well and good; if the evidence is not sufficient to prove it, there is no reason why we should fear to say so; besides, it is our duty to inform ourselves on this question. As intelligent beings we desire to know whether this Jesus, whose worship is not only costing the world millions [now, hundreds of billions of dollars per year!] of the people's money, but which is also drawing to his service the time, the energies, the affection, the devotion, and the labor of humanity – is a myth, or a reality.

We believe that all religious persecutions, all sectarian wars, hatreds and intolerance, which still cramp and embitter our humanity, would be replaced by love and brotherhood, if the sects could be made to see that the God-Jesus they are quarreling over is a myth, a shadow to which credulity alone gives substance. Like people who have been fighting in the dark, fearing some danger, the sects, once relieved of the thralldom of a tradition which has been handed down to them by a childish age and country, will turn around and embrace one another. In every sense, the subject is an all-absorbing one. It goes to the root of things; it touches the vital parts, and it means life or death to the Christian religion...

¹¹ From http://www.infidels.org/library/historical/m_m_mangasarian/truth_about_jesus.html.

A human Jesus may or may not have existed, but we are as sure as we can be of anything, that a virgin-born God, named Jesus, such as we must believe in or be eternally lost, is an impossibility – except to credulity. But credulity is no evidence at all, even when it is dignified by the name of FAITH.

Let us pause for a moment to reflect: The final argument for the existence of the miraculous Jesus, preached in church and Sunday-school, these two thousand years, as the sole savior of the world, is an appeal to faith – the same to which Muhammad resorts to establish his claims, and Joseph Smith, to prove his revelation. There is no other possible way by which the virgin birth or the godhood of a man can be established. And such a faith is never free, it is always maintained by the sword now, and by hell-fire hereafter...

If there were ample evidence for the historicity of Jesus, why did his biographers resort to forgery? The following admissions by Christian writers themselves show the helplessness of the early preachers in the presence of inquirers who asked for proofs. The church historian, Mosheim, writes that, “The Christian Fathers deemed it a pious act to employ deception and fraud.” [*Ecclesiastical Hist., Vol. I, p. 347.*] Again, he says: “The greatest and most pious teachers were nearly all of them infected with this leprosy.” Will not some believer tell us why forgery and fraud were necessary to prove the historicity of Jesus.

Another historian, Milman, writes that, “Pious fraud was admitted and avowed” by the early missionaries of Jesus. “It was an age of literary frauds,” writes Bishop Ellicott, speaking of the times immediately following the alleged crucifixion of Jesus. Dr. Giles declares that, “There can be no doubt that great numbers of books were written with no other purpose than to deceive.” And it is the opinion of Dr. Robertson Smith that, “There was an enormous floating mass of spurious literature created to suit party views.” Books which are now rejected as apocryphal were at one time received as inspired, and books which are now believed to be infallible were at one time regarded as of no authority in the Christian world. It certainly is puzzling that there should be a whole literature of fraud and forgery in the name of a historical person. But if Jesus was a myth, we can easily explain the legends and traditions springing up in his name...

Let it be further noted that it was not until eight hundred years after the supposed crucifixion that Jesus is seen in the form of a human being on the cross. Not in any of the paintings on the ancient catacombs is found a crucified Christ. The earliest cross bearing a human being is of the eighth century. For a long time a lamb with a cross, or on a cross, was the Christian symbol, and it is a lamb which we see entombed in the “holy sepulcher.” In more than one mosaic of early Christian times, it is not Jesus, but a lamb, which is bleeding for the salvation of the world. How a lamb came to play so important a role in Christianity is variously explained. The similarity between the name of the Hindu god, *Agni*, and the meaning of the same word in Latin, which is a lamb, is one theory. Another is that a ram, one of the signs of the

zodiac, often confounded by the ancients with a lamb, is the origin of the popular reverence for the lamb as a symbol – a reverence which all religions based on sun worship shared. The lamb in Christianity takes away the sins of the people, just as the paschal lamb did in the Old Testament, and earlier still, just as it did in Babylonia. [And as mentioned earlier in this post, the death of the lamb symbolizes the end of the Age of Aries, the ram, and the beginning of the Age of Pisces, the fish.]

To the same effect is the following letter of the bishop of Mende, in France, bearing date of the year 800 CE: “Because the darkness has disappeared, and because also Christ is a real man, Pope Adrian commands us to paint him under the form of a man. The lamb of God must not any longer be painted on a cross, but after a human form has been placed on the cross, there is no objection to have a lamb also represented with it, either at the foot of the cross or on the opposite side.” [Translated from the French of Didron; quoted by Malvert.] We leave it to our readers to draw the necessary conclusions from the above letter. How did a lamb hold its place on the cross for eight hundred years? If Jesus was really crucified, and that fact was a matter of history, why did it take eight hundred years for a Christian bishop to write, “**now that Christ is a real man,**” etc.? Today, it would be considered a blasphemy to place a lamb on a cross...

We have said enough to show that, in all probability – for let us not be dogmatic – the story of Jesus (his birth and betrayal by one of his own disciples, his trial in a Roman court, his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension) *belongs to the order of imaginative literature. Conceived at first as a religious drama, it received many new accretions as it traveled from country to country and from age to age. The “piece” shows signs of having been touched and retouched to make it acceptable to the different countries in which it was played. The hand of the adapter, the interpolator and the reviser is unmistakably present. As an allegory, or as a dramatic composition, meant for the religious stage, it proved one of the strongest productions of Pagan or Christian times.* [Italics added.] But as real history, it lacks the fundamental requisite – probability. As a play, it is stirring and strong; as history, it lacks naturalness and consistency. The miraculous is ever outside the province of history. Jesus was a miracle, and as such, at least, we are safe in declaring him unhistorical...

