

Religious Confluence

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To Mum and Dad

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Vox populi vox Dei

Preface

It is undeniable that the Bible has charted and shaped the course of human destiny, and although the Christian exposition has been the most pervasive, both biblical testaments have been claimed by their respective producers and their many past and present spell-bound enthusiasts as God's authentic Word to the world. However, the perusal of comparative ancient religious literatures exposes not only the preposterousness of these claims, but also, significantly enough, casts major doubts over the very existence of the biblical god.

Research further discloses the fertility and hallucinogenic roots of biblical fundamentals and also the plagiarism of foreign myths, legends and superstitions that helped to articulate the same. Indeed, essential Judaeo-Christian traditions can now be traced back to the Mesopotamian alluvial plains and the desperate battles of her resident primitive farmers against the unfathomable and unpredictable forces of nature. This indelible experience, coupled with these peoples' unrestricted access to inebriant botanicals, would pave the way for the establishment of mighty religious organisations throughout Asia Minor and beyond.

There is a hidden arithmetical design that runs consistently and correlatively throughout the entire Judaeo-Christian confluents of history, religion, and myth. This numeric system, together with the beautifully poetic diction that couches it, would appear to allegorize the awakening of the dormant spiritual Self in preparation for the imminent new age of enlightenment and purity.

The weight of the evidence here presented bears down heavily upon the biblical *Torah*, because, crucially enough, the credibility of the ensuing *Prophets*, the *Writings*, and the Christian *Gospels* does actually hinge on the authenticity of the god of the Bible. The following pages are thus certain to

raise a few eyebrows and also likely to alter the discerning reader's religious perspective.

Let us, then, without further prelude, immerse in antiquity, starting with Sumeria, the purported cradle of civilization.

INTRODUCTION

With a yearly average of 5 centimetres of rain, the natural yield of south-western Asia has never supported more than ten people per square mile. Endless explorations for pockets of water and green pasture would thus forever top the agenda of this land's earliest autochthonous communities. When hunting was fruitful, these troupes raised camp and filled to satiation, but because they knew not how to preserve the leftovers it must have been banquet one day and starvation the next. Although they could easily circumvent their prey, these intrepid hunters must have more often than not returned empty-handed from their tireless expeditions, having only severe and often mortal wounds to show for their parlous endeavours. The Fertile Crescent, as its name well indicates, is a semi-circular expanse of fruitful soil in south-western Asia, stretching around the Syrian Desert from Palestine on the Mediterranean Sea to Iraq at the top of the Persian Gulf, and although crop failure would continue to blight this land, by 9000B.C. the people of the southern Mesopotamian Valley and those of the less productive northern hills had learned to furrow the land and raise crops. Restless mobility for these enterprising tribes was now over and, albeit partially, a sedentary lifestyle would soon follow. The Sumerian *Oikumene* (from the Greek for "known world") was probably the first to burgeon forth in this part of the world. Consequently, the Crescent's fertile south and its virtually barren northern counterpart eventually blundered into hosting a stream of migrant nations and, in due course, its eastern region formed by Mesopotamia ('the land between the rivers' -the Euphrates and the Tigris) would also become an extremely busy conduit to conquest for many combative and imperialistic nations, ultimately leading this paradisiacal land to almost utter devastation and oblivion.

There exists no recorded history on the nation of Sumer, and no-one has yet managed to ascertain her background beyond 6000B.C. It is therefore not known whether the Sumerians

were already civilized, but nevertheless seeking expansion when they descended on Mesopotamia, or simply stumbled across this promising land, consequently settling it as exploring nomads often did throughout the ancient world. Either way, it is clear that the onset and rise of agriculture in south-western Asia must have suddenly become the main preoccupation of its denizens. The collection, storage, and distribution of crops, for instance, would certainly have demanded a high level of vision and managerial skills. Indeed, few experts would now deny that it was the successful meeting of these particular exigencies that eventually laid the firm foundations for the first known civilization in this part of the world.

Although its citizens eventually colonized most of the extensive southern Crescent, Sumeria's military, political, and commercial powers had been initially concentrated conveniently along the shores of Ur, from where local merchants often sailed for India despite sporadic piracy in the shallow waters of the Persian Gulf. Archaeological excavations at al-Ubaid reveal that Ur had been a trading hub and a city of stature around 3500 B.C., and archaeologists inform us that other uncovered ruins here and at Eridu may have once served as assembly rooms, where pressing national issues would have been addressed. Surprisingly, Sumeria's cuneiform literature evinces alarmingly advanced knowledge, particularly in the sphere of astronomy, while on-site excavations have produced an ancient system of measures, linking length, volume, and weight. It is common knowledge, moreover, that this nation's industriousness would result in the introduction of the wheel and the canvas-made sail to this part of the world, the latter, incidentally, having been invariably produced from the five-purpose cannabis plant well before the sea-faring Phoenicians had first circumnavigated the African continent, employing the papyrus equivalent. The Sumerians were also renowned for their excellent metal-craft as far east as India, where they would have exchanged it for large quantities of the finest silk

and, perhaps, spices. Although this early intercourse with Indians had been primarily commercial, it did however eventually engender a mix of celestial visionariness that would enrich and inspire not only these two nations, but also subsequent Mesopotamian settlers. Given all its splendour and auto-sufficiency, Sumer must have been the envy of her still largely destitute and mobile neighbourhood who thus represented a very real and constant threat to her hard-earned welfare. Indeed, the first organised incursion into the occupied Crescent would now be only a matter of time.

In 2360 B.C, and about 5000 years after civilization is thought to have surfaced in Mesopotamia, the migrant Semitic Akkadians set foot on this land unchallenged. They came from the Arabian Peninsula (from India, some would argue) via the neighbouring northern hills and settled, eventually raising an empire by annexing this land to the remaining Phoenician northern half of the Crescent. These unaggressive visitors absorbed much of what their hosts had to offer and successfully intermingled with them. From this racial fusion, it is believed in certain quarters, stem both Jews and Arabs. The disintegration of this illustrious empire would begin merely 350 years later, shortly after the ferocious Elamites stormed the capital city of Ur. Unwelcomed as it was, the Elamite presence would nevertheless set the path for the first great Mesopotamian Empire -Babylonia. These new Babylonians, surprisingly enough, afforded no significant cultural innovation and simply picked up where their predecessors had left off.

Persian culture is reputed to be one of the World's oldest. Whereas other historic nations built great empires, enjoying a single period of grandeur before their decline, resilient Persia would rise to imperial conquest and greatness again and again. Persia borrowed much from Assyrian and Egyptian cultures, eventually managing to blend these into an exquisite style of her own. During the 11th century B.C. and almost coinciding with the arrival of the Arameans, the

Chaldeans took root in Mesopotamia, creating kingdoms throughout the land. They were conquered by Assyria in 729 B.C., although eight years later, Merodach-baladan, a Chaldean king, reclaimed the throne of Babylon. Control of the country and its reins of power would pass back and forth between the Assyrians and the Chaldeans several times until the Assyrian king Sennacherib finally destroyed Babylon in 689 B.C. The Chaldeans revolted again when Nabopolassar became their new king in 625 B.C., successfully ousting the Assyrians in alliance with the Medes twelve years later. This event heralded the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

The earliest examples of Persian writing come in cuneiform, and these are mainly official proclamations. The only significant surviving work of this nation is the *Avesta*, the sacred book of Zoroastrianism, which would influence most Middle Eastern literatures, including the Judaeo-Christian.

Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, deported the Jews to Babylon in three separate waves. The first of these came in 597 B.C., when Jews were charged with anti-Babylonian activities, while the second occurred a decade later and after the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Finally, the third exile took place in 582 B.C., when the Babylonian governor Gedaliah was assassinated in the Yehud province. The Jews however would be decreed free by the Persian king Cyrus the Great after his conquest of Babylon in 538 B.C., and these trickled back into Jerusalem where they had the second temple built and their scanty historical and religious records revised once more in an event known to us as the Reformation. It was earlier, during the Jewish captivity, that work on a godly Jewish national past had first commenced, employing both the compilation of Jewish national records from the southern kingdom 253 years prior, and the mysticism and knowledge of their current Babylonian custodians. As we shall be endeavouring to explain in a later chapter, this had been the first revision of the said compilation, and not the definitive production of the *Pentateuch* as claimed by many. Only after their return to Jerusalem would the *Pentateuch* be rendered –albeit provisionally- followed by the

addition of the *Prophets* and then the *Writings*, which feature the work of King David. Then, and as inspired by the Greek master-encoders then residing in Jerusalem, the complete 3-part Hebrew Bible would be finally revised and numerically enciphered. The canonization of this elegantly dressed Hebrew testament, however, would have to wait until the 4th century, when its Christian equivalent was itself approved, numerically encoded, and finally introduced by Rome as supplement to the Old Testament early in the 4th century.

Although, as we shall see in a later chapter, there is documentary evidence to suggest that the Egyptian civilization is much older, it is unanimously thought that around 10,000 B.C. a hugely desiccating drought forced resident natives out of central Africa. It is further purported that some of these refugees had initially trickled onto the fringes of the newly-formed River Nile, eventually clustering its exuberant and fruitful delta by the Mediterranean Sea. Here, a unified kingdom was founded around 3150 B.C. by King Menes, whose move would give rise to the most mysterious and influential civilization ever -Egypt. Many were the successful dynasties that ruled this new kingdom, and one in particular, the 18th, would experience a sweeping change to the millennial Egyptian religious establishment when Pharaoh Akhenaton absconded to the desolate east bank of the Nile River to create the city of Amarna. Here, this heretic would reinvent the Egyptian religion, inspiring the birth of Monotheism, while simultaneously prompting commotion and furore among his somewhat befuddled, but still faithful priesthood back home.

The ancient northern Canaanites were known as Phoenicians. *Phoenicia*, which means to 'rise', was located along the eastern Mediterranean coast where now Lebanon and some adjoining parts of Israel and Syria are positioned. The Phoenicians were the branch of the Caucasian peoples who settled Palestine and Assyria millennia before the invasion of the former by the biblical tribes. Phoenicia was

not a unified kingdom, but a conglomerate of independent and often rival city-states that never hesitated to ally whenever required. The leading cities were Sidon, Tyre and, especially, the celebrated Byblos, which prospered greatly from trading in papyrus. Incidentally, *papyrus*, from which comes our word 'paper', was known both as *bublos* and *biblos*, whence 'book' and 'bible' respectively. For centuries prior to the brutal penetration of Canaan by the biblical tribes, the Canaanites had praised El, the Most High, for His intimacy and compassion.

The general consensus holds that *Israel* was the name given to the biblical Jacob. In Hebrew, this word is said to mean 'May God Strive', although it is also believed to have originally meant 'Contender with God' and even 'Soldier of God'. However, after the conquest of Canaan it was allegedly renamed *Eretz Israel*, meaning 'Land of Israel'. The kingdom of the biblical 12 Tribes is said to have been founded under Saul around 1020 B.C., the same being usually referred to as the United Kingdom of Israel. The Bible includes Israel as the northern kingdom of Palestine and Judah as its southern counterpart. This partition had come about around 922 B.C., when this ten-tribe house revolted against the United Kingdom under Rehoboam. The Kingdom of Israel was destroyed in 722 B.C., after Samaria, its capital, was captured by Assyria and many of its people carried into captivity. The southern kingdom suffered the same fate two centuries on, as we have just pointed out, when Judah was invaded by the Babylonians and the two-tribe house taken captive to Mesopotamia. As already mentioned, before these captivities and around 850 B.C., a writer of the southern kingdom is said to have gathered and compiled traditional tribal literatures and other early historical records to produce a national epic that would, in due course, become part -albeit embellished, as we shall unfurl later- of the final compilation of the *Pentateuch*. Similar records are said to have reappeared one hundred years later in the northern kingdom of Israel. Then, in 621 B.C., the *Deuteronomic*

Code is said to have been stumbled upon at the Temple of Jerusalem, consequently becoming the *Book of the Law* and, in due course, accepted as canon by Israel. Finally, between 500 and 400 B.C. there appeared the *Priestly Code*. Significantly, all four documents have been lost in their original form.

Greece's preponderance throughout Asia Minor during the 3rd century B.C. would result in the Greek-written *Septuagint*, a translation of the Hebrew *Pentateuch* that took a record-breaking 72 days to complete. By the end of the 2nd century the rest of the translated Hebrew literatures are said to have been incorporated, but the *Septuagint*, meaning 'seventy', would meet with the rejection of censorious Jerusalem-based rabbis, whence *apocrypha*, which in English means 'of doubtful origin'. Although the New Testament features Jesus referring to the Israelite Scriptures as the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, it is clear that he could not have possibly regarded the latter two as canon, for the *Writings*, for instance, which is the third section of the tripartite Old Testament that includes the supposed work of David, were still at hand. The 3-part Old Testament would, in fact, be canonized as late as 90 A.D., twenty years after the first Jews had left Jerusalem for Palestine and, surprisingly, about three decades after the first Christian literary works are said to have emerged. Importantly, copies of both testaments were reproduced in Greek early in the 4th century, namely the *Codex Sinaiticus*, the *Codex Alexandrinus*, the *Codex Vaticanus* and, lastly, the *Vulgate*, which is the Latin version of the Greek-written Bible that was produced by Jerome around the same time. The *Dead Sea Scrolls*, which are said to date from 150 B.C. to 100 A.D., would thus actually represent the oldest extant Hebrew-written religious works.

Although most rigorous and God-abiding, the Pharisees were also flexible in their interpretation of both the Oral and the Written Law, and were thus always willing to adapt these to changing circumstances. This Jewish order was perfidious

moreover, and after refusing to condone the Zealot uprising against the Roman occupation of Jerusalem, they secretly set out to gain the favour of the Eternal City. This apostasy would not only win them the sympathy of the Emperor Titus, but also, and more importantly, perhaps, the official permission to remain in this area at a time when the vanquished Israelite remnants were being definitively dispersed mainly in the directions of the Mediterranean coasts and northern Africa, where in Ethiopia, they would join other Jewish refugees, who had eluded captivity by the Babylonians a few hundred years earlier. The religious ramifications of a continued Pharisaic presence in this land were many, and the rewriting of Jewish religious literature would be among the most significant. Judaism, we should note, had been forbidden by the Roman authorities in Jerusalem after the final exile was set in motion, and although scattered dissenting Jewish voices would continue to be heard for years after the final exile had begun, grateful Rome gifted the colluding Pharisaic fraternity with unoccupied lands where they could live and develop. Soon enough, Jewish communities sprang in Jabneh, Palestine, and Babylon, eventually producing scribes who in 200 A.D. would assume sole responsibility for the completion of the *Mishnah* -the codification of an oral law- updating the already fusty and languishing *Mosaic Law* that was then threatened by more progressive approaches. Next, a set of erudites formed coteries that began two separate commentaries on this law, namely the *Gemara*, which was produced by Jewish Palestinian scholars known as the *Tannaim*, and the *Aggadah*, which was the work of Jewish Mesopotamian colleagues known as the *Amoraim*. These treatises became collectively known as the *Talmud*, meaning 'to study', and thenceforth considered supplementary to the Old Testament.

The Arameans were a Semitic people, whose Sumerian-derived language had once been the *lingua franca* among the peoples of the Middle East. Aramaic is said to have replaced Hebrew as a spoken language in the 6th

century B.C., prevailing long enough to become the language that Jesus would speak six hundred years later. Its alphabet predates the Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic equivalents, and it is therefore not surprising to find that parts of the Hebrew Old Testament and the *Gehena* were rendered in Aramaic. The Arameans probably originated in the North Arabian Desert, and by the 11th century B.C. had established several small kingdoms in the area of Assyria and Upper Mesopotamia. These kingdoms were conquered by Assyria during the 9th century B.C. and the Arameans were consequently dispersed throughout the former's newly-formed empire.

These, then, were the neighbouring nations from whom the Jews borrowed extensively in order to fabricate a godly pedigree for their stupefied nation after her freedom from Babylonian bondage. As we have just anticipated, and as we will endeavour to expand on, this conflation of historical, natural, and religious international reports was ultimately legitimized in the Hebrew Bible, whose expositions were at the time intended to restore in Jews a sense of national identity so desperately needed in the wake of this nation's return from her disjointing and erosive sojourn in abroad.

PART ONE

THE FERTILITY BACKGROUND

CHAPTER ONE

The god of Mesopotamia

Fertility tradition may well be divided into two cardinal parts; the elements and human survival. It is against this natural background that we should understand the advent and growth of south-western Asian gods and religious beliefs.

By 9000 B.C., as already touched upon, man is generally believed to have evolved from savage hunter to settled farmer, but despite extensive irrigation throughout the Mesopotamian alluvial plains, vast areas would continue to prove intractable and much of the Crescent's natural resources would therefore remain lamentably untapped. Evidently, helplessness and despair must have inexorably set in, but like the genetically embedded insecurity that turns the tender child to his parents for guidance and solutions, frustration may well have ultimately moved the imaginative farmer to equally plead and expect from this unfathomable celestial entity that was the evident cause of his misery. In synthesis, he may well have pondered its approach, and must have eventually reasoned that survival hinged on ingratiating schemes and rituals. Although experts cannot ascertain when the Asian farmer got his final act together, we certainly do know that the Sun was the target at which he aimed his first expressions of reverence.

According to Mesopotamian and Hellenistic astronomers, the Chaldeans were already making precise the times of the movements of heavenly bodies at the time of Nabonassar, the first king of Babylon. The control that the Sun exerts over its entire system was, therefore, evident to early Mesopotamians. Indeed, these had recognised this star's ability to transform the landscape, for instance, and had certainly been no strangers to the fact that the fertility of earth is regulated by its energy. The first detectable god in south-western Asia was thus none other than the paternal Sun-God, whose

countenance was far “*too radiant for mortal eyes to behold*”, and whose outpouring rain meant life and salvation. By continuous observation, moreover, the ancients had first come to understand that water was the life-blood of the planet and, ultimately, that it was the very basis of every bodily and spiritual development.

Mesopotamia’s emergent agrarian fraternity had thus perceived the Sun to be a fatherly penis, since its rain, like semen, was seen to impregnate and regulate earth’s productivity. During times of desiccation, and in some Chinese, Indian, and Greek rural areas, phallic processions (the bequest of their respective ancestors) are still a common occurrence. In some areas of the Yucatan Peninsula, we can still find monolithic phallic images dotting the landscape, whilst representational statues of Mother Earth, naked and pregnant, continue to be unearthed throughout the world. Indeed, the cult of Mother Earth, in its manifold manifestations, is also clearly present in myths and legends, such as those of Phoenicia, India, the Americas, and Africa. These two, then, the Sun and the Earth, are the original deities and, respectively, the producer and reproducer of all life. Once these parental gods were firmly established, it would be the turn for lesser gods to emerge and deify the rest of the meteorological and natural elements.

On account of Mesopotamia’s marshy and naturally rich southern region being under the level of the sea, having no natural watercourses, it is unable to distribute the seasonal inundations. The aforementioned belief thus found corroboration in the peculiarity of the area’s topography, inspiring the imaginative ancients to regard it as both, the very uterus of Mother Earth, and the very point where divine coition was manifested. Consequently, Southern Mesopotamia would become a haven for sex-oriented worship, which during the dry summer -the time of the year when the Sun takes a firmer control of the human hormones- saw the faithful holding what would later become known as

Lamentation ceremonies. These were desperately cringing supplications for rain in an attempt to arouse the Mighty Penis into outpouring His own all-restoring seminal bounty. In pre-Jewish Canaan, we should note, male and female prostitutes had been regularly employed in holy places, where orgies were held, and after which the resulting seminal emissions were ceremoniously collected by the presiding priesthood and then offered to God in pursuit of His much needed ejaculation. Such was the ancient reverence attached to rain that semen became most sacred, and its wastage, not surprisingly, consequently deemed unholy. Tantrism, the oldest Indian religion according to some, therefore warns: “...*the seed must not fall...the falling of the seed leads to death and its keeping is life.*” Similarly, in the later Bible, we find that “*spoiling it on the ground*” is a sinful act. 1 Samuel, 13:5, therefore threatens: “...*but if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed both you and your king.*” If there were no precipitations it was clear that there could be no regeneration possible, whence again the sententious; “*the wages of sin is death.*” Spoiling the precious fluid on the ground, or anywhere else for that matter, had become a sinful act, and this must be why the male homosexual population of the biblical Sodom (whence ‘sodomy’) would have been wiped out by Yahweh much later. This enmeshing creed had held that sin violated the natural laws and that it disrupted the natural process set in motion by the Great Phallus of the Sky. Bible students would do well to note that the word ‘sin’ comes via the Greek *pan* from the original Chaldean *hata*, meaning ‘to miss the mark’, and that its context is, evidently, not of archery, as thought in most quarters -given the later connection of this activity with enlightenment in Asian countries- but of human copulation. This basal idea of sin must thus lie not only at the root of the allegorical satanic image of the multi-orgasmic goat, but also, significantly, at the very core of the recently lifted Catholic strictures against contraception and the Judaeo-Christian condemnation of prostitution, *coitus interruptus*, masturbation, and practical male homo-sexuality.

This natural process could not be violated by such illicit sexual activities, and culprits were fervently persecuted by the priesthoods. This labyrinthine incontinence scheme, onerous as it was, must have rendered the laity forever trapped and penitent. Conveniently, then, measures that took the form of blood and burnt offerings to the Great Benefactor, were eventually introduced as appeasement and as penance by the priesthood, thus ensuring both the restoration of the natural balance and the extrication of those countless irrepressible sinners. Indeed, unearthed records speak of redemption animal sacrifices offered by the Sumerians as far back as 2300 B.C. *Mosaic Law*, in fact would later speak of the holiness bestowed by Yahweh upon those faithful who would perform blood-rituals exactly as decreed. In this context, and to please his demanding god, Solomon, the biblical Jewish king, had himself assumed full responsibility for the edification of "*the house to the Lord*" in Jerusalem. The Bible records Yahweh's response to Solomon: "*I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice.*" According to experts, this temple had comprised the Holy Place, where only the priesthood could enter to perform certain duties at stated times, and the Holy of Holies, accessed exclusively by the high-priest on the Day of Atonement for the sins of the common folk. Atonement blood is "*most holy unto the Lord*", claims *Exodus* and, in *Leviticus*, we find: "*the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.*" The New Testament adopts the foregoing, adding: "*he who eats of my flesh and drinks of my blood shall never perish.*" In order to incite the gods into coition, sacrificial blood -the container of life- had often been poured copiously into a devitalized and, by implication, a sex-starved earth. Often, the celebrant priesthood would eat the flesh of sacrificial victims, particularly of the first-born. It would appear that this was an act that allegedly drew priests nearer to the Divinity, enhancing their mediation role in the process. In the Aztec Cult of Tlaloc, numerous children, especially

first-born babies at the breast, were forcibly bought from their stumped mothers by the priests for daily sacrifice. Here, the rituals would have climaxed when the bawling suckling shed tears, to which the jubilant spectators would have responded by shouting to the top of their voices: “*rain is coming, salvation!*” Yahweh, the biblical god, would often resort to intimidation and killing over the preparation of the meat destined for the fire of offering. Indeed, this tribal deity was quite finical over these arrangements, and the *Books of Numbers* and *Leviticus* both dedicate a few chapters exclusively to these fleshy, mouth-watering recipes, some of which, by the way, had previously pleased the equally capricious Babylonian and Phoenician gods among others. However, when God manifested His Blessings, showering *mercies* upon the land, the exultant beneficiaries, now feeling redeemed, proceeded to organise convivial events in dedication to their forgiving and magnanimous benefactor.

Anciently, the first gathering of the season’s produce was believed to be more favourably endowed with the source of divine life than the later progeny. *Exodus*, 4:2, therefore projects Israel as God’s “*first-born*”, while in 13:2 of the same book, Yahweh enunciates: “*all first-born are mine.*” The human first-born were the pride of nations, and to lose these precious ones, except in sacrifice, was deemed ignominious and believed to entail excommunication from God and society for the affected families. This is precisely why the Bible features God, selecting the Egyptian first-born for the slaughter that would finally secure the release of His people from the tight grips of this nation. In Persian literature, Mithras, the Sun-God, gladly accepts the offering of the first-born, and *Genesis* likewise depicts a fawning Abel, presenting the firstlings of his flock for sacrifice to his grateful god, whilst Abraham, the biblical Patriarch, almost sacrifices Isaac, his very own first offspring. Although open to interpretation, *Exodus* includes Yahweh’s demand: “*...the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me*”, and *Proverbs* reports that His followers should “*...honour the Lord with his*

substance and with the first fruits of his increase.” Deuteronomy testifies that both, the offering of the first fruits and the sacrifice of the first-born to God were popular sacrifices among all those Canaanites who feared Him. Lastly, in *Romans*, we find Paul linking the holiness of the first-fruits to the first-fruits of the Spirit, while *1 Corinthians* speaks of Christ as “...*the first-fruit of all those who sleep*”, and *Revelations* of those fortunate enough to have been redeemed from among men, they being “...*the first-fruits unto God.*” It is no wonder, then, that Jesus, God’s First and Only Begotten offspring, should have been sacrificed as atonement for the sins of an evil world.

CHAPTER TWO

Sex, drugs, and festivities

The earliest known written record on the medicinal use of a plant (a Sumerian herbal) dates back to 2200 B.C. Needless to say, medicinal knowledge was as important then as it is today. The identification of the correct plants with which to prepare successful curative compounds cannot have been an easy task and must have thus required great expertise. This knowledge appears to have once been the exclusive occupation and preserve of sorcerers, or *shamans*, the latter name finding its roots in the Sanskrit *shramana*, meaning ‘religious ascetic’. Shamans were also those mesmeric botanists who would later claim to be a separate people. Taoist priests, for instance, had been particularly renowned for their knowledge of traumatology, and in *Josephus*, we find that ancient priests had “...*knowledge of the art used against demons for the benefit and healing of men.*” Of Solomon, the same historian reports that “...*he composed incantations (medicinal concoctions) by which illnesses are relieved.*” The Greek *Cult of Asclepius* was a religion and system of therapeutics, and sanctuaries, such as those at Tricca, Epidaurus, Cos, and Pergamus, were built outside the towns on particularly healthy sites. Here, the priesthood in charge of the sanctuaries would hold the monopoly of herbal remedies traditionally handed down from father to son. Elsewhere, in Mayan culture, the priests lived “*on high*”, leading a semi-reclusive and separatist existence up in the highlands and in locations that were forever out of bounds to the laity, who, congruently enough, always settled the lowlands. The universal view that held priests as the Guardians of our Souls and the Keepers of the Keys to Heaven appears to find its genesis in Sumerian fertility culture, where, as we shall see in our next chapter, they had been the Guardians of the Semen and the shepherds responsible for the fecundity and salvation of the flock placed in their charge. Without any doubt, this is the fertility-rooted

mission of Israel, that is to say, a god-ordained nation of priests, separate unto Himself and tasked with the planting of His seed in the heart of humanity.

Once sustenance could be secured, procreation was progressively encouraged, especially among those smaller tribes, whose future survival and establishment then hinged precisely on going forth and multiplying in great numbers. Human fertility, broadly speaking, was seen as a gift from God, and strict adherence to this creed would induce the vigorous condemnation of sexual dysfunction. Those afflicted found themselves stigmatized and relegated to the fringes of society. As recently as a century ago, and in some parts of India, for instance, widows were still being ostracised and, in many cases, brutally burned at the stake. The Hebrew word for 'widow', meaning 'wasted womb', thus admirably underpins the significance attached to fecundity in those days. In short, sexual impotence and infertility were a waste in the pursuit of the all-crucial and delicate balance of nature earlier referred to, and its victims, understandably enough, were rendered destitute and branded as reprobates who could no longer secure God's favours.

Aphrodisiacs thus became extremely popular throughout these primitive societies. Although most of these preparations were innocuous and served only to stimulate the imagination of users, others, by contrast, were potentially lethal to aspiring lovers for instance. It was pretty clear that the potency of botanicals needed to be ascertained before ingesting. The *Mandragora Officinarum*, better known as the mandrake, had to be taken in minute quantities, as mental derangement and even death have been known to often follow its abuse. This particular fruit was, perhaps, the most sought-after love potion in Asia. The hedonic Greeks knew it as the *Antimimon*, which is a word traceable to the Sumerian *Heavenly Shade*, implying 'ecstasy', and which means, literally, 'to stand beside oneself'. Pythagoras also named this plant the *Antropo-morphon*, meaning 'Human Figure'. A

member of the Night Shade family known as Solanaceae, meaning ‘mandrake’, it was once commonly referred to as the Phallus of the Field and the Devil’s Testicles. From the Old Testament we learn that Rachel had put the mandrake to the test and was not heard to complain. This plant is also a sedative and was later routinely administered by the Romans to prisoners awaiting crucifixion.

Other natural *psychedelics* (from the Greek for ‘mind-revealer’) had an excellent reception in antiquity. Here, they satisfied mankind’s persistent craving for euphoria, eventually also serving as soul detonators that would, in due course, engender sentiments of awe, mysticism, and reverence. In China, for instance, *opium* was said to be capable of transforming the human personality, while in Central America, the *peyote* cactus is still reputed to provide glimpses of the Divine. Known to the ancient world as incense from India’s Indus Valley, the inebriant *cannabis* was ritually burned in the temples of Babylonia, Assyria, Phoenicia and, particularly in those of Israel, where as part of the Jewish Holy Friday night, many thousands of devotees ritually inhaled from incense burners filled with *qaneh-bosem*. Ancient Hindus regarded *vijaya* (‘victory’) as having been bestowed upon them by the gods to induce spiritual enlightenment and to help achieve physical restoration. This is the reason why Indian *Saddus* (‘Holy men’) revere and consume the cannabis plant on a daily basis. It is written that Siva had collected the “*Sacred Plant*” from the Himalayas, and that upon his return to India he had commanded the word *bhangi* (‘cannabis’) to be chanted repeatedly during its sowing, weeding, and harvesting. The *Bhagavad-Gita* corroborates, featuring Lord Krsna himself, claiming: “*I Am the Healing Herb*”. Krsna also taught that this plant had been given for “*the welfare of mankind*”. This supra-nutritional botanical was held as the most holy by Chinese Buddhists, whose tradition includes its master surviving exclusively on hempen seeds for six years before pressing ahead with his revolutionary *Four Truths*. In 500 B.C., Herodotus was

writing about the Scythians and their ceremonious inhalation of cannabis during funeral and religious rituals. In Japanese Shintoism, cannabis is said to have been taken to bind married couples together and also to drive away evil spirits. Egypt had also plied her religious initiates with cannabis on a regular basis in order to aid their spiritual development, a practice, which, by the way, continues to be observed by a number of religious movements. The word 'cannabis' comes from the Sumerian *kana-bis*, or *kana-ba* (*qunapam* in later Assyrian texts), meaning 'twin reed' and 'cane of two' respectively. So indispensable had this plant become in Israel, for instance, that the Sumerian derived Hebrew word *qaneh* ('cane' in English) must have been coined in remembrance of the former nation's traditional association with it. Despite the outstanding popularity of one of the world's oldest cultivars, it was the toadstool known as the *Amanita Muscaria* that would play the key role in early human psychogenesis and in the ensuing quest for godliness throughout the ancient world.

'Mycology' (from the ancient Greek *mykes*) estimates the total number of different species to be as high as 100,000. Micro-fungi are immensely relevant to our lives. Indeed, fungi-extracted yeasts have been used by man for centuries to ferment his food and drink, and the beer, wine, and dairy products that we consume today all use enormous amounts of especially cultured yeasts. Moulds, as well as posing a serious threat to stored provisions by causing decay whenever the conditions are damp enough, also represent, in the cases of *Cyclosporin* and *Penicillium*, an invaluable suppressant and antibiotic in the fight against disease. Notwithstanding, other fungi can be extremely harmful. For instance, the *Claviceps Purpurea*, better known as the ergot, is a parasite on rye and, occasionally also on grain. The infection is so powerful that during the Middle Ages almost 20,000 people lost their lives in a single outbreak after eating bread made from poisoned grain. Moreover, hysteria during the Spanish religious Inquisition would see dozens of impoverished

peasants perish at the stake allegedly for dabbling in witchcraft when, in reality, these had become almost demented from eating bread baked with the more readily available and less costly, but invariably contaminated rye. Nevertheless, the ergos has also been put to good medical use, particularly in childbirth, as it arrests bleeding by contracting the uterus.