What are the elements out of which the Jesus story was evolved? The Jewish people were in constant expectation of a Messiah. The belief prevailed that his name would be Joshua, which in English is Jesus. The meaning of the word is savior. In ancient Syrian mythology, Joshua was a Sun God. The Old-Testament Joshua, who “**stopped the Sun,**” was in all probability this same Syrian divinity. According to tradition this Joshua, or Jesus, was the Son of Mary, a name which with slight variations is found in nearly all the old mythologies. Greek and Hindu divinities were mothered by either a Mary, Meriam, Myrrah, or Merri. Maria or Mares is the oldest word for ‘sea’ – the earliest source of life. The ancients looked upon the seawater as the mother of every living thing. “**Joshua (or Jesus), son of Mary,**” was already a part of the religious outfit of the Asiatic world when Paul began his missionary tours. His Jesus, or anointed one, crucified or slain, did in no sense represent a new or original

message. It is no more strange that Paul's mythological "savior" should loom into prominence and cast a spell over all the world, than that a mythical Apollo or Jupiter should rule for thousands of years over the fairest portions of the earth.

It is also well known that there is in the *Talmud* the story of a Jesus, Ben (or son) of Pandira, who lived about a hundred years before the Gospel Jesus, and who was hanged from a tree. I believe this Jesus is quite as legendary as the Syrian Hesous, or Joshua. But may it not be that such a legend accepted as true – to the ancients all legends were true – contributed its share toward marking the outlines of the later Jesus, hanged on a cross? My idea has been to show that the materials for a Jesus myth were at hand, and that, therefore, to account for the rise and progress of the Christian cult is no more difficult than to explain the widely spread religion of the Indian Krishna, or of the Persian Mithra. [For a fuller discussion of the various "christs" in mythology read Robertson's *Christianity and Mythology* and his *Pagan Christs*.]

Now, why have I given these conclusions to the world? Would I not have made more friends – provoked a warmer response from the public at large – had I repeated in pleasant accents the familiar phrases about the glory and beauty and sweetness of the Savior God, the Virgin-born Christ? Instead of that, I have run the risk of alienating the sympathies of my fellows by intimating that this Jesus whom Christendom worships today as a god, this Jesus at whose altar the Christian world bends its knees and bows its head, is as much of an idol as was Apollo of the Greeks; and that we – we Americans of the twentieth century – are an idolatrous people, inasmuch as we worship a name, or at most, a man of whom we know nothing provable...

The Christian religion has the appearance of being one great myth, constructed out of many minor myths. It is the same with Muhamadanism [Islam] or Judaism, which latter is the mischievous parent of both [Islam] and the Christian faiths. It is the same with all supernatural creeds. Myth is the dominating element in them all. Compared with these Asiatic religions how glorious is science! How wholesome, helpful, and luminous, are her commandments!

If I were to command you to believe that Mount Olympus was once tenanted by blue eyed gods and their consorts – sipping nectar and ambrosia the live-long day – you will answer, "Oh, that is only mythology." If I were to tell you that you cannot be saved unless you believe that Minerva was born full-fledged from the brain of Jupiter, you will laugh at me. If I were to tell you that you must punish your innocent sons for the guilt of their brothers and sisters, you will answer that I insult your moral sense. And yet, every Sunday, the preacher repeats the myth of Adam and Eve, and how God killed his innocent son to please himself, or to satisfy the devil, and with bated breath, and on your knees, you whisper, Amen...

My third example is from Joseph Wheless ["Lately Major, Judge Advocate, U.S.A.; Associate Editor (in section of comparative Law) of American Bar Association Journal; Life Member of American Law Institute; etc."] from

his 1930 book *Forgery in Christianity*. In his book,¹² Wheless carefully documents evidence for the following indictment:

THE INDICTMENT

I charge, and purpose to prove, from unimpeachable texts and historical records, and by authoritative clerical confessions, beyond the possibility of denial, evasion, or refutation:

1. That the Bible, in its every Book, and in the strictest legal and moral sense, is a huge forgery.
2. That every Book of the New Testament is a forgery of the Christian Church; and every significant passage in those Books, on which the fabric of the Church and its principal Dogmas are founded, is a further and conscious later forgery, wrought with definite fraudulent intent.
3. Especially, and specifically, that the “famous Peterine text” – “**Upon this Rock I will build my church**” – the cornerstone of the gigantic fabric of imposture – and the other, “**Go, teach all nations**” – were never uttered by the Jew Jesus, but are palpable and easily proven late Church forgeries.
4. That the Christian Church, from its inception in the first little Jewish-Christian religious societies until it reached the apex of its temporal glory and moral degradation, was a vast and tireless Forgery-mill.
5. That the Church was founded upon, and through the Dark Ages of Faith has battened on – yet languishes decadently upon – monumental and petty forgeries and pious frauds, possible only because of its own shameless mendacity and through the crass ignorance and superstition of the sodden masses of its deluded votaries, purposely kept in that base condition for purposes of ecclesiastical graft and aggrandizement through conscious and most unconscionable imposture.
6. That every conceivable form of religious lie, fraud, and imposture has ever been the work of Priests; and through all the history of the Christian Church, as through all human history, has been – and, so far as they have not been shamed out of it by skeptical ridicule and exposure, yet is – the age-long stock in trade and sole means of existence of the priests and ministers of all the religions.
7. That the clerical mind, which “reasons in chains,” is, from its vicious and vacuous “education” and the special selfish interests of the priestly class, incapable either of the perception or the utterance of truth, in matters where the interests of priestcraft are concerned.