Among the fungi kingdom the Agaric family is the better known. Typical of these is the extremely notorious genus *Amanita*, which includes such poisonous toadstools as the so-called Death Cap and the Fly Agaric. The toxicity of the latter's stem stupefies and kills flies, whence its first name, whilst the second part of the name, that is, 'agaric', owes its philological origin to its umbrella-like pileus, which, according to the Sumerians, is where its inebriating substance and the very Father of Celestial Visions resides. The *haoma*, the holy and euphoriant beverage and symbol of immortality of the Persian *Zend-Avesta*, as well as the Indian Vedic *soma*, were both obtained from the *Amanita Muscaria* by squeezing the toadstool between two mill-stones, after which it was processed and fermented before imbibing. In Taoism, it was known as *lingchih* ('divine mushroom of immortality'), and in India, it was often called the Nectar of Instruction, while in Persia, it would be referred to as the Drink of the Gods. In *Yasna*, we find that the *haoma* is "*correct in faith*" and "*the adversary of death.*" The Koryaks of Siberia have for centuries gathered the *muchumor* to induce vigour and boisterousness, and legends here describe the arrival of the mushroom men, who would take users of the fungi on intricate paths to other worlds. In the tales of the Koryak peoples, fungi is connected with the gods and even accepted as a gift from heaven. The Koryaks maintain that the God Existence once spat upon the ground and that the *Fly Agaric* had then sprouted to give strength to the warrior Big Raven in his time of need. Another tale, current in parts of Europe, speaks of St. Peter, spitting bread on the ground and producing mushrooms in the process. In retaliation, the Devil

is said to have also spat on the ground, producing the beautiful, but deadly toadstools. This fungi was also abused by the Norse to enter the berserk state ('Berserk' was the name of a Viking leader who had violently opposed the establishment of Christianity in Norway around 1200 A.D.), which saw them perform super-human feats, while in Mexico, a surviving cult consumes the toxic fungi known as *Teonanactl*, the 'Food of the Gods'. In Japan, the Land of the Rising Sun, the rapid growth-rate of fungi was associated with the full-moon and with thunder. Here, the *Amanita Muscaria* was referred to as the Thunder Mushroom not only for this botanical's surprising susceptibility to gravity, but also for its 'mind-blowing' capabilities. The Brothers of Thunder of the New Testament suddenly spring to mind. The Mayan priesthood prescribed the sacred fungi to religious hopefuls, and a total of three mushrooms were ceremoniously administered to these during their lifetime; on conversion if the apprentice had been a youngster, during middle-age and, lastly, when death had been imminent. In ancient Asia Minor, the psychoactive fungi had come to represent good living, and this may probably be why the biblical Adam and Eve are featured as vegetarians, living as sybarites in the Garden of Eden and, as in the mythical Garden of Hesperides, "*walking with God.*" It is thus no wonder that in many translations, the word *gan*, which is Sumerian for 'mushroom', was often erroneously rendered as 'paradise'.

Unlike most of the vegetation, fungi lack the green pigment known as *chlorophyll*, which is the result of photosynthesis. Like bacteria, fungi reproduce agamously by spores rather than seeds. These spores are usually as small as a few thousandths of a millimetre and are thus invisible to the naked eye. The mushroom, moreover, happens to resemble an erect human penis before it fully develops its pileus. It is also a fact that hallucinogenic fungi can blossom anywhere in the world. Evidently, this combination of peculiarities, that is, the fungi's physiognomy and omnipresence, its seedless birth,

and its enlightening properties, are clearly some of the characteristics of most religious messiahs.

Scientists agree that the *Amanita Muscaria* is particularly psychoactive and that it can lure users into a parallel existence. In the USA and some parts of Europe during the Sixties, Timothy Leary inadvertently expounded the Sumerian view, claiming that LSD, whose mind-altering effects are not entirely at variance with those of the fungi, actually illuminates the mind. “*Tune in, turn on and drop out*” had been Leary’s motto. Soon enough, countless young Americans would take to spirituality and love, some even emigrating to more exotic and supposedly less materialistic communities, such as the Indian. Hallucinogenic fungi are further thought to have been used frequently by ancient Egyptians in addition to cannabis and in association with this nation’s obsessive experimentations with disembodiment. Curiously, in Yucatan, there is a famous ancient sculpture of a toad, sitting under the shade of a mushroom. It is a fact that the secreted glands of frightened toads, like those of the Australian cane-toad, for example, are also hallucinogenic. Clearly, some natural toxins have represented a welcomed respite from the drudgery of quotidian life. Paradoxically, whereas the mushroom was anciently symbolic of sacredness and life, the bellowing mushroom-shaped clouds of nuclear explosions are today synonymous with evil and death.

With few exceptions that include wine (the addictive and highly toxic national drink of Christian Rome), which was traditionally drunk on the Sabbath by the Jews to induce a sanctified state of communion with the Divine, these other mind-altering substances which according to the *Rig Veda*: “...preceded even the gods by three ages”, continue to be surrounded by an aura of illicitness in most western and democratic countries, where they are further deemed immoral by the very religionists who, incredibly enough, are today unwittingly pushing what must surely rate as a lingering, infectious hangover from past drug-induced heavenly

glimpses. In the words of Aldus Huxley: *“For unrestricted use the West has permitted only alcohol and tobacco. All the other chemical Doors in the Wall are labelled Dope, and their unauthorized takers are Fiends.”* But we shall continue to examine the shocking contribution of fungi-induced deliriousness to the establishment of ancient religious organisations, particularly in our next chapter.

The rotation of the seasons, the so-called Wheel of Life, and its effects upon plant life denote a likeness to the birth and death of humanity itself, and the annual return of the vegetation must have eventually prompted the first notions of reincarnation among the ancients. As *Isaiah* extrapolates, *“they that sleep in the earth will awake and shout for joy, for thy dew is a dew of sparkling light and the earth will bring these long dead to birth again.”* The main festivity of the ancient agrarian cults was obviously that held in the spring to commemorate the manifestations of this particular season. This was a time of pure revelry and thanks-giving. In Phoenicia, for instance, the people had celebrated the harvest and the Adonai. Says an ancient fertility goddess: *“You will sing, dance, feast, make love and music in my praise, for mine indeed is both the ecstasy of the spirit and the joy on earth. Worship me within the heart that rejoices, for behold, to me belong all acts of love and pleasure.”* Spring was also the opportunity for truce and magnanimity aimed at famished and menacing nomads, who were out prowling along the fringes of the well-protected Crescent. These New Year festivities were observed in most ancient cultures. In India, for example, the festivals had concerned Gavampati, the God of Drought and Wind also known as Ga-Tum-Dug in Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian religious traditions. In Phoenicia, Gavampati was renamed the goddess Ashtarte, who, like the Phoenician Ba'al, for instance, was believed to die and resurrect annually in sympathy with the natural cycle. Finally, in Greece, celebrations focused on Demeter, the goddess of the fertile and cultivated soil.

Today, this and three other festivals occur in almost every pagan religion and with appropriately saintly labels they have survived ineradicably in the Christian calendar in particular. The May /Day festivals, for example, are the oldest and the ones that have survived with the maximum of popular vigour and the minimum of Christian refashioning. For its part, the festival of the Eleusinian Mysteries began in the month of *Boedromion* ('September'), which is the traditional time for grape gathering. This festival would start on the 15th and end on the 22nd of this same month. The Phoenician and Hebrew equivalents known as the Feast of Ingatherings and the Feast of Tabernacles, were therefore held in the month of *Ethanim*, a word that flows precisely from *Adonim*, *Adonia*, and *Attenim*, the three names clearly bearing salacious connotations as already mentioned.

Lastly, the Winter Solstice is the true New Year astronomically as well as spiritually. Christianity actually acknowledged the religious significance of the turn of the year when it settled on December 25th (the date of birth of the earlier Egyptian Horus and the Persian Zoroaster) as the date of Jesus' birth, after three or four centuries of argument during which March, April, and November had all been strong contenders. Indeed, whilst most scholars would allow the Gospel accounts of Christ to have at least a basis of historical fact, the legend of His birth evidently bears all the hallmarks of the far older tradition of the Goddess giving birth at the Winter Solstice to the promised new Sun God, who would, in due course, be ceremoniously sacrificed as prelude to rebirth or resurrection.

CHAPTER THREE

Biblical fertility nomenclature

Although a much debated date in certain quarters, the unanimous view holds that alphabetic writing was the invention of Semites around 1500 B.C. Much earlier, the Sumerians are said to have introduced their particular language known as cuneiform, this being the earliest form of writing known together with those of China and Egypt. The latter, however, had by then devised a hieroglyphic system that represented sounds. Sumerian Cuneiform, once spoken in cities of southern Mesopotamia, now only exists in its written form. The development of this language for use in complex documents was understandably a slow one, but by 2500 B.C. it had been completed, comprising a total of 300 signs that were put to successful use in politics, commerce, and religion. This language-system would be replaced 150 years later by the Akkadian equivalent, which soon after became the official language in the area. Sumerian cuneiform provides a bridge between the Indo-European languages that include Greek, Latin, and English, and the Semitic group that consists of the languages employed in the writing of the Old Testament, that is, Aramaic and Hebrew.

Etymologists tell us that a written word is the expression of a thought or idea. To penetrate a word's original meaning, they say, is to look into the mind of the person who coined it. 'Etymology', from the Greek *etymus*, meaning 'truth', can thus help elicit the true cultural and technical development of ancient civilizations. Importantly, 'philology', from the Greek *philos*, meaning 'word', equally leads to a better understanding of basal terminology, such as the names of ancient gods, legendary characters, rituals, and ceremonies, whose authentic meanings have remained obscure almost since their very inception. To understand their eventual and more sophisticated meanings in literatures like the Judaeo-Christian, for instance, we must first follow their evolution.

The earliest cuneiform ideograms that were found in Kish were plain and would have thus made easy reading for most of its community. However, because the ridges caused by the indenting stylus on the wet and soft clay often blurred these outlined pictures, the wedge-shaped incision -whence the term *cunei-* was introduced in its place. This script, which was rendered by new, clean impressions, eventually overtook the pictorial system altogether, representing syllables of consonants and vowels that made up word bricks which could then be joined together to make sentences. Inevitably enough, cuneiform script became progressively incomprehensible to the masses and, ultimately, legible only to influential local scribes, priests, politicians, and merchants. Evidently, Sumerian cuneiform script is the forerunner and herald of so-called liturgical languages which, in due course, would become the exclusive domain and preserve of priesthods.

In his cogent essay entitled *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*, John M. Allegro, a renowned British linguist commissioned by the Jordanian Government to lead an investigation team to analyze the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, declared that the Greek *Zeus* and the Jewish *YHWH* were names derived from the Sumerian for 'juice of fecundity', 'spermatozoa', and 'seed of life'. Allegro argued that such names are composed of two syllables; IA ('ya', dialectically 'za', meaning 'juice' and, literally, 'strong water'), and 'U' - perhaps, the most important phoneme in south-western Asia. The latter, according to him, is reflected in Sumerian cuneiform texts that are represented by a number of different signs, and at whose root we find the concept of 'fecundity'. Thus, one 'U' may mean 'copulate', 'mount', or 'create', and another 'rainstorm' as a source of heavenly seed. Yet, another 'U' can mean 'vegetation' as the offspring of the god, while another can be the name of the storm deity himself. Behind sophisticated elaborations on vocabulary, Allegro believes he has identified the basic fertility phoneme 'U'.

Surprising to most of us is that the universal sabaoth's destructive power finds its genesis in the Sumerian storm-god ISKUR, meaning 'Mighty Penis', the actual name itself, having derived from the Sumerian composition SIPA-UD, meaning, quite literally, 'penis of the storm'. It is thus no wonder that Iskur's frequent descents to earth, like those of the later Greek Zabazios and the Jewish Sabaoth, among others, should have often been marked by tempestuous climatic conditions.

Lamentation Priest is rooted in I-LU-BALAG-DI, the latter part of this word meaning 'penis stirrer'. Initially and as already touched upon, Lamentation ceremonies were mostly held during the dry season in an attempt to excite and erect the apparently uninterested Penis of the Sky. In other words, these ceremonies had been supplications for rain. Indeed, the word 'lamentation', which is *qinah* in common Hebrew, actually flows from GI-Na*, meaning, 'erect', and from URA, which means, quite literally, 'penis'.

The Law (the fertilizing rain) was the prerogative of God, which He poured liberally upon "*the just and the unjust.*" This law, for example, is clearly reflected on some ancient monolithic works, such as the stele that commemorated *Hammurabi's Code of Law*, and which depicts Marduk, the Sun-God, as the evident ejaculator and out-pourer of the laws thereon inscribed. This kind of law thus also becomes abundantly evident throughout the Bible, the Hebrew word *Torah*, meaning 'Lawgiver', 'Teacher', or 'Out-pourer'. The kingship and the priesthood were divine lawgivers, teachers, and imparters of life, who thus held the secret to God's Benevolence and, correlatively enough, the keys to paradise. The Hebrew word *kohen* actually derives from the Sumerian GU-EN-NA, meaning, exactly, 'Guardian of the Semen', while the biblical *shepherd* itself stems from the Sumerian root RIG, which when broken down unfurls the original idea of fecundity. This is why Jesus, as both king and shepherd, delivered the new divine mandate in the Sermon on the

Mount. Universal history, we should note, reveals that kings traditionally boasted divine origins, and in England, for instance, and only until a few centuries ago, when Oliver Cromwell successfully disputed it, all kings had enjoyed so-called Divine Rights, a status that until then had allowed monarchies to wield unrestrained clout over their gullible subjects.

The biblical *grace* and *mercy* are likewise embedded in fertility tradition. In *Genesis*, we thus find that the rainbow - the natural consequence of moisture in the atmosphere- was the symbol introduced by God to commemorate precisely His Benevolence. "*Wherever I bring rain clouds over the earth, this shining bow will recall my promise*", enounces Yahweh. When God was benevolent, He was also demonstrating His Mercy and Compassion, whence the biblical citation: "*it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not, they are (the dew) new every morning.*" Like *compassion*, which originally spoke of the morning dew, *grace* and *mercy* were synonymous with rain, while "*the pouring of blessings*" in *Malachi*, 3:10, for instance, was representative of downpours and the resulting delectable bumper harvests.

Prophet (rebin, or nabi in Hebrew), as well as *seer, water-oil expert, and physician*, all come from the Sumerian root A-ZU, or I-ZU, meaning 'essene'. Not surprisingly, the Essenes, who were also known as the Sons of Light and as the Nazarenes, were those who had concentrated primarily on the preparation and dispensation of medicinal remedies throughout Jerusalem as from the 3rd century B.C., sharing many escetic practises with both Egyptian and Buddhist traditions, including the purification of the soul through baptism in water.

The 'Royal City, or 'Seat of the Gods' Creative Activity' already discussed, was the very uterus of Mother Earth, whence the Greek *delphi*, meaning, precisely, 'uterus', and

the name of the most venerated religious location of its time. *Osiris*, or *Asari*, actually means ‘Seat Maker’, and this is exactly why he was God’s priest, solely responsible for the fertility of the Egyptian soil. He was thus the God of Life and Fertility often depicted in green skin, the colour of the rich and exuberant vegetation. One of his tasks included the minding of the resources of the Nile during the months of July and August, when he prepared the Seat of the Gods’ (sexual) Creative Activity by allowing the ‘Father of the Waters’ to both swell to its optimum level and to then burst its banks in order to fertilize the surrounding flood plains, thereby securing not only the harvest, but also the survival of the resident flock. *Jerusalem*, we must note, flows from the Sumerian ‘City of the Heavenly Womb’, or ‘Groin’, and can also mean ‘Virgin Daughter of Zion’. Not surprisingly, Jerusalem, the biblical Holy City and the site of the Temple built by Solomon as a house of sacrifice to his god, is itself located under the level of the sea. To Israel, *Zion* originally meant ‘City of David’, and the name *David*, appropriately enough, actually comes from the Sumerian for ‘the lover’. *Zion*, running counter to established criteria, is not Semitic either, but Sumerian in provenance, *Sinai* itself coming from ZA-NE, meaning ‘brazier’, whence the *Torah’s* Burning Bush, itself symbolic of Canaanite Sun worship and the obvious reason for Moses’ gloriously shining face.

The name *Cain* means ‘womb’ and proceeds from the Sumerian GAR-EN, which means ‘seed container’. Correlatively, *Abel* flows from BAL, meaning ‘bearer’, or ‘phallus’. The biblical story may thus be alluding to the priestly delusional notion of the balance of nature and of its sinful transgression which could bring death to all.

Halleluia comes via the Greek *eleleu eleleu*, from which stems ELOhim, meaning ‘Gods’. The former is actually a Sumerian combination of E-LA, meaning ‘strong water’, or ‘juice’, and of IA-U/UIA, which, as already noted, actually means ‘juice of fecundity’.

Last, but certainly not least, the name *Jehoshua* ('Joshua') is also Sumerian in provenience. IA-U-ShU-A* means 'semen', and which, as previously discussed, restores, heals, and ultimately saves.

Other biblical nomenclature denotes a possible association with inebriating fungi. For instance, *Hermon* comes from 'Organ of Support' which would have held up the sky and offered celestial visions. Needless to say, this is the description of a mushroom and, evidently, of the psychogenetic type. It is a fact that mushrooms gain in hallucinogenic potency when grown at over 2000 metres, and this may well account for the universal sacredness of mountains, including the biblical Mount Hermon, the Highest Region, and the place for heavenly glimpses as witnessed by Moses himself.

Esau, the name of Isaac's first-born, comes from the Sumerian and Greek composition EShU-A, which means 'volva' of a mushroom, or 'raised canopy', whence, incidentally, the rich covering borne over priests in Roman Catholic and other Orthodox street processions.

The name *Jacob* (Iakobos in Greek) comes from the Sumerian IA-A-GUB, meaning 'pillar', or 'stem'. Again, this accords well with the description of a mushroom. Apropos of the mushroom and Catholicism, all member churches include an altar upon which is found the curtained tabernacle which allegedly houses the symbolic and regenerating host of the Christian Messiah and which is accessed only by the priest during Mass and when Holy Communion takes its turn. Gill fungi have a fine cobweb-like veil, stretching between the cap and stem, whence this species' appropriate name of *Cortinarius*, meaning 'veil'. As during Mass, this veil was firstly removed ceremoniously by the fertility shaman and its sacred, life-giving properties within the consequently exposed toadstool's cap then administered to religious apprentices.

To recapitulate, and in a nutshell, Mesopotamian fertility culture is the bed-rock source of much Judaeo-Christian religious nomenclature and tradition.

* The lower-case insertions indicate the Greek addition to the Sumerian original

PART TWO
COMPARATIVE TRADITIONS

CHAPTER ONE

The Middle East

Almost invariably, middle-eastern myths and legends are traditional stories, initially passed on by word of mouth and eventually written down to form mythological and religious systems. Mythology properly deals with gods, while legend concentrates on human epic. The two, as already partly perused, had been genuine attempts at explaining the often unpredictable manifestations of nature at a time when there would have been very weak scientific understanding of the natural environment. “Myths”, from the Greek *muthos*, meaning ‘utterance’, or ‘re-telling stories’, or even ‘talking about’, may well therefore constitute not only the earliest valid explanations to have emerged, but also represent the backbone of the first overarching natural philosophy around which life would be focused.

Four main types of myths would develop throughout the ages; the already partly examined Nature and Ritual myths, and the Creation and Culture myths, which I now propose to labour in order to highlight their likeness to the biblical renditions. I make no apology for allowing the following to verge on dilatation and repetitiveness, as this helps to accentuate the mythical nature of the Bible. It is important, therefore, that the reader bears with me.

Mesopotamia

The unearthed writings of ancient Mesopotamia are among the oldest and most significant, these having greatly influenced those of south-western Asia, Greece, and Rome. The best known Mesopotamian literary works, nonetheless, are not precisely Sumerian, but Babylonian and Assyrian. Both these works, which flourished around the 18th century B.C., were written by priests in the Akkadian language, and each was rendered in its separate dialect in cuneiform script. These writings also deal with virtually the same mythological and legendary subjects and, at times, with the same historical events.

As a matter of tradition, most Asian nations after Sumeria had divinized their past by fabricating noble, God-inspired ancestries. Well before the biblical invasion of Canaan by Semitic desert vagabonds, the Babylonians had entertained the notion of a 'chosen people', further professing to be the ambassadors for the Lord on Cloud found in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. This work, which predates the Old Testament by more than 2000 years, represents the world's first recorded national epic, comprising a 3500 line-poem that describes the errant life of Gilgamesh, an early ruler of Uruk. Like the biblical couple in *Genesis*, Gilgamesh is deceived by the serpent and is consequently expelled from paradise and condemned to thenceforth eke out an existence in complete agricultural wilderness. Like the Old Testament's *Genesis*, this epic also deals with timeless themes, such as loyalty, courage, and man's quest for immortality.

The term Holy of Holies first emerged in Sumer, where it would later become the inner sanctuary in which the Sumerians traditionally recited their sacred *Enuma Elish* in the presence of the High God. As does the later *Torah*, this holy book praises one god and his Seven-Day Creation. Published in 1876 by Layard and Rassam, the *Enuma Elish* comes from seven cuneiform tablets unearthed at Ashurbanipal, Nineveh. Although some pieces from Ashur are said to date back to 1000 B.C., experts agree that this work must be based on much older texts. The protagonist here is Marduk, later to become the Great God of Babylon. After triumphing over Tiamat, his rival, Marduk proceeds to organise the universe: "*In the beginning when 'the sky above had not been named and the earth below was nameless' there existed only Apsu, the primordial ocean, and Tiamat, the tumultuous sea. From their mingled waters there came forth firstly Mummu (the tumult of the waves) then a pair of monstrous serpents called Lakhmu and Lakhmu, who in their turn gave birth to Anshar, the celestial world, and to Kishar, the terrestrial world. To Anshar and Kishar were born the great gods: Anu, the powerful; Ea, of vast intellect; and the other divinities. These latter were the Igigi who peopled the sky and also the Anunnakis who were scattered over the earth and through the underworld.*" The death of Tiamat spreads

confusion among her following, and although her auxiliaries flee in chaos to save their lives, Marduk manages to catch them in his net, taking them all prisoners. With Kingu he casts them into the infernal regions, splitting Tiamat's skull and cutting her blood arteries. Contemplating the corpse *"he conceives works of art, after which he turns to clove the body "like a fish into two parts."* From one half *"he fashions the vault of the heavens"* and from the other *"the solid earth."* This done, he organizes the world and constructs a dwelling place in the sky for the great gods, where he further *"installs the stars in their image."* He then *"fixes the length of the year"* and regulates the course of the heavenly bodies. Thus, the world is formed. Then, *"in order that the gods should live in a world to rejoice their hearts"*, Marduk creates humanity, *"moulding the body of the first man"* by using the blood of Kingu. A neo-Babylonian text from Eridu relates that he is aided by the goddess Aruru, who *"produces with him the seed of mankind in their image."* Lastly, there appear the great rivers, vegetation, and animals both wild and domestic. The work of creation is finally achieved. The victory of Marduk re-establishes peace and order in the world of the gods, and each divinity receives a particular sphere of influence in the universe. Anu's share is the sky, and Enlil takes over the earth, while Ea is appointed as custodian of the waters. Anu becomes the Supreme God, and Enlil, like his Greek counterpart Zeus, goes on to represent the natural elements.

The compilation of the *Fragments of Berossus* dates back to 500 B.C. One of the fragments collected features this short account: *"There was a time in which there was nothing but darkness and an abyss of waters, wherein resided most hideous beings, which were produced of a two-fold principle. Men appeared with two wings, some with four and with two faces. They had one body but two heads; the one of a man, the other of a woman. They were likewise in their several organs both male and female."* As science now reveals, and as the Bible would later include, *"Male and female created he him"*, in other words, androgynous. Thus, in the *Nuctameron of the Hebrews*, we find that *"the creators outline in the second 'hour' the shape of a more corporeal form of man. They separate it into two and prepare the sexes to become distinct from each other. Such, is the way the fowl, plant,*

beast and man were 'androgynous' at the first hour." The Sumerian/Akkadian Ninurta, the God of Fields, Canals, and the God of Fertility, was married to Bau, who, like the Elohim of the Bible, is said to have *"breathed into men the breath of life."* In the Chaldean version of the Creation by the Babylonian Onkelos, the Work Master *"created and fashioned the world in six days"*, after which *"He rested on the seventh."* In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, we find that although *"the gods created men in their image"* the former becomes so displeased with their behaviour that they resolve to annihilate them. Assembled in the town of Shuruppak by the banks of the Euphrates, the gods Anu, Enlil, Ninurta, and Ennugi decide to drown the earth with a deluge. But humanity finds favour in the god Ea who is also assembled there. Feeling sorry, Ea pulls the plug on the plot, revealing the secret to a reed-hut and, as intended, he is overheard by an inhabitant of Shuruppak named Uta-Napishtim: *"Man of Shuruppak, son of Ubar-Tutu, destroy thy house, build a vessel and leave thy riches and seek thy life. Store in thy vessel the seeds of all of life."* The alerted Uta-Napishtim immediately builds a boat 120 cubits high. He loads it with all he possesses in gold and silver and then takes his own family onboard, also herding in his cattle together with all the birds and animals of the land. Meanwhile, the hour appointed by Shamash comes, and that evening the Lord of Shadows causes *"a rain of filth"* to fall. Uta-Napishtim, therefore, hastens to board his vessel and secure its door: *"When dawn broke, a cloud black as night rose from heaven's foundation. Within it, Addad bellowed! Shullat and Khanish march at the head, Nergal tears away the mast. He comes, Ninurta, he spurs the attack. The Anunnakis are bearing torches, their brilliance lights up the land. Addad's tumult reaches the skies and all that is bright is changed into darkness."* The terror which spreads throughout the universe eventually reaches the gods themselves, who, seized with fear, now seek refuge in the sky of Anu. *"They crouched like dogs on the ramparts, their burning lips quivering with fright."* Repentant of her collusion with the gods, Ishtar cries out: *"May that day become as mud, that day when I spoke evil to the assembled gods, for I did so in order that my people might perish. I commanded the battle and I give birth to my people! Like the spawn of fish they fill the sea."* But nothing can stop the

scourge, and *“for six days and six nights the lashing winds were abroad and the deluge descended. At last, on the dawn of the seventh day, the evil wind grew peaceful, the sea became calm; the voices of men were stilled, and all mankind was changed into mud.”* Uta-Napishtim cannot hold back his tears as his stricken ship comes to rest on Mount Nisir, the only land which has surfaced from the waves. He then lets loose a dove and then a swallow, but both soon return to the ship, having found nowhere to land. A raven, in its turn released, does not come back at all. The hero then comes onshore, *“pours a libation”* and then presents *“a burnt offering”* upon the summit of the mountain. With joy *“the gods smell the good odour of sacrifice.”* Only Enlil is infuriated to discover that some mortals have survived the disaster, but Ea manages to mollify him with carefully chosen words. In token of reconciliation, Enlil takes Uta-Napishtim and his wife by the hand and touches them on the face, saying: *“Formerly Uta-Napishtim was a human being, now Uta-Napishtim and his wife will be like unto us, gods.”* This same notion is included in Psalms, while the New Testament appears to endorse it, featuring Jesus, stating: *“Is it not written that I have said that you are gods?”* Finally, Enlil fixes their abode far away at the mouth of the rivers in a peaceful retreat.

There is an account of a flood by the Babylonian priest from the city of Belus. As he browsed through historical archives in a Greek temple around 500 B.C., Berossus came upon a set of tablets thereafter known as the *Fragments of Berossus*. In addition to the record on the physical nature of the first created entities just presented, the fragments also explain how civilization was founded in Babylon by amphibious beings known as the *Oannes* and the *Annedoti*. These inscriptions also list the chain of Chaldean kings and some national historical events. The hero of this deluge is one such king by the name of Sisithrus: *“To Sisithrus, the deity Cronusb foretold that on the fifteenth day of the month Desius, there would be a deluge. Cronusb commanded him to deposit whatever writings he had in the city of the Sun in Sippara. When Sisithrus had complied with these commands, he instantly sailed to Armenia, where he was immediately inspired by God. During the prevalence of the waters, Sisithrus sent out birds that he may judge if the flood had*

subsided. But the birds passing over an unbounded sea, and not finding any place of rest, returned to Sisithrus. This he repeated, and when upon the third trial he succeeded. They then returned with their feet covered in mud and the gods translated him from among men. With respect to the vessel, which yet remains in Armenia, it is the custom of the inhabitants to form bracelets and amulets from its wood.” In a Chaldean story published in 1876, we have the Goddess Ishtar, recounting: “*Six days and six nights the wind, deluge, and storm overwhelmed. On the seventh day there was calm and the deluge, which had destroyed like an earthquake, quieted. The sea he caused to dry, and the wind and deluge ended. I perceived the shore at the boundary of the sea...to the country of Nizir went the ship. The mountain of Nizir stopped the ship...the first and the second day the mountain of Nizir did the same. On the fifth and the sixth day, the mountain of Nizir did likewise. On the seventh day, in the course of it, I sent forth a dove, and it left. The dove went and turned, and...the raven went...and did not return. I built an altar on the peak of the mountain. By seven herbs I cut, at the bottom of them I placed reeds, pines, and simgar, and the gods gathered like flies over the sacrifice.”*

Babili means ‘Gate of the Gods, and this expressed the conviction that Babylon was a holy place and the home of the gods. As already referred to, the concept of a Holy City, or that of the Seat of the Gods’ Creative Activity, had first emerged in Sumeria, where it was celebrated annually as part of the New Year festivities that date back to the 17th century B.C. As already touched upon, this had been the Nisan and the precursor to the Jewish Passover, which witnessed the time of birth of the vegetation and the subsequent joyful offering by the Babylonians of the harvested first fruits to their god. On the afternoon of the 4th day, the priests and choristers would file into the Holy of Holies to recite the *Enuma Elish* -the epic that also celebrates the victory of the gods over primal chaos.

The biblical conception of the 10 Patriarchs shares a common origin with the 10 Hindu dynasties of the Lord of Beings, which reached Israel possibly through the Chaldean *Saros Orages* during her detainment at Babylon. The latter work is identical to

the Indian *Pragapatis* and the later *Sephiroth* of the Jewish *Kabbalah*. The Patriarchs are actually 10 of the 12 signs of the *Zodiac*, which are emblems of the spiritual and also of the physical evolution of human races, of ages, and of divisions of time. Initially, these numbered 10, but were later augmented to 12 when both Enoch and Lamech were incorporated. Adam, for instance, is Virgo, “*the pure*”, and upon his fall he becomes Scorpio, “*sin*” and “*matter*”. Enoch is Libra, “*the seventh*”, and Noah is Pisces, “*the fish*”, while Lamech is Aquarius, “*the water bearer*”, etc. Although Hebraized later, the names of the Patriarchs find their origin in the land of the Chaldeans. In the Old Testament, we read that once released from Babylon the Jews denounce this nation for her corruption and venality, but no complaints about the masterly Chaldean Magi, who had altruistically taught and initiated the Jewish priesthood into all things appertaining to religion and mysticism, are reported. In *Lydus*, the Chaldeans call their God IAO Sabaoth after the original Sumerian Penis of the Storm as we have already discussed. The former, we should note, had not been worshipped in Mesopotamia before the 11th century B.C., and it is thus clear that the Jewish equivalent could not have emerged before Israel’s first contact with Chaldean tradition during the former half of the first millennium B.C. It was actually during this educative confinement that the Jews would also learn of the Creation and of *Zarman* and *Zerban*, both aliases of Abraham as we shall see further on. In Chaldean literature, as already mentioned, IAO, the Work Master, is the “*creator of the world in 6 days*”, who “*rested on the seventh*” from his work. The Creation story found in Genesis, as well as the mysticism surrounding the number 7, as we shall substantiate in a later chapter, is evidently the bequest of Babylonians.

The Chaldean *Zodiac* and its corresponding ages is a sophistication of the Babylonian Seven-Day Creation, which is itself probably rooted in the Lemurian Seven Periods that once also greatly influenced the writings of the Tibetan *Book of Dzyan*. Thus, the Chaldean Iida-Baoth, like IAO, is “*He who is over the 7 orbits*”, or the Demiurge of Jewish kabbalists (the Son of Darkness and the Creator of the material world), who is made to inhabit planet Saturn. According to Greek Ophites, Iida-

Baath, like Yahweh and Abraham, is another name for Saturn, from who, they further taught, emanates six spirits that respectively dwell with their father on the 7 planets. To the Ophites, Baath, Iao, Jeh, and Yahweh were all foreign names for Saturn, while Saba was the name for “Mars” and Adonai, appropriately enough, for “Sol”, or “Sun”. About Jupiter, it is said that he was also known as the Jove, who would later be identified with both the Greek Zeus and the Jewish deity. Many of the stories about Jupiter are truly similar to those told of these two other gods.

Persia

The *Avesta* is the holy book of Zoroastrianism. In it, Zoroaster, like Tammuz and the biblical Moses, the Levite, is the Chief Fire Worshipper. Furthermore, Zoroaster is also “*the giver of divine laws*” also called “*a splendid light from the Tree of Knowledge*” upon which, incidentally, he is eventually crucified. Persian cults and myths were written down during the Sassanian period, that is, between 660 and 583 B.C. Many of its themes, nevertheless, are said to be rooted in pre-historic Aryanism. Mazdaism eclipsed all other Iranian cults. The Mazda of the Achaemenians was the God of the King of Kings, while the Mazda of the Sassanians was the God of the Priesthood. Interestingly, the Sassanian Ahura Mazda, who was spirit and had no human weakness, is said to have spoken to Zoroaster, His “*well loved*”, by the way, about how he had “*created a universe where none had previously existed.*”

Zoroastrianism, meaning ‘Sun Worship’, teaches of piety, power, right and wrong thought, and immortality. It speaks of a final judgement to be preceded by a messianic figure at the end of earthly history, this being the time when the evil ones would be punished and the virtuous recompensed. These notions are believed to have been introduced to Babylon by Cyrus the Great around the 5th century B.C., the same having later fused with similar Buddhist notions already in existence there. Well after the Jewish subjection at Babylon, and during the Maccabean period in Jerusalem, the Pharisees (rabbis) were themselves embracing this same eschatological principle, teaching that when

their particular messiah materialises, the dead will rise to meet the living for a last judgement.