¹² Available at http://www.infidels.org/library/historical/joseph_wheless/forgery_in_christianity/.

Now, in this single post, I certainly can't provide details supporting Wheel's "indictment"; readers interested in the details would profit from reading his book. An outline of the Christian clerics' con game, however, is available even in the NT – in fact, the obvious reason for their concocting the NT seems to have been to develop such details, as I'll sketch below.

7.4 The Christ Conspiracy

Actually, the methods used by the Christian clerics to concoct their mythical Christ are so painfully obvious that it hurts to realize how many people fell (and still fall!) for such chicanery. In outline, the clerics' method consists of two principal steps:

- 1) Submit the (preposterous) proposal that their fictitious Jesus had the authority of no less than the creator of the universe ("God"), and
- 2) Add the (preposterous) proposal that Jesus subsequently passed on God's authority to the new breed of clerics.

7.4.1 The Clerics' Ruse about Receiving "Authority" from Jesus

The second step in the clerics' con game (i.e., the claim that Jesus delegated his "authority" to the clerics) is easiest to demonstrate. It's detailed in the following NT quotations (from the New English Bible), to which I've added the underlining.

Then he [Jesus] called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to cast out unclean spirits and to cure every kind of ailment and disease. (*Matthew 10, 1*)

"I [Jesus] tell you this: whatever you [apostles] forbid on earth shall be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you allow on earth shall be allowed in heaven... if two of you agree on earth about any request you have to make, that request will be granted by my heavenly Father." (*Matthew 18, 18*)

He [Jesus] now called the Twelve [apostles] together and gave them power and authority... (*Luke 9, 1*)

The seventy-two [disciples] came back jubilant. "In your name, Lord," they said, "even the devils submit to us." He [Jesus] replied, "I watched how Satan fell, like lightning, out of the sky. And now you see that I have given you the power to tread underfoot snakes and scorpions and all the forces of the enemy, and nothing will ever harm you." [Or, in the New American Standard Bible: "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you."] (*Luke 10, 18*)

“Believe me [Jesus] when I say that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else accept the evidence of the deeds themselves. In truth, in very truth I tell you [apostles], he who has faith in me will do what I am doing; and he will do greater things still because I am going to the Father. Indeed, anything you [apostles] ask in my name I will do...” (John 14, 11)

“The glory which thou [God] gavest me [Jesus] I have given to them [the apostles] that they may be one, as we [God and Jesus] are one; I in them and thou in me...” (John 17, 22)

Only a child, however (or someone who is as gullible as a child), would fail to notice that it’s the clerics who wrote the NT who claim that Jesus gave so much power to them!

7.4.2 Clerical Claims of Jesus Gaining Authority from God

On the other hand, the first step in the clerics’ con game (i.e., to show that Jesus had acquired his authority from God) was more complicated than the second step (to show that Jesus passed his authority onto the clerics); therefore, the clerical authors of the NT used a multi-pronged attack.

In the first prong, the clerics simply claimed it was so, as shown in the following quotations, to which I’ve added the underlining:

“The Father loves the Son and has entrusted him with all authority.” (John 3, 35)

They [Jesus and his disciples] came once more to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple court the chief priests, lawyers, and elders came to him and said, “By what authority are you acting like this? Who gave you authority to act in this way?”... [Then, after Jesus posed a question that they refused to answer] Jesus said to them, “Then neither will I tell you by what authority I act” [although the other gospels, especially *John*, claim that Jesus did tell them by what authority he acted, as I’ll show in the quotation that immediately follows]. (Mark 11, 27)

To this charge [of claiming equality with God] Jesus replied, “In truth, in very truth I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he does only what he sees the Father doing: what the Father does, the Son does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all his works, and will show greater yet, to fill you with wonder. As the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to men, as he determines. And again, the Father does not judge anyone, but has given full jurisdiction to the Son; it his will that all should pay the same honor to the son as to the Father. To deny honor to the Son is to deny it the Father who sent him.” (John 5, 19)

As an additional prong, the aspiring clerics promoted the silliness illustrated at *John* 8, 45, where the clerics have their Jesus say the following (in

response to those assembled who said that he was “**possessed**”, and later, at *John 10*, 20, that he was “**raving**”, i.e., that he was insane):

“But I [Jesus] speak the truth and therefore you do not believe me. Which of you can prove me in the wrong?”

Incidentally, the same silliness was used by (“**the mad poet**”) Muhammad in promoting his con game, apparently not realizing (or not caring) that sensible people respond with something similar to:

Hello? You’re the one making the claim; it’s your job to back it up. I’m not gonna waste my time demonstrating that you’re bonkers.