The god Atar, represented as the son of Ahura Mazda, is actually much older than his father. He is rooted in Primitive Aryanism as the God of Fire, Sky, and Woods. In Persian mythology, the personified Atar brings men comfort, further granting them the wherewithal to live, wisdom, virility, a noble offspring and, like the Christian Messiah, among others, “*a paradise reserved for the virtuous.*” Above all, Atar is said to be engaged in the protection of the world against the enterprises of the Evil One.

Further to the battles between these two polarized powers, the *Amshaspends* speak of the Six Spirits and the Benign Immortals, who are the creators of the powers of good, while the *Ahriman* do as much for the powers of evil. Evidently, this is the story of the later three biblical archangels Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael. About the creation of the Universe, Gayomart, the First Man, and Gosh, the Primitive Bull, are the two original creatures from which issue all life. Gayomart's seed is interred for forty years, after which the first human couple, Mashya and Mashyoi, are said to issue. Ormazd, the Creator, then says to them: “*You are human beings, masters of the world. In the perfection of thought, I have created you the first of creatures. Think that which is good, say that which is good, and do that which is good. Do not worship the Daevas.*” The diabolical nature of the Daevas (not to be confused with *deva*, which is the generic name for God in India) like that of the biblical Serpent and Satan, consisted in the devotion to trickery, falsehood, and to the frustration of all efforts to achieve the good.

The Persian poet Firdusi was writing during the 10th century B.C. The *Shah-Nameh*, the Book of Kings, is a poem of nearly 60,000 verses that depicts the best epic in Iranian mythology. Jam, or Yima, the son of Tahmuras and the grandson of Husheng, the first king, lives in some sort of subterranean fortress. Here, we are told that Yima maintains the just laws and the purity of the Aryan stock. Matirkusha, the demon, threatens to wipe out humanity and all other creatures in a flood, but Ahura Mazda foresees the tragedy and decides to save Yima,

“the just”. The latter, however, is not commanded to build a floating ark, but an underground dwelling for shelter: *“Build a var as long as a horse can run, and of equal length and width. Into it, carry representations of every kind of beast, great and small, of men, dogs, birds, oxen and sheep.”*

In the tale of the Iranian King Zohak, we find cases of dreams and their interpretations. In one particular case, Zohak fears dethronement by a certain prince who repeatedly appears to him in dreams. In desperation, he asks Zirek Mobed for interpretation: *“Empty thy head of wind, for none is born of his mother save to die...There will be someone to inherit thy throne and he will overthrow thy might. His name will be Feridun, and for the earth he will be an august sky.”* In terror, Zohak, like the later Herod in the biblical episode, orders the massacre of all children, hoping to thus destroy in his cradle he who intends to put an end to his reign.

It is written that Eznik, the Armenian Final Saviour, will be a reincarnation of Gayomart, and that he will be *“immaculately conceived by the virgin Vispataurvi.”* In the *Book of Dehesh*, we find that the virgin-born Sosiosh will come as *“redeemer to regenerate the world.”* Sosiosh's appearance will be preceded by two prophets, who will come to announce him. This would seem to be why the Jews, who have already had Moses and Elias, are still awaiting their particular messiah.

Contractual arrangements between gods and men abound in foreign literatures. Ba'al-Berith, for example, is the Babylonian Lord of the Covenant, and in Egyptian mythology, the goddess Isis strikes a deal with the gods to build the pyramids. In India, Indra is one of the gods enumerated as guarantors of a treaty that has been preserved in the clay tablets of *Bogaz-Kevi*, Cappadocia. Similarly, the later Bible reports that the protective Jewish deity drew up contracts with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses. In the case of Persian mythology, Mithras appears not only as the God of Contracts and Covenants with mankind, but also as the Protector of Truth and the Enemy of Falsehood. Mithraism is a derivation of Zoroastrianism, and so, Mithras, The Light, like Zoroaster, is therefore the God of the

Sun. Like Yahweh, Mithras is the God of War, whose military valour has no rival. As most of the gods of Asia, Mithras accepts the sacrifice of beasts in his honour. However, and at variance with most redemption rituals of the day, Iranian literature has it that to burn or cook dead flesh is the supreme and indelible insult to the Life Principle. The Iranians also observed the traditional fertility festivities, including “*the offering of the first-born*” to Anahita, the Goddess of Waters, Fecundity, and Procreation widely worshipped in Achaemenian times. The Iranians, like the Sumerians before them, had considered rainwater as the “*everlasting oil*”, which fertilized Mother Earth. During prolonged periods of drought, it was customary of the priesthood to collect human semen from organised orgies and to then deposit the same into minutely perforated glass receptacles that were subsequently buried in the dry land. On the third day, once the precious fluid was thought to have percolated and impregnated the soil, the empty containers were retrieved. This particular repertoire was immediately followed by thanksgiving that focused on sensual rituals aimed at encouraging the Celestial Phallus into outpouring His very own fertilizing juice.

Egypt

We may never know how ancient the culture of the Gift of the Nile really is. According to some sources, the original inhabitants of Egypt were the Colchians, a black people that had taken refuge there after escaping a massive draught in central Africa, as we read earlier, and who are alleged to have been ousted 16,000 years ago in the general direction of what is now the land of Mali when the Naga-Maya colonized the Nile Delta. The ancient red-skinned Egyptians (not the present Arab-descended residents) may have thus come from the Continent of Mu, the Motherland, once located in the Pacific Ocean, and whose dramatic disappearance account comes couched in the Greek Koine Alphabet that features *Mu* as its twelfth character. According to the *Naacal Tablets*, Sais, the lower of the two later kingdoms, was already flourishing 4000 years before the end of the last ice-age, that is, some 16,500 years ago. That the Egyptian civilization is much older than what many people have been led to believe is quite possible given the reports by a

handful of reputable ancient historians. About Egyptian chronology, Herodotus, for instance, once wrote: "*The Egyptians assert that from the reign of Heracles to that of Amasis, 17,000 years elapsed*", and in *Timaeus*, Plato states that "*the transactions of this city of Sais, are recorded in our sacred writings during a period of 8000 years*", in other words, since 8500 B.C.

Although based on what could thus be a much earlier and recondite culture, the bulk of the literature coming from Egypt is, nonetheless, said to date from about 2700 B.C. Among these works we find the *Wisdom Books*, which contain proverbs much like the apologues found in the later Old Testament, and which were also intended for the moral guidance of the Egyptian youth. Some of the more eloquent of these are actually hymns dedicated to the Sun-God. There is also a collection of love-songs which are very much like the biblical canticles. Notable among the more ancient Egyptian religious books and rituals, however, is the *Book of the Dead* (the oldest bible according to many, having greatly influenced both the Old and New testaments) or, as the Egyptians knew it, the Chapters of Coming Forth by Day. This collection of elegies comprises many hymns, and one particular dirge on Osiris is very familiar: "*I have given thee thy Spirit. I have given thee thy Soul. I have given thee thy Body.*"

Diodorus, a Sicilian-born historian of the first century B.C., wrote extensively on the Cult of Osiris, the oldest cult in Egypt together with that of Anubis. *Osiris*, *Asar*, and *Asari* all mean 'Seat Maker', as already discussed, and it is written that he had been "*a merciful judge*" and "*a good man full of love for the people of Egypt and the world.*" He, too, like many after him, "*rose from the dead.*" The central point of Osirian religion was the worshipper's hope of resurrection in a transformed and immortal body. Like Zeus and Yahweh, to name but two later foreign deities, Osiris had "*rewarded the righteous and punished the wicked.*" A pyramid text shows that as far back as 3400 B.C. the Egyptians had professed ideas on truth, justice, and righteousness. In fact, in Osirian worship, Speakers of Truth were promised "*eternal life and bliss.*"

In the Egyptian Creation story, *Shu*, which is Phoenician for ‘Asia’, meaning ‘to rise’, holds aloft the body of Nut, the Sky Goddess, who, like the Bible’s Eve, is “*separated from her husband Geb.*” The Cain and Abel story in Genesis also flows partly from the Egyptian equivalent of Osiris and Typhon, a tale that embodies the philosophical conception of the eternal struggle between the powers of good and evil. The biblical names, however, find their origin in Sumerian fertility culture, where, as already pointed out, they had been associated with human genitalia and sex.

The *Emerald Tablet*, a work attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and later translated to Latin, reports the following on the genesis of the universe: “*True it is, without falsehood, certain and most true. That which is above is like to that which is below, and that which is below is like to that which is above, to accomplish the miracles of one thing. And as all things were by the meditation of one, so did all things arise from this one thing by adaption. The father thereof is the Sun, the mother the Moon. The Wind carried it in its womb and the Earth is the nurse thereof. The father of the whole world’s Telesma (perfection) is here. The power thereof is perfect if it is converted in Earth. Thou wilt separate Earth from Fire, the subtle from the gross, gently, with great industry. It doth ascend from Earth to Heaven and again it does descend to Earth, receiving the force from things superior and from things inferior. Thus thou wilt possess the glory of the whole world, and all obscurity will fly far from thee. It is the strong fortitude of all strength, for it overcometh every subtle thing and doth penetrate every solid thing. Thus was the world created. Hence will there be marvellous adaptations achieved of which the manner is here. For this reason I am called Hermes Trismegistus, holding the three parts of the wisdom of the whole world. That which I have said about the operation of Sol is complete.*”

As far as deluges are concerned, there are at least four Egyptian accounts. Plato mentions that during Solon’s tutorial visits to Egypt, the latter learns that “*there have been and there will be again, many destructions of mankind arising out of many causes.*” One account includes a flood that occurred at the end of

the rule of the God Kings -the first known Egyptian dynasty. In another tale, Ra, the Sun God, causes all men to drown except those who board his boat. Then, *“the sun arose from the waters dividing earth from the sky.”* In another Egyptian story, and although he would repent in the nick of time, a king wants to punish his subjects by asking the Fire Goddesses to destroy them. Lastly, Pyramid texts mention that *“it had been the ark that had carried Isis and Osiris over the deluge.”*

An acquaintance of mine, a fervent student of the Bible, informs me that there is a cryptic prophetic warning in the Old Testament about future bogus religious teachers. He confides that “wood” and “stone” are two of the encoded words. He had, therefore, concluded that the former is referential to the pervasive Christian symbol, the wooden Cross -this symbol being a derivation from the Cruz Ansata, the Egyptian sign of Life, and the All-Heal, by the way- and the latter to Islam’s 8-metre rectangular stone located at Mecca, Jordan. I think that he is wrong on both counts. If this alleged occult warning is not referring simply to idols carved out of wood and stone -a practice, which, in any case, is denounced overtly in the Pentateuch, it may well be referring to Sirius A. Allow me to expand.

It has been proposed that the construction of the pyramids in Egypt endeavoured to reproduce all the visible constellations in our star-studded Milky Way. This may well be why the word *ta-khut*, the Egyptian denomination for ‘pyramid’, means, precisely, ‘light’, or as we would understand it today, ‘star’. The later Bible echoes this very notion in the familiar prayer known as the Our Father, which includes: *“Let it be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”* Sirius had been the subject of much religious adoration and reverence among ancient Africans. Excerpts of Egyptian texts, for instance, speak of *“holy emanations”* proceeding from Sirius and Orion, *“vivifying gods, men, cattle and all creeping things.”* To the Dogon Tribe, *“the seed which energizes the world pours forth from the Sirius system”*, and the ancient Maya, like the Egyptians, also spoke of the gods *“building the Constellation of Orion, the path to the beyond.”* It turns out that Orion snookers our vision of Sirius during part of the year, and this may well be the reason for the latter’s attribute

-The Beyond. According to the *Koran*, the Islamic holy book, the praises of Sirius had been voiced throughout Africa. In *Sura*, 53:49, God reminds Mohammed: "...I (God) am above the Lord of Sirius, and to me is the final goal." Sirius was particularly significant to the Egyptians, because its appearance in the sky heralded the annual overflow of the Nile, whence this constellation's clear association with seed and life. So rated was Sirius in fact, that the construction of the great stone Pyramids at Gizeh is said to be an attempt to replicate the path that ancients believed led to it -Orion's Belt. This has been arguably demonstrated recently by independent investigators, who tell us that in 10,500 B.C., the constellation Orion, comprising three stars, had stood in perfect geometrical alignment with the three pyramids at Gizeh. Significantly, the word *Sept*, the Egyptian name for 'Sirius', also has the meaning 'a kind of wood'. This occult message, if indeed it exists in the Bible at all, would not appear to be prophetic, but rather, a first century open attack on a more ancient religious system, which in all probability was at the time posing a very real threat to the infant and yet already evanescent Jewish canon.

One of the oldest accounts of Creation is to be found in the Pyramid texts of the Egyptian pharaoh Pepi 1. One of its fragments reads: "*In the beginning the god Tem (or Atum) existed when not was sky, not was earth, not were men, not were born the gods, nor were dead.*" It is said that it was out of sheer boredom that Atum, like the biblical deity, had created the celestial bodies, gods, men, animals, and plants. His thoughts, furthermore, are said to have been translated into Words by Thoth, the God of Wisdom. In *Hermes the Egyptian*, we read: "*...in the beginning of time there was naught in the chaos, but when the Verbum (the Logos of the Phoenicians and Greeks) issuing from the void like a 'colourless smoke', made its appearance, then this verbum moved on the humid principle.*" Another Pyramid text that dates to the fifth century B.C. deduces that Atum, the self-created god, may have been bisexual. In fact, to the Egyptians, the Chinese, the Persians, the Phoenicians, the Chaldeans, the Greeks, and to both Oriental and Jewish kabbalists, there could not have been a creation of any kind without feminine and masculine interaction.

Khnum, the God of Creation and Fertility, was also the Keeper of the Nile. *Khnum* means ‘moulder’, and it was taught that he had formerly fashioned the world-egg, shaping all flesh on his potter’s wheel. At Philae he was “*the Potter who shaped men and modelled the gods.*” Much later, Jeremiah would be claiming as much for Yahweh, writing that he had the ability and power to mould man with clay and, precisely, on a potter’s wheel. Isaiah joins in the analogy, adding: “*But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand.*”

Like Zeus and Phyxius, the god Min is the God of Roads and the popular Protector of Travellers in the Desert. He was especially worshipped in *Coptos*, the Town of Caravaneers, where he would become further known as the God of Foreign Lands. His protection extended to crops and vegetation and, in due course, he too would become the triumphant God of Fertility.

Phoenicia

The only source of reference on Phoenician mythology comes from four very ancient groups of text. The first and oldest of these dates back to the time of the Egyptian Old Kingdom, that is, during the beginning of the third millennium B.C., and was discovered by Pierre Montet in Byblos, central Phoenicia. The second group, dating to the 14th century, was recovered from the ruins at Ugarit to the north of Ras Shamrah. The third group was unearthed in 1929, comprising architectural inscriptions, while the last of these four groups -a papyrus document- was discovered at Carthage, Phoenicia’s principal colony.

At the head of the Phoenician pantheon stood El, the Sun God, who was once traditionally honoured among all western Semites. This supreme deity governed the entirety of Canaanite soil, where his responsibilities had centred on allowing the rivers to flow freely into the abyss of the ocean and thus avert the devastation of plantation fields by floods. El was the “Father of Years”, the “Father of Men”, and the *Elon* and *Elion*, “The

Highest". El was traditionally worshipped in open spaces, particularly on the highest mountain crests. These demotic adorations and ceremonies were held during the summer and climaxed precisely at midday, when El's omnipresence would have been gloriously manifest and his effervescent Light of Life seen to encompass His gathered flock. Appropriately, *Zen*, or *zan* (two Greek words for 'sun') mean 'the all-encompassing'. After El's establishment, the god Ba'al was incorporated to the Phoenician pantheon. This lesser god was El's son and also his traditional enemy, who features in the *Ras Shamrah* texts as both Ba'al-Tsaphon, Lord of the North, and Ba'al-Lebanon, later to be venerated on mountain tops. Ba'al was never a proper name, the true name of the deity, as in most other religious systems, having been revealed only to the initiated. Then was Addad, God of the Atmosphere, Clouds, and Tempests. Like Yahweh's, among others, his voice sounded in the clouds, from where he likewise "*wielded the thunderbolts and dispensed the rain.*" Next, we have Aleyin, Mot's opponent, who would often "*ride on the clouds.*" As in the biblical showdown between the Canaanite and Jewish deities during Elijah's time, the god Aleyin also defeats and unseats his enemy, thereby usurping his fertility office. Both incidents were reportedly preludes to the saving rains.