As someone else said: **it’s never necessary to debunk something that hasn’t been established**. Thus, as I describe in detail in other chapters,¹³ no one can “prove” the truth or falsity of any fairy tale, for example, that Superman either is or isn’t harmed by kryptonite. Similarly, although probably no one will ever be able to prove that most of the alleged claims of Jesus (or Moses or Muhammad or Joseph Smith) were false, it’s equally probable that no one will ever be able to prove that all invisible flying elephants aren’t pink – and it would be equally pointless to try.

The above two methods of attempting to show that Jesus received his “authority” from God (i.e., claiming it was so, and then challenging people to prove it wrong), however, were probably insufficient to convince skeptics. The new breed of con-artist clerics therefore perpetrated their prime ruse, which is summarized in the NT at *Acts 2*, 22, where Peter (whom the Catholics call “the first pope”, but he almost certainly wasn’t)¹⁴ allegedly told those assembled:

“Men of Israel, listen to me: I speak of Jesus of Nazareth [by the way, it should be not “Jesus of Nazareth” but “Jesus the Nazarene”, where the Nazarenes were probably a faction of the Essenes; that is,¹⁵ there’s no evidence that a town called Nazareth existed during the first century CE], a man singled out by God and made known to you through miracles, portents, and signs...”

¹³ For example, start at http://zenofzero.net/docs/T1_Truth_&_Knowledge.pdf.

¹⁴ See http://webspaces.webring.com/people/np/paul_tobin/peterpope.html.

¹⁵ See, e.g., <http://www.jesusneverexisted.com/nazareth.html>.

From that quotation one can see that the principal prong of the clerics' thrust was (and still is): the “**miracles, portents, and signs**” performed by Jesus demonstrate that he was God's representative on Earth.

As for the specific “**miracles, portents, and signs**” by which Jesus allegedly revealed his “**authority**”, they've got to be one of the most ridiculous sets of fabricated nonsense that ever insulted human intelligence – which the mindless masses lapped up (and still lap up) like warm milk. Below, I'll provide a few illustrations of the alleged: 1) Miracles, 2) Portents, and 3) Signs.

7.4.2.1 Alleged “Miracles”

The word ‘miracle’ has multiple meanings. For those of us who consider the word ‘supernatural’ to be meaningless, we sometimes use the word ‘miracle’ to describe simply “**a surprising and welcome event**”, where by ‘surprising’ is meant that the probability of the event occurring is close to being zero – although, actually, most of us avoid using the word ‘miracle’.

The biblical sense of the word ‘miracle’, on the other hand, is “**a surprising and welcome event**” resulting from “**the work of a divine agency**”. Consequently, for those of us who have reasoned from the evidence that the most certain knowledge humans have been able to gain (even more certain than the knowledge that we exist!) is that no “**divine agency**” (or god) exists or has ever existed,¹⁶ we conclude that the biblical sense of the word ‘miracle’ is pure gobbledygook.

For those who can believe in biblical-type miracles (with no more evidence than that some con-artist clerical author said they occurred), then according to the NT, Jesus allegedly performed a host of miracles: he turned water into wine, walked on water, stopped the wind from blowing, cured people of illnesses and deformities by driving out the “evil spirits” that caused them, and similar silliness, including bringing dead people (including himself) back to life. Such, however, aren't ‘miracles’ (either in the supernatural sense or in the sense of events with low probability that occurred) but only reports of alleged miracles. In fact, nowhere in the NT are there any ‘miracles’ (in either sense of the word).

¹⁶ My analysis is at <http://zenofzero.net/docs/IiIndoctrinationInIgnorance.pdf>.

Thus, for example and for some strange reason, nowhere in the NT (or, for that matter, in any “holy book”) does one find a combination of quantum mechanics and general relativity (yielding a “theory of everything” or TOE), or the DNA sequencing for the human genome, or even Maxwell’s equations, or even (for crying out loud) the periodic table of the elements. If such had been included in some “holy book”, they would have been “miracles” worth considering. Instead, the Gospels (in particular) provide stories that a child could concoct, and surely such stories convince no one whose mental development has progressed beyond that of a child’s that Christ performed any “miracles”.

7.4.2.2 Alleged “Portents”

According to my dictionary, the primary definition of a ‘portent’ is “a sign or warning that something, especially momentous or calamitous, is likely to happen.” Thus, a ‘portent’ is not your everyday, garden-variety ‘prophecy’ (e.g., that it’ll rain tomorrow) but a prophecy with major consequences (e.g., that there’ll be no tomorrow). In the case of the clerics’ fabricated Jesus, his most famous portent was that the world was about to end, e.g., his “apocalyptic” statements:

“I [Jesus] tell you this: there are some of those standing here who will not taste death before they have seen the kingdom of God already come in power.” (*Mark 9, 1*)

“I [Jesus] tell you this: there are some of those standing here who will not taste death before they have seen the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” (*Matthew 16, 28*)

“I [Jesus] tell you this: the present generation will live to see it all. Heaven and earth will pass away...” (*Mark 13, 30, Matthew 24, 34, and Luke 21, 32*)

“I [Jesus] tell you this: there are some of those standing here who will not taste death before they have seen the kingdom of God.” (*Luke 9, 27*)

In reality, the “kingdom of God” is not yet here, “in power” (as much as the Catholic Church and the “Christian Reich” in the U.S. have tried to make it so), and unless I missed something, “heaven and earth” have not yet passed away. Therefore, the “portents” of the clerics’ Jesus are obviously not worth the paper they were written on, not worth the horrible amount of time and mental energy wasted defending them (see, e.g., most of the 250,000 Google hits for “Jesus false prophecies”), and certainly not worth the money people have paid the clerics for running their resulting con game.

7.4.2.3 Alleged “Signs”

As I’ll suggest below, the alleged “signs” that the clerics’ Jesus fulfilled are even sillier than his alleged “miracles” and “portents”. Further, not only are they silly, but all of them contradict what Jesus allegedly said! Thus, at *Mark 8, 11* we find:

Then the Pharisees came out and engaged him [Jesus] in discussion. To test him they asked him for a sign from heaven. He sighed deeply to himself and said, “Why does this generation ask for a sign? I tell you this: no sign shall be given to this generation.”

Yet even in the same gospel, at *Mark 15, 33*, we learn that, after the crucifixion:

At midday a darkness fell over the whole land, which lasted till three in the afternoon.

Hello? Wasn’t that a sign? But, but... didn’t he say that there’d be no sign?

Further, if Jesus said “no sign shall be given to this generation”, why does Peter tell us (as already quoted, from *Acts 2, 22*), what has been promoted during the past 1900 years by all Christian apologists, that Jesus was

... a man singled out by God and made known to you through miracles, portents, and signs...

Couldn’t the storytellers at least keep their stories straight?!

But ignoring the inconsistencies and incoherencies¹⁷ in the NT stories (as we’re apparently supposed to do!), it’s clear that, what the NT storytellers did to concoct the alleged “signs” was to construct tales about Jesus based on OT statements and “prophecies” (with some superstitious, astrological, and metaphysical nonsense added to spice up the tales), and *voilà*, Jesus the Christ satisfied the “signs” contained in the OT. A “tell” of the authors’ “technique” (i.e., lies!) can be seen at *Matthew 26, 53–54*, were Jesus allegedly says to his captors:

“Do you suppose that I cannot appeal to my Father, who would at once send to my aid more than twelve legions of angels? [A rather presumptuous claim – and not explaining why more than one angel would have been sufficient!] But how then could the scriptures be fulfilled, which say that this must be?”

¹⁷ See, e.g., http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ox15_NT_Incoherencies.pdf.

That is, above all, the “prophecies” of “**the scriptures**” (the OT) had to be “**fulfilled**”!

Similar craziness appears at *Mark 4* (and at *Matthew 13*), where the clerical authors portray their Jesus as a purposefully deceptive teacher. The purpose of his deception is apparently to fulfill some prophecy – which is eminently silly, since any prophecy worth a damn wouldn’t need any contrivance to make it occur! Further, though, the overall purpose was even worse. As stated at *Mark 4*, 12, the clerics’ Jesus spoke in parables, so the people would NOT understand him – for

“**otherwise they might turn to God and be forgiven.**”

Hello? Wouldn’t it rather be expected that Jesus would think it would be a good idea for people to “**turn to God and be forgiven**”?! Rather than this, he wanted to confuse the people with parables, so that a prophecy would be fulfilled? Somebody’s gotta be kidding!

The same clerical shenanigans are also clearly outlined at *John 5*, 36:

“There is enough to testify that the Father has sent me [Jesus], in the works my Father gave me to do and to finish – the very works I have in hand [i.e., the OT]. This testimony to me was given by the Father who sent me, although you never heard his voice or saw his form. But his word has found no home in you [the Jewish people to whom he was speaking], for you do not believe the one whom he sent. You study the scriptures diligently, supposing that in having them you have eternal life; yet, although their testimony points to me, you refuse to come to me for that life...”

That is, again, the authors of the NT Gospels claim that the OT “**points to**” Jesus. The resulting literary concoctions (the Gospels of the NT) are so audaciously childish, so filled with clerical BS, that one would hope no one would be so dumb as to fall for them: what the authors obviously did was just use scenes from the OT as “stage props” for their fictitious Jesus depicted in the Gospels.

7.5 “Stage Props” for the Jesus Play

Now, I certainly don’t plan to address all the alleged “signs” of Jesus contained in the OT; it’s claimed that there are more than a hundred of them. Interested readers may want to investigate a few of the 1,290,000 Google hits for “prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament” – the vast majority of which, of course, defend the silly claim that such “prophecies” provide

* Go to other chapters *via*

“signs” of Jesus – rather than “stage props” for a fictitious Jesus. But just to illustrate how silly such “signs” (and their defenses) are, below I’ll comment a little on two such claims, dealing with the concocted stories about the birth and death of the clerics’ Jesus.

7.5.1 *The Concocted Story about the Birth of Jesus*

As for the alleged “miraculous, virgin birth” of Jesus, for some strange reason [I’m being sarcastic], it’s not mentioned in *Mark*,¹⁸ which of the four gospels included in the NT, scholars agree that it was the first one written. The “virgin birth” was apparently also unmentioned in the original version of *Matthew*, called *The Gospel of the Hebrews* or *Authentic Matthew*.¹⁹ It thus seems to have become standard policy for subsequent clerics to add their own twists to earlier tales.