Like their Greek counterparts, Phoenician gods were obliged to eat in the same way as mortals, and were often offered, as they still are today, "*bread and wine on a golden table.*" Sacrificing to these gods was demotic in Phoenicia, and some of these approaches were expiatory. It is written: "*I am Aleyin, son of Ba'al. Make ready then, the sacrifice. I am the lamb which is made ready with pure wheat to be sacrificed in expiation.*" Many animals were also sacrificed, namely the ox, the sheep, the ram, and the calf. Among other sacrifices was the cooking of a kid in the milk of its mother, a custom that would later be condemned in Israel.

Canaanite fertility traditions possessed familiar ethical features. These promulgated God the Father as virtuous, compassionate, loving, and merciful, while also encouraging devotees to follow in His footsteps. The Phoenicians had expressed a preference to hear from God through their priests and prophets, who, like their

Jewish counterparts, had allegedly enjoyed a special relationship with God. We also find that the Jewish Feast of the Passover finds its particular precedent in the Canaanite Feast of Unleavened Bread, while the Feast of Tabernacles reached Israel through the Canaanite Feast of In-gatherings. These two feasts, as well as the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, were closely linked to the many fertility ceremonies so characteristic of Canaanite tradition before, during, and well after the infiltration by the biblical conquerors. *Adonia* was the name given by the Greeks to the popular sex-oriented fertility festivals that celebrated the harvest. Lucian, the historian, cites the ancient lamentations that commemorated the resurrection and ascension of Adonis after his "*descent to the underworld.*" The notions of ascension and resurrection are rooted in Sumeria, where lamentation ceremonies were originally supplications for rain during times of draught, aiming to erect and excite the uninterested Penis of the Sky into discharging his revitalizing seed.

Philo, the Jewish philosopher, wrote extensively on Phoenician culture, insisting that this is where Greek mythology happens to find its particular roots. In fact, Philo's own *Cosmogony* is a combination of Phoenician traditional elements over which "*troubled and windy air or breath of wind and dark chaos*" presides as the ruling principle. Other Phoenician cosmogonies are mentioned by different Greek authors. Eudemus, the philosopher, is a case in point: "*...from the union of these two first principles, were born Aer, (air) and Aura, (breath). Aer represented pure intelligence and Aura, the first living creature proceeding therefrom by movement. This couple produced the cosmic Egg, in conformity with the intelligible spirit.*" According to Philo, "*...the air was illuminated due to the flaming of the earth and sea; and winds were formed and also clouds. And there was a vast down-pouring of waters and floods from the sky. And when, after the sun's heat all things were separated and left their appointed place to meet in the air and there collide, thunder and lightning resulted. At the sound of the thunder, the intelligent animals awoke and took fright at the noise and wandered over the earth and in the sea, as males and females.*" Prometheus, the Greek Creator of Mankind, also features in the Phoenician legends of *Ras-Shamrah*, fashioning

“the first man out of earth and water, into which Athene breathed soul and life.”

Greece

Solon, the Greek sage and lawgiver, is said to have been edified in Egypt. This sage features in Plato’s *Timaeus*, being apprised by the old Egyptian temple priest of several past deluges, such as the great one of Ogyges: *“O Solon, Solon, you Greeks are ever childish, having no ancient opinion, no discipline of any long standing!”* Solon further learned that *“so many gods and goddesses of the Grecian Pantheon were but the disguised gods of Egypt.”* According to Zonaras, *“All these things came to us (Egyptians) from Chaldea and from thence derived to the Greeks.”* Herodotus, the Father of History, also speaks of Egypt bequeathing much of its knowledge to Greece.

There was no single divine creator in Greek mythology, the Earth and the Sky having emerged from the void to give birth to worldly life-forms. The *Theogony*, which means the ‘Birth of the Gods’, is a poem written by the Greek historian Hesiod during the 8th century B.C. As well as accounting for the advent of the gods, the poem also deals with the creation of the world, reporting that there had been *“chaos, vast and dark.”* In the Greek account of the Creation, and after the Great Deluge destroys the first race of men, Earth bore a son named Uranus. They then committed incest and the first race known as the Twelve Titans was born. Hesiod’s etymology of the word *titan* reveals its original Sumerian meaning of ‘stretch out’, or, as we have read in an earlier chapter, ‘erect’. The Titans, believed to be divine, were widely honoured as the true ancestors of mankind from whom, appropriately enough, had ejaculated the life-giving spermatozoa, or rather, the rain. Prometheus, one of the Titans, was the creator of man, and *“It was he who with earth and water (mud) fashioned the body of the first man into which Atherie breathed soul and life.”* The Twelve Titans, as well as the Great Twelve Gods of Olympus and the Twelve Labours of Hercules, among others, are regenerators and deliverers of mankind through whose labours was manifested the Divine Plan. This is why the biblical Twelve Tribes, as well as the Twelve Disciples,

are also priests and out-pourers of divine laws for the regeneration and salvation of mankind.

Greek chronologists divided their system of dates, beginning with the Flood of Deucalion, in two periods; mythicon, the period of myths, and a second called historikon, the period of history. The tale of this flood is typical. It relates that the infuriated Zeus resolves to annihilate the human race. Prometheus is on guard, however, and he forewarns his son Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha of the plot. Deucalion then “*constructs an ark*” on his father’s instructions and boards it as soon as the black clouds start to approach. Eventually, once the diluvial rains abate and the water levels drop, the ark comes to rest on Mount Othry/Parnassus, where in gratitude, Deucalion, like the earlier Uta-Napishtim and the later Noah, “*offers up sacrifice to Zeus Phyxius*”, the Protector of Fugitives. Deucalion’s wish for the renewal of the human race is subsequently granted and, again like Uta-Napishtim and Noah, he, too, is thereafter recognized as the Father of Mankind.

Pythagoras, the Greek sage and mathematician, regarded the ineffable name of God as “*...the key to the mysteries of the universe.*” In an Orphic hymn, Zeus is the First and the Last, or, more appropriately, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*. He is, moreover, the God of the Sky in complete control of all atmospheric phenomena. From Mount Olympus Zeus often hurls lightning bolts down onto his enemies, overwhelming them. When he defeats his opponent, as Yahweh would do after his pulverisation of Ba’al’s golden image, Zeus is seen to reign supreme, thereafter prevailing as the uncontested master of gods and men. Zeus is, evidently, also subject to caprice and envy, and he thus often cruelly punishes all who dare arouse his enmity. About this uncontested sovereignty over all other gods, Zeus is reported by Homer, the Father of Poets, as saying: “*Let no god, let no goddess attempt to curb my will...or, I shall seize him and cast him into darkness Tartarus. Then will he recognize how much mightier am I than all the gods! Come, then, try it, O gods!*” Likewise, in the Greek legends of *The Muses*, we find that without hesitation these would destroy any deity that dared to vie with them for supremacy. In true Fertility fashion, and further

matching the characteristics of the later biblical god, Zeus would sometimes “*shower favours*” and “*pour mercies*” on all those who revered and honoured him with gifts. Zeus also liberally “*dispensed good and evil*” to mortals, and was, moreover, kind, compassionate, and protective of the weak and the fugitive. Like the earlier Canaanite El, Zeus was omnipotent and all-knowing, and he, too, is said to have resided in the ether. Appropriately, Zeus inhabited mountain tops, especially Mount Olympus, a 9000 feet land-elevation where he reigned and met with other gods. Zeus was clearly the All-High. Mount Olympus, like Teotihuacan in Central America, thus became the House of the Gods and the equivalent of the Beth-El, the Babili, and the Gate of Heaven of other nations. Olympus was home to Zeus, Hera, Athene, Hephaestus, Ares, Aphrodite, Apollo, Artemis, Demeter, Hestia, Poseidon, and Hermes. In the Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, we are told that Anu speaks up in the Assembly of the Gods, while at the top of his ladder the biblical Jacob dreams that he sees El. On awakening, the Hebrew religious icon realizes that he has spent the night in a holy place where men had traditionally conversed with their gods. As would happen around Yahweh's first public descent upon Mount Sinai, Greek worshippers scarcely dared to raise their eyes towards these summits, for “*they knew that up there, behind the veil of clouds which hid them from mortals regard, dwelt the almighty gods.*” On Greek mountain tops, the resident gods had “*savoured the rising fragrance of fatted cattle which mortals burned in their honour on their altars below.*” Likewise, upon one of the biblical Ararat mountain-peaks, and once Noah had completed an altar and presented his burnt-offering, “*the Lord smelled a sweet savour.*”

The citizens of Athens, The Eye of Greece, considered Prometheus as the Benefactor of Mankind and the Father of all the Arts and Sciences. It is said that in his honour the Athenians “*raised an altar*” to burn offerings in the gardens of the Academy. Here, the Athenians sat around golden tables joined by the gods, who “*dined on celestial nectar and ambrosia.*” Hesiod tells us of the time when there was a very good relationship and understanding between men and gods: “*In those days, meals were taken in common; men and the immortal gods*

sat down together.” This is also true of the biblical Abraham, who features conversing and eating with God. Epiphanies, however, would become anathema to devout Jews during the latter half of the 4th century B.C., this being the approximate time of their religious reformation. Xenophanes humorously criticised the long held universal tradition of anthropomorphising the Divinity: “...*there is one God Supreme... Whose form is not like unto man's and as unlike his nature; But vain mortals imagine that gods, like themselves, are begotten with human sensations, voice and corporeal members; So if oxen or lions had hands and could work in man's fashion to trace out with chisel or brush their conception of Godhead, then would horses depict gods like horses, and oxen like oxen, each Divine with its own form and nature endowing.*”

In the biblical Genesis, we discover that misery and perfidiousness set in the moment the first woman appears on Earth. This is a fable reminiscent of the Greek Pandora, the first woman created by Zeus, specifically to punish men. It states that for this particular task Zeus found collaboration in Hephaestus, the God of Fire and Volcanoes, who “*moulded the body of the woman with water and clay to give it life and a human voice.*”

Shamash, the Sumerian Sun-God, like the Egyptian Ra, is said to “*rise from the mountain of the East.*” Likewise, Helios is the Greek God of the Sun, whence ‘helium’, incidentally. It is written that each morning Helios leaves his palace in the East to drive his 4-horse chariot of the sun across the sky. On landing in the western ocean he bathes and rests. At night, he sleeps until he reaches his eastern palace once again. The more recent Old Testament teaches that God “*rises from the mountain of the East.*”

In his deathbed, Socrates, one of the great sages of Greece, who, by the way, had offered to pay 30 pieces of silver (minae) in exchange for his life, whispered to his saddened students: “*Friends, work out your own salvation with diligence.*” More than three centuries on, Jesus would be advising his bewildered disciples to do exactly as much.

CHAPTER TWO

External influences

There were other non-vicinal civilizations, whose religious and mythical systems, whether directly, or by diffusion, also greatly influenced those of the Middle East, particularly the Judaeo-Christian. The most significant of these was India.

The oldest Indian literary works are the *Vedas*, the sacred and florid literatures of Hinduism that gave birth to the *Puranas*. Vedas were initially communicated by word-of-mouth from teacher to pupil and, eventually, popularized by Vyasadeva as far back as 2000 B.C. The Sanskrit verbal root *veda* may be interpreted variously, but the purpose is finally one -knowledge. Incidentally, the Gnostics (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning 'knowledge') were those "*instructed in the Vedic knowledge*", for which they were unjustly castigated and condemned by the state-controlled Orthodox Christian Church early in the 3rd century. I speak of unfairness, because prior to the *Nag-Hammadi* finds in 1947, all that we knew of the Gnostics had come precisely from the scathing attacks vented upon them in 180 A.D. by the imperious polemicist Bishop Irenaeus, the Roman Catholic theologian, particularly in his chief work titled "Refutation and Overthrow of Gnosis, falsely so-called" There are four Vedas; the *Rig-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda*, and the *Atharva-Veda*. Although Indian mythology is generally about 3500 years old, the fundamental religious philosophy which structures the same emanates from pre-Vedic Brahmanism and primitive Indian religious philosophy. This is the double source from which all sophisticated Asian religions appear to have borrowed heavily. Brahman is the Supreme Being, or Absolute Spirit of Hinduism, who exists and works through a triad of gods; Brahma, the Creator of the Universe, Vishnu, the Preserver of the World, and Siva, the Destroyer and the representative of Renewal.

In 570 B.C., Gautama Buddha is said to have uttered: "*Let all sins that have been committed in this world fall on me that the world may be delivered.*" In the New Testament, Jesus is

tempted by the Devil with the promise of kingdoms and glory, and five hundred years earlier, Indian scriptures features Buddha, suffering similar demonic pressure when on his way out of his father's palace in search for God: "*Be entreated to stay that you may possess the honours that are within your reach; go not, go not*", entices Wasawartha-Mara. Like Jesus, Buddha successfully dismisses the evil approach and thus prevails triumphant. The biblical credentials and mission of Jesus are, in fact, virtual duplications not only of Buddha's, but also of the earlier Indian Krsna. Here are but a few:

Krsna, Brahma's son, is the Shepherd God, who is "*born of a virgin*" and is later pinned to a tree until dead. He then descends into hell only to resurrect and ascend bodily into heaven. According to the old Brahmanical book entitled *The Prophecies*, Krsna, who is also the Second Person in the Hindu Trinity, is to return in the latter days riding a horse and dressed like a warrior. It is written that this appearance will "*cause the sun and moon to darken, the earth to tremble violently, and the stars to fall from heaven.*" Krsna, who is also the centre of all things visible and invisible, "*the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things,*" will be the judge of the dead at the last day. Other prophecies found in the *Atharva*, the *Vedangas*, and the *Vedantas* regarding Krsna are also very much alike those of the Messiah found in foreign literatures, including the Old and New testaments. The *Ramatsarian* traditions are also similar to the first two chapters in Genesis. In the *Siva Purana*, we find that man is called *Adhima* (the 'First Man' in Sanskrit) and the Woman *Heva* ('that which completes life'). Again, in the *Siva Purana*, we read: "*O Siva, thou 'god of fire', mayest thou destroy my sins, as the bleaching-grass of the jungle is destroyed by fire. It is through thy mighty 'breath' that Adhima and Heva, the ancestors of this race of men, have received life and covered the world with their descendants.*" Buddha, like Krsna and Jesus, is also said to be the *Alpha* and the *Omega* and to have been baptized in the presence of the Holy Ghost. Typically, Buddha resurrects from the dead and will make a return in the last days to judge the dead and restore peace. Buddha taught that human pain and suffering was the direct result of desire, and half a century later, the escetic Jesus would be instructing on self-

abnegation, encouraging his faithful to relinquish all hedonic persuasions and to follow in his footsteps.

The traditionally established Hindu *Code of Manu* originally comprised 100,000 *slokas* (verses) that were ultimately reduced to 4000 in 300 B.C. by Soumati, a son of Brighou, after Narada, the Sage of Sages, had himself reduced them to 12,000. The Code, which includes the *Laws of Brahma*, was copied by the whole of antiquity and is reflected in the *Code of Justinian*, which would later be adopted as the basis of legislations. Indeed, Manu is referred to by Indians as the most ancient lawgiver in the world. About Creation, the *Laws of Manu*, chapter 1, verse 5, reads as follows: “*This world was darkness, unknowable, without form, beyond reason and perception, as if utterly asleep. Then the august and self-existent Being, he who never unfolded, having unfolded this universe under the form of the great elements and others, having shown his energy, appeared to scatter the shades of darkness. This Being, whom only the spirit can perceive, who is subtle, without distinct parts, eternal, including in himself all creatures, incomprehensible, appeared spontaneously. Wishing to draw different creatures from his body, he first by thought, produced the waters and deposited his seed in them. This seed became a golden egg as brilliant as the sun, in which he himself was born under the form of Brahma, the first father of all worlds. The waters are called Naras, who are the daughters of Nara; and since they were his first dwelling-place (ayana), he took his name Narayana. From this (first) cause, indistinct, eternal, including in itself being and not being, came the male, ancestors of this race of men, have received life and covered the known in the world by the name of Brahma. In this egg the blessed one remained a whole year and then of himself, by the effort of his thought only, he divided the egg into two. From the two halves he made Heaven and Earth, and between them the air and the eight cardinal points and the eternal abode of the waters. From himself he drew the Spirit, including in itself being and not being, and from the Spirit he drew the feeling of self, which is conscious of personality and is master. He is also the great principle, the Soul of all objects, which possesses the three qualities and, successively, the five organs or the senses, which perceive material things.*”

Accounts of deluges appear in the *Puranas*, the *Satapatha* (one of the *Brahmanas*), and also in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, ‘The Song of the Holy One’. The latter is a splendid philosophical poem based on primitive Buddhism, which includes Vaiswasvata, a hero known as *Nuah*, ‘the Dove’, who equally represents the Messianic Spirit as we shall examine in a later chapter. Vaiswasvata is featured escaping with all his tribe in the ark, which carrying seven rishis (the progenitors of the various terrestrial forms) comes to rest on the Himalayas. The *Argha* was an oblong vessel used by high priests as a sacrificial chalice in the worship of the goddesses of the generative powers of nature, or matter. In this story, it symbolizes the ark that contains the germs, or “*seeds of all living things*”. In the *Avatar of the Fish*, Manu, the Man, is forewarned by a giant fish of a coming deluge. The fish sends him a large ship and orders him to load it with “*two of every living species and seeds of every plant*” before actually boarding it himself. In this account, all those on board are spared because they manage to moor the ship to the horn of this giant fish. This particular tale is considered by some to be the oldest account of the universal deluge.

The conceptual biblical story of the Tree of Life finds its roots in either, the Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh* and its Great Cedar Tree, or in the Indian work known as the *Aswatha* and its *Arasa Maram*, the ‘Bunyan Tree’. The bunyan tree was particularly sacred to the Hindus, because it had sheltered Lord Vishnu as he taught the Arts and the Sciences. Vardhamana also “*sat down near an ancient temple under the tree Sala, where he remained motionless and fasting for two and a half days, after which he entered an advance state of meditation. When he arose on the third day, enlightenment was complete.*” Finally, Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment as he sat under a fig tree.

Some myths and legends have it that weapons endowed with amazing power have come to the rescue of gods and mortals alike. In the Old Testament, and although not strictly a weapon, the Ark of the Covenant kills an unspecified number of people before being finally released and supposedly used in the story’s demolition of Jericho’s walls. Apparently, no-one could touch this power-charged chest and still escape unscathed. It is stated

that God and His laws were inside this receptacle. Likewise, the earlier Egyptian gods were believed to dwell in the just as deadly portable shrines of their country, while the Hindu Indra is also reported as having possessed a magic weapon in which lived Lord Vishnu and with which the enemy was invariably defeated. Siva, the Hindu Creator and Sustainer of Life, who was also their God of War and Destroyer, is said to have owned a weapon that he carried under his arm and with which he “*singed the beard of Brahma*”, blinded the enemy gods, and also decapitated both Jala and Hara. We are told that this particular artefact was shaped like a disc, and that the dexterous Siva knew how to “*make it constantly spring up again.*” Significantly, not one of these weapons or sacred receptacles has been recovered, except the evidently powerless Egyptian equivalent known as the Ark of Anubis.

While Yahweh was still achieving his objectives by intimidation and violence among people who, contrary to the biblical reports, as we have already noted, had traditionally believed in the compassion of their gods, the Indian teaching on the inscrutable nature of their particular deity was already disseminating fast. Indian monks were at the time worshipping *Hakama*, the Supreme Wisdom, who was said to be unreachable by reflection. He was the Boundless and Infinite En-Soph of later oriental kabbalists, and the No-Thing, or Unknown Essence. Vedic literature, as Pythagoras would do some time later, taught about the ineffable name of God as “*the key to the mysteries of the universe.*” In the also Indian *Sri-Santara*, the Great Aum is himself The Nameless, and in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, once again, Krsna states: “*Narayana, the Supreme Personality of the Godhead, is beyond this cosmic manifestation.*” About this god, *Manu*, book 1, reads: “*He that can be perceived only by the spirit, who escapes the organs of sense and is without visible parts, eternal and the soul of all being that none can comprehend, displayed His own splendour.*” In book 12, we also read: “*Of all the duties, the principal one is to acquire the knowledge of the Supreme Soul (the spirit), it is the first of all sciences, for it alone confers immortality.*” Further on, it admonishes: “*The man who recognizes the Supreme Soul, in his own soul, as well as in that of all creatures, and who is equally*

just to all (whether man or animal), obtains the happiest of all fates; that to be finally absorbed in the bosom of Brahma.” Thousands of years later, the New Testament authors would be expressing similar notions, writing: *“Gathered into the bosom of Abraham.”* Despite the pervasiveness of most religious systems, the Chaldean, Egyptian, Persian, Israelite, and Hindu devotees never revealed the names of their gods. The Hindus, under penalty of death, were commanded not to. The most sacred names of the gods and the toady prayers by which their favours could be propitiated were jealously guarded, especially from foreigners. Undoubtedly, no religion was ever more secretive and exclusive than that of the Brahmas.

The *Upanishads*, meaning ‘approaches’, is a collection of mystic interpretations and speculation about Man, God, and the Universe. Known as the *Vedanta* -since it constitutes the end of the Veda, or that whole body of philosophy and development between 1500 and 600 B.C. - it is, in a sense, an anthology of transcendental thinking and, probably, the first transparent literary expression of man’s quest for spirituality and infinite joy.

About the Supreme Soul, or the Self, the *Dialogue with Death* teaches that it is the way to *Nirvana*, a word that represents the final release from an otherwise eternal cycle of rebirth on the one hand, and the guarantee of perpetual bliss on the other. In response to Nakiketa’s questions, Death teaches:

“The Self is not born, it dies not; it sprang from nothing, nothing sprang from it. The ancient is unborn, eternal, everlasting; he is not killed, though the body is killed.

If the killer thinks that he kills, if the killed thinks that he is killed, they do not understand; for this one does not kill, nor is that one killed.

The Self, smaller than small, greater than great, is hidden in the heart of that creature. A man who is free from desires and free from grief sees the majesty of the Self by the grace of the Creator.

Though sitting still, he walks far; though lying down, he goes everywhere. Who, save myself, is able to know that God who rejoices and rejoices not.

The wise who knows the Self as bodiless within the bodies, as unchanging among changing things, as great and omnipresent, does never grieve.

That Self cannot be gained by the Veda or by understanding or by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained.

The Self chooses him as his own, but he who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil and subdued or whose mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the Self even by knowledge.”

At the time when the Jewish high-priest by the name of Hilkiah is said to have retrieved the *Book of the Law*, the *Puranas*, meaning ‘scriptures’, were already disseminating throughout Asia Minor. The Brahmins consider that five elements constitute a real *purana*; Firstly, the treatment of the creation and of matter in general; secondly, the treatment, or production of secondary material and spiritual beings; thirdly, the inclusion of a chronological abridgement of the great periods of time; fourthly, the presentation of a genealogical abridgement of the principal families that reigned over the country, and fifthly, the history of some great man in particular. This essential concept and literary configuration was evidently adopted by the authors of the later *Pentateuch* -*penta*, meaning ‘five’ in Greek, and the precise number of *teuchos* (‘scrolls’), or elements that comprise it.

The Bible teaches that “*one thousand human years is like a day to the Lord*”, but this exposition is perfunctory when compared to the older Indian equivalent from where it was probably plagiarized. To Vishnu, in fact, a human generation is only “*a moment*.” In other Hindu *puranas*, we find: “*A thousand Yugas is Brahma’s Day; A thousand Yugas is Brahma’s Night. In the day of Brahma, all living things come into being, but with the night all fades back again to Him who set it forth.*” Furthermore, in the first *Book of Manu*, we read: “*Know that the sum of 1000 divine ages composes the totality of one day of Brahma, and that one night is equal to that day.*” According to Brahmanical calculations, one *Mahayuga*, or 1000 ‘Divine Ages’, equals 4,320,000,000 human years. A *mahayuga* actually consists of four ages; *Krtayuga* (4800 years), *Treta* (3600 years), *Dvapara*

(2400 years), and *Kali* (1200 years). Altogether, then, a mahayuga consists of 4,320,000 Earth years, which, according to Hindu cosmology, equals 12,000 years of the gods. In turn, 2000 mahayugas are said to amount to one *kalpa* (1 'neon'), which is in fact "a day in the life of Brahma."

The Pentateuchal Breath of Life is mentioned in earlier universal literatures. The Sumerian Bau, for instance, is said to have "breathed into man the breath of life", and in the Indian *Siva Purana*, the Breath of Life was responsible for creating the first couple. Pliny would later recall the Indian Breath of Brahma: "...that famous Breath (*spiritus*) that generates the universe by fluctuating to and fro as in a kind of womb." Similarly, the Dogon Tribe in the land of Mali describe the Universe as a growing placenta.

The fast diffusion of Buddhism throughout the Middle East helped mitigate Israel's religious bankruptcy after her prolonged and osmotic confinement at Babylon. Once repatriated, and in order to regain her composure as a nation, Israel would embark on a mission of religious reformation and social transformation. But we shall be examining this religious veering in a later chapter.

Tibet

Tibet, the Roof of the World, also boasts religious antiquity. Indeed, the *Book of Dzyan* is often claimed to be "older than the earth itself." As mentioned earlier, this work includes the genesis of the Universe, which like the Bible's, comes in *stanzas*, meaning 'periods':

Stanza one: "Time was not, for it lay sleeping in the infinite bosom of duration. Darkness alone filled the boundless all and life pulsed unconsciously in universal space. The seven sublime lords and the seven truths had ceased to be."

Stanza two: "Where were the builders, the luminous sons, the producers of the form from no-form, the root of the world? The hour had not yet struck; the ray had not yet flashed into the germ."

Stanza three: *“The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness, the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more. Behold...bright space, son of dark space. He shines forth as the sun; he is the blazing divine dragon of wisdom. Where was the germ, and where now was the darkness? The germ is that and that is light, the white brilliant son of the dark hidden father.”*

Stanza four: *“Listen, ye sons of the earth, to your instructors, the sons of fire. Learn what we, who descend from the primordial seven, we, who are born from the primordial flame, have learnt from our fathers. From the effulgency of light, the ray of the ever-darkness, sprang in space the re-awakened energies. From the divine man emanated the forms and the sparks, the sacred animals, and the messengers of the sacred fathers.”*

Stanza five: *“The first seven breaths of the dragon of wisdom produce in their turn from their holy circumgyrating breaths, the fiery whirlwind. The swift son of the divine sons runs circular errands. He passes like lightning through the fiery clouds. He is their guiding spirit and leader. When he commences work, he separates the sparks of the lower kingdom that float and thrill with joy in their radiant dwellings.”*

Stanza six: *“The swift and radiant one...seats the universe on the eternal foundations. He builds them in the likeness of older wheels, placing them on the imperishable centres. How were they built by Fohat? He collects the fiery dust. He makes balls of fire, runs through them, and round them infusing life therein, then sets them in motion. They are cold, he makes them hot. They are dry, he makes them moist. They shine, he fans and cools them. Thus acts Fohat from one twilight to the other, during seven eternities. The mother's spawn filled the whole. There were battles fought between the creator and the destroyers, and battles fought for space.”*

Finally, Stanza seven reads: *“Behold the beginning of sentient formless life. Firstly, the divine and the one from the mother spirit. Then the builders, having donned their first*

clothing, descend on radiant earth and reign over men -who are themselves."

Africa

Very little, if anything at all, is known of the Dark Continent's ancient past, but there could well be abundant archaeological evidence awaiting discovery under the ocean of shifting sand we call Sahara. More than 10,000 years ago, the geography of central Africa swung from extreme exuberance to absolute desertification in a handful of years, forcing the desperate dislodgement of many of its hapless residents in a northerly direction in search for water and green pasture. Fortunately, five hundred years earlier, Lake Victoria had burst its banks, her oozing waters eventually snaking their way down north towards the Mediterranean basin, where these refugees would find a permanent abode exactly where these waters forked out to drain into this sea's basin. This epic was to herald one of the greatest civilizations ever -Egypt.

Africa, particularly when it comes to her central and southern regions, is extremely rich in religious lore, the essence of which, as we shall now examine, is pretty familiar.

In South East Africa, the Masai tribes claim to be the "*Chosen People*" of Ngai, who is the One God and Creator of the Universe. The Bushmen related to the Hothentots say that mankind was born from a tree called Yggdrasil, and that the god Cagn is "*creator of all things.*" The Zulus believe that mankind emerged from a bed of reeds called Uthlanga, and that the first man had been *Unkulunkulu*, the 'Very Old', who instituted the Arts and the laws of marriage in this land. In Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Mundangs recognize three gods; Massim Biambe, the Omnipotent Creator and Immaterial God, Phebele, the Male God, and Mebelli, the Female Goddess. These last two had a child called Man, to whom Massim-Biambe "*gave a soul*" and the "*breath of life.*"

The lower Congo has a legend of a deluge. The account speaks of the sun meeting the moon and of the latter spitting mud at it,

thereby unleashing a tidal wave that changes men into monkeys. Interestingly, this legend maintains that the present human race (the race extant at the time) evolved from these monkeys. The lore of the Congonese Bomitaba includes God making a typical promise to his first created man: *"thou wilt never perish."*

The Bushongo, another tribe in Congo, worship the god Bumba, the Creator of the Universe, who vomited forth the Sun, the Moon, the stars, and even eight species of animals from which the present animal kingdom is said to derive.

Among the Shilluk of the White Nile there is a creation story. In this legend, Juok is the god who creates all men on earth: *"In the land of the Whites, he found white earth or sand, and made it into men of the same colour. Then he came to Egypt, where he made brown men from the Nile mud. Then to the Shilluk where he created the Black man from black earth."*

As already mentioned, legend in Mali has it that our solar system was born of *Ogo*, or cosmic placenta. The Dogon Tribe, who still inhabit this land, only have one god and universal creator known as Amma. His son is called *Nommo*, meaning 'Monitor', and he is alleged to have arrived from Sirius B 7000 years ago to introduce civilization to this land. Curiously, this Nommo was later *"crucified on a tree"* and *"resurrected on the third day."* He is also said to be *"returning to earth"* sometime in the future.

My favourite account of the advent of mankind comes from a tribe in Togo. These Ewe-speaking people think that to this day God is forming human beings from clay. It is said that when he wants to mould a good man he employs good clay, while for a wicked man he is said to make use of bad clay. According to the legend: *"...in the beginning, God first made a man and set him on earth. Then he made the woman."* The couple then *"looked at each other and burst out laughing as they took each other by the hand, wandering off together."*

The Americas

We may never know how old American mythology is, and we may never ascertain how old the civilizations that produced it really are. Likewise, we may never discover to what extent, if any at all, there was ancient interaction and, therefore, religious communication between the peoples of the Americas and the rest of the World's communities, particularly Asia. In any case, the two Americas are rich in mythology, some of which, as already cited, is surprisingly harmonious with those from around the world. The analogies from one end of the continent to the other, allows American mythology to be considered and treated essentially as a whole.

The Indians of the Forest, the Algonquin, believe that everything in nature is inhabited by a mysterious power called the Orenda, or Manitou. The most powerful of the Manitous is Kitcki, the Great Spirit and Father of all Life, "*who was never created.*" Kitcki is the fountain-head of all good things according to these natives, who, moreover, think that above the Sun and Moon live the stars and, as in ancient Mesopotamian fertility tradition, that beneath the clouds lays *Nokomis*, Earth-Mother, from whom is derived the Water of Life, and at whose bosom "*feeds plants, animals and men.*"

The Montagnais, another Algonquin tribe, have a story about a raging flood that charges across the land: "*One day, Michabo went hunting, and the wolves he used as hunting-dogs plunged into a lake and did not return. Michabo looked for them everywhere, and at last, a bird told him that the wolves were lost in the midst of the lake. When he wanted to go in and look for them, the water overflowed and covered the whole earth. Michabo told the raven to bring him a lump of clay to re-make the world, but the raven could not find any. Michabo then sent an otter, which dived but brought nothing back. At last he sent out a musk rat which returned with some soil which Michabo used to re-make the earth. He fired arrows into tree-trunks, and they changed into branches. He took vengeance on those who had kept his wolves in the lake, and then married a musk-mouse by whom he had children to re-people the earth.*"

The Sioux Indians believed in Wakonda, the Great Spirit, also known as the Master of Life and Our Father the Sky. He is depicted in many symbols as *“the source of all life and power.”* To the Pawnees, this same Great Spirit was *Shakuru*, the Sun-God, and their most powerful deity. Like the Sumerians, the Pawnees considered Earth to be the start and end of all life. The religious ceremonies of the Pawnees were regularly held in commemoration of Shakuru’s double marriage to Earth and Heaven, and to the resulting birth of life. Again, this is reminiscent of the Mesopotamian fertility tradition of ‘Divine Coition’. In Pawnees culture, thunder was *“the Voice of God speaking in the clouds.”* The legends of the Iroquis and the Huron are thus analogous with those of the Algonquin’s just presented. Like those of Asia, these also agree on looking for the origin of life on a higher plain located above the clouds. The Huron recognize their particular ancestor in Ataentsic, who, like Adam, was cast out of paradise in punishment. About the world’s genesis, the Pawnees say: *“In the beginning, Tirawa, the great chief and Atira his wife, dwelt in heaven.”* When all other gods are seated about them, Tirawa says to them: *“I shall give each of you a task to carry out in heaven and a portion of my power, for I mean to create men in my image.”*

The Hopi and the Moqui Indians of Arizona also tell of the advent of mankind. The latter have it that *“after filling the world with animals (Huruing and Wuhti) decided to create men and women.”* These two gods then *“took clay and moulded it”* as they sang an incantation. Soon after, the man and the woman sprang to life.