In particular, the authors of *Matthew* and *Luke* (whoever they might have been) apparently decided that, if gods of the polytheists could be born from virgins, then so could their Jesus. In fact, these unknown authors went so far as to claim that the “wonderful event” of the birth of their god from a virgin was foretold in the OT. Thus, at *Luke 1*, 28–36, we are treated to a riveting, first-hand account of the following conversation between the angel Gabriel and a virgin by the name of Mary (not Jesus’ girlfriend; his alleged mother). [Unfortunately, the original digital recording of this conversation was lost in a magnetic storm (I guess).]

“Greetings [Gabriel reportedly said to Mary], most favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was deeply troubled by what he said and wondered what this greeting might mean. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for God has been gracious to you; you shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall give him the name Jesus. He will be great; he will bear the title ‘Son of the Most High’; the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David, and he will be king over Israel for ever; his reign shall never end.”

“How can that be?” said Mary; “I am still a virgin.”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy child to be born will be called ‘Son of God’.”

¹⁸ As well, by the way, the original *Mark* contains nothing about Jesus being sighted after his execution – at least, not in the original version of *Mark*, before later clerics added the material at *Mark 16*, 9–20.

¹⁹ See, e.g., http://www.upto11.net/generic_wiki.php?q=authentic_matthew.

And at *Matthew 1, 22*, we learn:

All this happened to fulfill what the Lord declared through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and bear a son, and he shall be called Emmanuel...”

The particular OT “prophet” being referenced is Isaiah, but unfortunately for the author of *Matthew* (and all subsequent Christians), there was a slight glitch in the system: the version of the OT [from which (the Greek-speaking) author of *Matthew* was working, to concoct his tale about Jesus] had a serious, relevant, translation error. What the author of *Matthew* read in his version of the Hebrew “holy book” (the *Septuagint*) was as quoted above. But *Isaiah*’s original Hebrew statement,²⁰ as given in the “holy book” of the Jews, is “*Hinne ha-almah harah ve-yeldeth ben ve-karath shem-o immanuel*”, which correctly translated (which is now done, e.g., in the New English Bible) is:

A young woman [not a virgin!!] is with child [not “will conceive”], and she will bear a son and will call him Emmanuel. (*Isaiah 7, 14*)

That is, in *Isaiah*’s time (about 700 BCE), the “prophecy” was that a young woman, who was then pregnant, would give birth to a son who was to be called Emmanuel – not a particularly startling “prophecy” (there was a ~50% chance the baby would be boy and maybe a ~1% chance that he would be called ‘Emmanuel’) and this “prophecy” had nothing whatsoever to do with the fabled virgin-birth of Jesus!

Soon after *Matthew* was written (probably after the destruction of the Jewish temple in 70 CE), Jews familiar with their own “holy scripture” called attention to the Christian error of claiming that *Isaiah* described a virgin birth. Confirmation of that statement is available in “Saint” Justin’s Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, written in about 150 CE:²¹

And Trypho answered, “The Scripture has not, ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,’ but, ‘Behold, the young woman shall conceive, and bear a son,’ and so on, as you quoted. But the whole prophecy refers to Hezekiah, and it is proved that it was fulfilled in him, according to the terms of this prophecy. Moreover, in the fables of those who are called Greeks, it is written that Perseus was begotten of Danae, who was a virgin; he who was called among them Zeus having descended on her in the form of a golden shower. And you ought to feel ashamed when you make assertions

²⁰ From <http://www.harrington-sites.com/terms.htm>.

²¹ Available at <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/justinmartyr-dialoguetrypho.html>.

similar to theirs, and rather [should] say that this Jesus was born man of men. And if you prove from the Scriptures that He is the Christ, and that on account of having led a life conformed to the law, and perfect, He deserved the honor of being elected to be Christ [it is well]; but do not venture to tell monstrous phenomena, lest you be convicted of talking foolishly like the Greeks.” (Chapter LXVII)

In response to Trypho (with the entire, almost-certainly fictional dialogue written similar to one of Plato’s dialogues, but with Justin acting as if he were Socrates – but without the mental competence for the part!), Justin includes his ridiculous (and ridiculed) “the devil did it” and provides one of the most famous examples of how humans can waste their lives studying minutia of “sacred scripture”, looking for knowledge that isn’t there.

Justin Martyr did demonstrate, however, that he was “well versed” in the OT (similar to how many bright Muslim youngsters, today, have their potentials for doing something useful ruined by memorizing the Koran) and that he had the agility to twist the writings in the “holy book” of the Jews to defend his own desires (specifically, his desire to live forever in paradise), just as have all subsequent Christian apologists. As Joseph Wheless wrote in 1930 book *Forgery in Christianity*:²²

Thus is apparent, and confessed, the dishonesty of “Matthew” and of the Church of Christ in perverting this idle, false, and falsified text of Isaiah into a “prophecy of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ”, and in persisting in retaining this falsity in their dishonest Bibles as the basis of their own bogus theology unto this day of the Twentieth Century. The Church, full knowing its falsity, yet clings to this precious lie of Virgin Birth and all the concatenated consequences... As Thomas Jefferson prophetically wrote – as is being verified:

“The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus by the Supreme Being as his father, in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter.”

And what horrors have followed from this fanciful fable! For example, for denying the Virgin Birth (as well as maintaining other “heresies”, e.g., that other stars were similar to our Sun) the Roman Catholic Inquisition burned the Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno at the stake in 1600. Four hundred years later, in 2000,²³

²² Again, it’s at http://www.infidels.org/library/historical/joseph_wheless/forgery_in_christianity/.

²³ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giordano_Bruno.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano [then Vatican Secretary of State (under Pope John Paul II), now Dean of the College of Cardinals (a position previously held by now Pope Benedict XVI)] declared Bruno's death to be a "sad episode"... [but] despite his regret, he defended Bruno's persecutors [!], maintaining that the inquisitors "had the desire to preserve freedom and promote the common good"...

Such statements by Cardinal Sodano seem to have been borrowed from Orwell's 1984. Consistent with Sodano's sense of history, honor, and justice [I find it difficult not to be sarcastic], in 1998 he

intervened to halt an investigation into sexual abuse by the founder of the Legion of Christ... [Father Marcial Maciel,²⁴ who] was found guilty of having forced homosexual relations with underage boys and... fathered at least one child.

But turning back ~2,000 years to similar corruptions by the first Christian clerics, I now want to comment on their crazy concoction dealing with the death and alleged resurrection of the dead Jesus.

7.5.2 The Concocted Story about The Death of Jesus

After the clerical authors of the NT had concocted a fanciful, fraudulent birth for their savior, they apparently decided to concoct an equally deceitful tale about his death. For the motif of the crucifixion story, they obviously used *Isaiah 53*, 3–12 (which was allegedly written during the 8th Century BCE):

He was despised... tormented and humbled by suffering... we despised him. Yet on himself he bore our sufferings, our torments he endured, while we counted him smitten by God... he was pierced for our transgressions, tortured for our iniquities; the chastisement he bore is health for us and by his scourging we are healed. We had all strayed like sheep, each of us had gone his own way; but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all. He was afflicted, he submitted to be struck down and did not open his mouth; he was led like a sheep to the slaughter... Without protection, without justice, he was taken away; and who gave a thought to his fate, how he was cut off from the world of living men, stricken to the death for my people's transgression?... Yet the Lord took thought for his tortured servant and healed him who had made himself a sacrifice for sin...

To that motif, the clerical authors of the NT added OT details, mostly borrowed from the *Psalms* (allegedly written approximately 1,000 years earlier). To illustrate, below I'll quote a part of the story (as given at *Matthew 27*, 33–52) and insert the alleged "signs" that Jesus was fulfilling.

²⁴ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcial_Maciel.

Pilate's soldiers then took Jesus into the Governor's headquarters, where they collected the whole company around him. They stripped him and dressed him a scarlet mantle; and plaiting a crown of thorns, they placed it on his head, with a cane in his right hand. Falling on their knees before him they jeered at him: "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and used the cane to beat him about the head. When they had finished their mockery, they took off the mantle and dressed him in his own clothes.

Then they led him away to be crucified... So they came to a place called Gogotha... and there he was offered a draught of wine [or vinegar] mixed with gall; but when he had tasted it, he would not drink. [*Psalm 69, 21*: "They... gave me vinegar when I was thirsty."]

After fastening him to the cross they divided his clothes among them by casting lots... [*Psalm 22, 18*: "They share out my garments among them and cast lots for my clothes."]

The passers-by hurled abuse at him: they wagged their heads... [*Psalm 22, 7*: "All who see me jeer at me, make mouths at me, and wag their heads..."] So, too, the chief priests with the lawyers and elders mocked at him: "He saved others," they said, "but he cannot save himself. King of Israel, indeed! Let him come down now from the cross, and then we will believe him. Did he trust in God? Let God rescue him, if he wants him – for he said he was God's Son." [*Psalm 22, 8*: "He threw himself on the Lord for rescue; let the Lord deliver him, for he holds him dear!"]...

From midday a darkness fell over the whole land, which lasted until three in the afternoon [*Amos 8, 9*: "On that day, says the Lord God, I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight..."]; and about three, Jesus cried aloud... "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" [*Psalm 22, 1*: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me..."]...

"So," says the true believer to this day, "isn't that amazing? Look at all the signs that our Lord Jesus fulfilled! And those given above are just a few of the hundreds of ways that our Savior fulfilled scripture."

To which someone who has at least a few remnants of rationally remaining responds: "But rather than fulfilling scripture written centuries earlier, isn't it rather more likely that the clerical authors of the NT were just using the OT text (probably open in front of them) to fabricate their Jesus story? In general, as the philosopher David Hume (1711–76) proposed for the evaluation of any alleged "miracle", it's rational to put most confidence in the possibility that has the highest probability of occurrence. In the present case, therefore, it's more reasonable to assume that the NT clerical authors

simply concocted the Jesus story based on what was available in the OT (surely the probability is at least 50%) rather than to assume that predictions/ prophecies/ stories written centuries earlier were being fulfilled (to the letter!), the probability of which is expected to be somewhere down near one part in a googol (i.e., 1 part in 10^{100}).”

“Ah yes,” respond Christian believers familiar with Pascal’s wager,²⁵ “but sometimes it’s wisest to bet on the ‘long shot’. Look at the payback: even if the probability is small, given that the reward for believing is huge (it’s eternal life in paradise!), then the smartest wager is to bet that it’s all true.”

“Yes, but,” responds someone whose brain is still functioning, “you have only the clerics’ claim that the reward for believing what they say is eternal life in paradise. Meanwhile, as I reported elsewhere,²⁶ I had a little chat with your God and he let me in on the skinny:

He said that he purposefully flooded the world, but not with water, with words! He said that eternity is a real bore and what he’s looking for is a few intelligent people who can think for themselves, who can bring something original to his table, not just parrots²⁷ mindlessly repeating the same old BS, who never had an original thought.

So, he developed a test: he said that those who buy into any clerics’ con game fail the test; their remains are just recycled in the environment, for use by later candidates. The few who think for themselves, the few who demand to see data, the few who conclude that there’s no evidence that any god ever existed, the few who choose to live their lives the best way they can, using their brains as best they can, the few who work hard to solve the world’s problems intelligently, the few who thereby help intelligent life continue are the few he chooses as company.

“And thus, Pascal (and you) couldn’t have made a worse bet: the only way to get eternal life in paradise is to totally disregard its possibility and to do something useful for humanity with the life you have – the life you lose if you buy into the clerics’ BS.”

Apparently, however, as Julius Caesar said: “Men in general are quick to believe that which they wish to be true” (which is consistent with the Anglo-Saxon root of the word ‘belief’: with ‘lief’ meaning ‘wish’, then ‘belief’ means “wish to be”).

²⁵ Reviewed at http://zenofzero.net/docs/Y06_Your_Hopes_& Priorities.pdf.

²⁶ At <http://zenofzero.net/docs/IIndoctrinationinIgnorance.pdf>.

²⁷ See <http://zenofzero.net/docs/3Preface.pdf>.

Apparently, also, many people willingly relinquish authority over their lives, presumably because doing so relieves them of associated decisions and responsibilities, permitting them to live like little children, imagining that they're protected by a powerful, benevolent father-figure in the sky. And so long as people continue to be frightened by the vicissitudes of life and continue to dream of eternal peace and plenty in paradise, there'll probably be con artists who'll try to cash in on such people's hopes and fears.

7.6 Summary of the Christian Con

In the case of the Christian clerics, in summary, the essence of their con was (and still is) to claim that they received their "authority" (over the people) from Jesus, who in turn received his authority from God. The "proof" that Jesus was God's representative was proposed to be that, most importantly, their Jesus performed a bunch of "miracles" (violating the principle of causality), uttered important "portents" (e.g., that the world was about to end), and fulfilled a bunch of OT "signs" that allegedly announced his coming (rather than used to connect the Jesus myth), and secondarily, because no one could prove false the claim that Jesus had been given such authority (or that invisible flying elephants aren't pink).

In reality, though, the entire Jesus concoction provides another example of the character of all clerics: they're either nincompoops or pathetic parasites.

Thus, rather than gain authority by becoming experts in some productive field of human endeavor (fishing, farming, sailing, mining, building, trading, protecting the people, protecting the environment, teaching, engineering, medicine, science...), the new breed of clerics (similar to all clerics before and since) claimed that they were God's representatives – either because they were bonkers or because they decided that it would be easier to leech off the people than be productive. Most unfortunately for the world, people bought into the Christian clerics' con, and ever since, the clerics have been laughing as they stashed and squandered their loot. As examples, Catholic clerics have squirreled away a fortune surely worth trillions of U.S. dollars, and even the little Mormon Church (about 10 million members), which originally was just another variation of Christianity and is now straining to regain that status, collects approximately 7 billion U.S. dollars per year from their con.²⁸

²⁸ See http://www.mormoncurtain.com/topic_tithing_section1.html.

And thus, in reality, the fatal flaw is with the people: those who are duped want to be duped, for as all con artists know, “[you can never cheat an honest man.](#)” Thus, even though all organized religions (including Judaism and Islam) are just humongous piles of BS, yet gullible, frightened, egotistical, greedy people (“thinking” that they’re so important as to “deserve” eternal peace and plenty in paradise) are obviously eager to swallow such BS. Which then leads me to more of what the ex-Presbyterian pastor M.M. Mangasarian (1859–1943) wrote in his 1909 book *The Truth about Jesus – Is He a Myth?*²⁹

There is in man a faculty for fiction. Before history was born, there was myth; before men could think, they dreamed. It was with the human race in its infancy as it is with the child. The child’s imagination is more active than its reason. It is easier for it to fancy even than to see. It thinks less than it guesses.

This wild flight of fancy is checked only by experience. It is reflection which introduces a bit into the mouth of imagination, curbing its pace and subduing its restless spirit. It is, then, as we grow older, and, if I may use the word, ripen, that we learn to distinguish between fact and fiction, between history and myth.

In childhood we need playthings, and the more fantastic and bizarre they are, the better we are pleased with them. We dream, for instance, of castles in the air – gorgeous and clothed with the azure hue of the skies. We fill the space about and over us with spirits, fairies, gods, and other invisible and airy beings. We covet the rainbow. We reach out for the moon. Our feet do not really begin to touch the firm ground until we have reached the years of discretion.

I know there are those who wish they could always remain children – living in dreamland. But even if this were desirable, it is not possible. Evolution is our destiny; of what use is it, then, to take up arms against destiny?

Let it be borne in mind that all the religions of the world were born in the childhood of the race. Science was not born until man had matured. There is in this thought a world of meaning.

Children make religions.
Grown up people create science.
The cradle is the womb of all the fairies and faiths of mankind.
The school is the birthplace of science.
Religion is the science of the child.
Science is the religion of the matured man...

²⁹ From http://www.infidels.org/library/historical/m_m_mangasarian/truth_about_jesus.html.