In ancient Guatemala, the *Popol-Vuh* of the Quiché people is attributed to the god Ixtlilxochitl. This book carries different accounts of Creation, and one of these includes a flood hero called Thlinkithian. It speaks of the Four Ancestors of the human race being *“neither begotten by the gods, nor born of woman and whose creation was a wonder wrought by the Creator. When the Four Ancestors (the 4 successive progenitors of men) had rendered thanks to the creator for their existence, the gods were frightened and they breathed a cloud over the eyes of men that*

they might see a certain distance only, and not like the gods themselves.” Note that as in the Bible, *sight* and *distance* here relate to the knowledge of good and evil. The *Popol-Vuh* further states: “*All that exists is the work of Tzkol, the Creator, who by his will caused the universe to spring into existence; and whose names are Bitol the Maker, Alom, the Engenderer, and Quhalom, He who gives Being.*” Again, we come across the three stages of man’s evolution; his moulding, his making, and his creation. The *Popol-Vuh* recounts: “*while the man was asleep God gave him a wife.*” According to Guatemalan folklore, “*In the beginning, everything was covered in water, above which hovered Hurakan and Gucumatz, the ‘givers of life’. They said ‘Earth’, and immediately the earth was created. The mountains rose out of the water, to the great joy of Gucumatz who congratulated Hurakan. The earth was covered with vegetation, and the creators peopled it with animals with the command to do them homage. But as these animals could not speak, they roared, howled and whistled, but could not make themselves understood. To punish them the gods decided they should be killed and eaten.*”

They then made clay men who were unable to move their heads or speak or understand. They decided to make wooden men, but they lacked intelligence and feelings, and had no knowledge of their creators. The gods destroyed them. But some survived, and made little wooden monkeys.

After consulting together, Hurakan and Gucumatz decided to make four men from yellow and white maize. But as they were too perfect, the gods ‘shortened their sight’. During their sleep they created four women. And these were the ancestors of the Quiché tribe. However, they complained that they could not see clearly, for the sun had not yet appeared, so they went off to Tullan where they learned about their gods. It was very cold there, and they received fire from Tohil (Hurakan). But the sun did not appear, and the earth remained damp and cold. Speech was divided, and the ancestors could no longer understand each other. They then left Tullan guided by Tohil and came to the Quiché country. There at last the sun appeared, followed by the moon and the stars. In their delight animals and men sang a

hymn, and offered the gods blood from their ears and shoulders. Later they thought it better to shed the blood of victims."

The Indians of Guatemala also have a legend of a flood and its corresponding protagonist who escapes by boat. The Tainos of Haiti speak of the creation of the world and of the origin of the female sex, after a flood in which all the women were drowned and all the men changed into trees.

The *Toltecs*, the 'Builders', recorded another flood that had covered the earth, attaining the height of 15 *caxtolmolatli* (225 cubits) over the highest mountains. All but seven men and their seven wives survived by escaping in a "*great chest*."

Viracocha was originally outside the cycle of the Inca gods, although he would later be added to the Cult of the Sun. He lived in Lake Titicaca, where he represented its fertilizing and procreative powers. The myth of *Viracocha* explains that "*before the Sun appeared, the earth was already peopled*." When Viracocha emerged from the depths of the lake, we are told, he made the Sun, the Moon, and the stars, after which he proceeded to set them on their regular course.

The Inca nation, the Sons of the Sun, had a tradition of a flood in which all had drowned except a few people and some animals that took safe refuge on the highest mountains of the Andes. Typically, once the waters were said to have subsided, the men, women, and animals descended to "*repopulate the world*."

The Indians to the east of Lima, Peru, say that the world had once come near total destruction because of a deluge. It is written that an Indian ties his reluctant llama to good pasture and that the animal then resists, exclaiming: "*Madman! learn that there is plenty of reason for my grief, for within five days the sea will rise and cover the whole earth*." The Indian takes the animal's advice and collects provisions for five days, by which time he hopes to reach the high mountain called Villca-Coto. Once on its summit, he sees that all surviving animals are already settled there. The sea begins to rise fast, eventually covering all the plains and mountains except the top of Villca-

Coto. When the water levels drop, the Indian discovers that all except him have drowned. Familiarly, it is alleged that from this one survivor "*descended all the nations of earth.*" Hopi legend, furthermore, speaks of the earth's axis being guarded by two cosmic giants, who abandon their respective positions, causing the Earth to falter in its spin, and triggering a series of catastrophic floods in the process. The legend explains that this same form of catastrophe has taken place a total of three times already, and it further places the fourth one at the end of the second millennium A.D.

The Luiseño of Lower California say that a flood once covered the highest mountain so rapidly that it drowned most of mankind. The few that were spared had taken refuge on the dry heights of Bonsald as the rest of the land was enveloped in water. The survivors, we are told, were forced to remain there for many years after the surging floods had come to a halt.

In Mexico, the Storehouse of the World, the Aztecs have a tradition of a flood and of a subsequent confusion of languages. This tradition speaks of humanity being utterly wiped out. Only Coxcoxtli and his wife Xochiquetzal escape the disaster by reaching safety on a mountain called Colhuacan, where, according to the Aztec calendar, "*lives the goddess of flowers and love.*" Here, they give birth to many dumb children who finally speak when a dove settles on a tree-top to make them the gift of languages. These, however, differ so much that like in the biblical episode of the Tower of Babel, the children can no longer understand each other.

The Brazilian Tuscarara Tribe also boasts legends worth noting. Here, the creator of mankind is Monan, the Ancient One, who later destroys mankind with floods and fire. According to this account, all drown except the argumentative twin-brothers Ariconte and Tamendonare together with their respective wives. From these two couples come two different peoples, who are also said to perpetuate the human species.

Mu, the lost continent

There is one last source of reference that I would next like to bring to the reader's notice. It is the account of Creation as depicted in two ancient sets of hieroglyphic tablets, which, according to their discoverers, date back to at least 20,000 B.C. The *Mexican Tablets* were unearthed last century in Yucatan, Mexico, by William Niven about the same time that the *Nacaaal Tablets* were discovered in India by British military archaeologist James Churchwood. These inscribed stone tablets illustrate the extraordinary story of the Motherland, a lost continent that witnessed the advent of man. Churchwood, who managed to decipher the inscriptions thanks to a Burmese temple priest, delivered the following translation in his book titled: *The lost Continent of Mu*:

"Originally, the universe was only a soul or spirit. Everything was without life-calm, silent, soundless. Void and dark was the immensity of space. Only the Supreme Spirit, the great Self-existing Power, the Creator, the Seven-headed Serpent, moved within the abyss of darkness.

The desire came to Him to create worlds and He created worlds; and the desire came to Him to create the earth, with living things upon it, and He created the earth and all therein."

Subsequently, the Seven Superlative Intellects of the Seven-Headed Serpent gave seven commands, or, as also expressed in Nubian inscriptions, seven words. These are:

The first command: *"Let the gases which are without form and scattered through space be brought together, and out of them let the earth be formed."* The gasses then became a whirling mass.

The second: *"Let the gases solidify to form the earth."* Then the gases solidified, some volumes of which were left on the outside, out of which water and the atmosphere were formed. Some were enveloped within the new world. Darkness prevailed and there was no sound, for as yet neither the atmosphere nor the waters had been formed.

The third: *"Let the outside gases be separated and let them form the atmosphere and the waters."* And the gases were

separated. One part went to form the waters, which settled upon the earth, covering its face so that no land appeared anywhere. The other part formed the waters and the atmosphere which contained light. The shafts of the sun then met the shafts of the light in the atmosphere and gave birth to light. Then there was light upon the face of the earth, the heat being also contained in the atmosphere. And the shafts of the sun met the shafts of the heat in the atmosphere and gave it life. Then there was heat to warm the face of the earth.

The fourth: *“Let the gases that are within the earth raise the land above the face of the waters.”* Then the fires of the under-earth lifted the land on which the waters rested until it appeared above the face of the waters. This became dry land.

The fifth: *“Let life come forth in the waters.”* And the shafts of the sun met the shafts of the earth in the mud of the waters and there formed cosmic eggs (life germs) out of particles of the mud. From these eggs came forth life as commanded.

The sixth: *“Let life come forth upon the land.”* And the shafts of the sun met the shafts of the earth in the dust of the land, and out of it formed cosmic eggs from which life came forth upon the earth as was commanded.

Finally, the seventh command: *“Let us make man after our fashion, and let us endow him with powers to rule this earth.”* Then Narayana, the Seven-headed Intellect, the Creator of all things throughout the universe, created man and placed within his body a living, imperishable spirit. It was then that it equalled Narayana in intellectual power. Then was creation complete.

The reader will no doubt have noted that as in the biblical Genesis, these seven commands are indicative of seven periods, or geological ages.

Finally, the Lemurian Sacred Writings consider God to be unreachable by the five senses: *“To man, the Creator is incomprehensible, and being incomprehensible, He can neither be pictured nor named -He is the Nameless.”*

It is crystal clear that both biblical testaments often echo older international religious initiatives. Thus, not much significant

religious or mythical originality is evident on the part of the Bible producers. Israel, like many of her contemporary neighbours, as we have just perused, was aware of the value of history and myth in establishing the divine antecedents of an aspiring nation. And so, before decanting Babylon, emancipated Jewish scribes, who were now enjoying unrestricted access to Babylonian historical archives, set out to revise their own scanty national historical records by peeling back the layers of history and wedding these to an otherwise uneventful nomadic Jewish past. However, for reasons of lack of space and energy, I am inviting my patient reader to undertake his or her own research in this context. Let me simply whet my readers' appetite by naming the more prominent cases in *Genesis*: the Jews' enslavement in Egypt and their subsequent release after the Ten Plagues; the Parting of the Red Sea and the ensuing drowning of the Egyptian army amid the column of smoke and flames; the tumbling of Jericho's walls; Joshua's moon eclipse. Meanwhile, let us continue with this potpourri of traditions and myths.

The Lord on Cloud of the Sumerian *Enuma Elish* is also present in most other Asian myths. In Arianism, for example, the Rider of the Clouds and the Lord of Heaven is the god Megahavana Svargapati. From Egypt we learn that Hermes Pimander "*appears within a cloud of a humid nature with smoke escaping from it.*" The Old Jewish Testament itself is replete with nebulous visitations by Yahweh. In *Exodus*, 19: 16, for instance, we are informed that Yahweh "*makes his appearance on the clouds accompanied by loud thunder*", and *Psalms*, 3-4, declares: "*...who (the Lord) maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind.*" About the omnipresent Yahweh, Isaiah, reputedly the greatest Jewish prophet, wrote that He would one day make use of a cloud to descend upon Egypt. Finally, in the New Testament and once resurrected, Jesus Christ himself is "*taken up on a cloud.*"

The Creative Word of God is present in some ancient international literatures. From Egypt we hear of the *Verbum*, the translation into words of Atum's work. The Chaldeans spoke of *dabar*, and the Phoenicians, like the Greeks and later Christian Jews, of the *logos*. In Hindu Scriptures, the principle that creates

and drives the Universe is known as *Anahad Shabad*, the ‘Unstruck Music’, and also as *Akash Bani*, the ‘Celestial Voice’. The *Nacaal Tablets* speak of “*Divine Commands*”, as we have just seen, whilst in Tanzania, the Wapangwa speak of the sky as being very vast and clear, but empty and without stars and moon. Only a tree had stood in the air, feeding on the atmosphere controlled by “*the power of the Word.*” This could not be seen, for it was “*a force that enabled one thing to create another.*” In Central America, Mayan literature has it that “*...the gods spoke. By their word they made heaven and earth, and clothed the earth with trees and grass, with all kinds of bushes and plants*”, and in Guatemalan legend, Hurakan and Gucamatz said: “*earth*” and the earth was created. About the actual *Voice of God*, it came from the skies and, more precisely, from the clouds, especially when these roared and rumbled. In Phoenicia, for instance, it was Addad’s voice that “*sounded in the clouds.*” Zoroastrianism spoke of this voice as *raosha*, ‘the sound from the sky’, while *Psalms*, 77:18, features: “*...the voice of thy thunder was in the heaven*”, and 2 Samuel includes: “*...the Lord thundered from heaven, and the most high uttered his voice.*” In Fertility tradition, the drizzle was the visible aspect of the deity’s speech. The rain, as already examined, had been the first Law and Word of God. Not surprisingly, when priests, the carriers and custodians of the Word, spoke on God’s behalf, the very spittle that left their mouths were believed to be holy emanations capable of providing those it fell upon with added virility and strength.

Eden, like the Fertile Crescent -if not the very Crescent itself- was a flourishing agricultural haven in the middle of nowhere, its inhabitants reaping the many benefits of crop plantation. We are told in the Bible that Adam had been expelled from Eden in punishment, and that Cain, his son, had after the fratricide also been condemned by the deity to literally plough the sands of the barren desert (the word “desert”, incidentally, coming from the Egyptian for infertile ground). Abel’s murderer was told by God that wherever he chose to cultivate the ground, the same would never yield any fruit. ‘Paradise’, from the Persian for ‘garden’, was synonymous with the Presence and Benevolence of God, and this may well account for the biblical

Adam's expulsion from paradisiacal Eden, banished from God's Sight and thereafter condemned to never again "walk" in His Presence. Once farming had been invented throughout Asia, the notion of paradise developed into a significant and integral part of an emerging and persuasive religious creed -that of a happy abode prepared for the righteous after death. And so, when the Scales of Justice in Egypt determined that the dead had "*spoken truth*" before Osiris, the same were allowed into paradise. In Greek mythology, the Elysium is a region of perfect happiness where the souls of the virtuous depart after the death of the body. In Persia, Atar Lebanon also spoke of "*a paradise reserved for the virtuous*" in the presence of God and, in India, Buddha taught of "*an abode reserved for the just and righteous.*" Moreover, the New Testament features Jesus, answering his fellow victim: "*Verily verily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in paradise.*"

If Eden and its regenerative power was originally synonymous with paradise, the vicinal desiccated and torturous desert must have been its very opposite. Cain, if you remember, had lost all hope of survival when expelled from paradise in punishment, because here, God would never be present to pour His Blessings or manifest His Benevolence. Therefore, and in congruence with the development of the meaning of 'paradise', the *Enuma-Elish* would speak of the infernal regions, whilst centuries on, the Christian New Testament would include a place of punishment for the wicked, a type of inferno already known to the Greeks as *Hades*, as *Sheol*, to the Hebrews, and as *Gehena* to the Jews. *Sheol*, in fact was the name by which the ancient Hebrews had known the gloomy underworld inhabited by the departed dead, whilst *Gehena* was the name of the Valley of Hinnom at Jerusalem, which was a site that had initially been used as an open-air human sacrificial site to the god Moloch and, eventually, as this city's dumping and burning area. The word 'hell', by the way, comes from the Anglo-Saxon *helan*, meaning 'to conceal', and this word was first employed by the King James's translators.

Circumcision is at the core of the first covenant between the biblical god and Abraham: "*And I will establish my*

covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God...This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.” Circumcision, nevertheless, did not emerge in Israel until her confinement at Babylon or possibly during the occupation of Jerusalem by the Greeks some time later. Circumcision was, in fact first practised in Persia, the same having probably reached the Mesopotamian Basin through Zoroastrianism around the former half of the 5th century B.C. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Ethiopians, it turns out, had all practised and advocated circumcision centuries before Israel is said to have introduced it. Clearly, circumcision was the bequest of neighbouring cultures.

Jewish religious attire is described by the Jewish historian Josephus as plush and of incomparable beauty and craftsmanship. About this, *The Sabbath of the Jews*, written by Proctor, the astronomer, states: “*The remarkable breastplate worn by the Jewish high priest was derived directly from the Egyptians.*” It is also evident that the Levites had adopted their particular ceremonial vestment from the Egyptians.

According to the *Naacal Tablets* already mentioned, a feathered serpent is symbolic of the Royal Family of Can. These inscriptions reveal that the Can Dynasty was the last reigning line of Mayan monarchs of Mayax, Queen Mu, in fact, having been the last in line. This queen reportedly visited the Nile in Egypt to meet with Thoth during the first century of this nation’s existence, that is to say, some 16,000 years ago according to these tablets. The serpent, therefore, features in most subsequent universal myths as symbolic of wisdom, immortality, and eternity, and the same is often named the Demiurge, the Creator of the World, or Matter. For example, Kukulcan, the Feathered Serpent, is the Mayan God of Wisdom, and in the *Manava Dharma Sastra*, an ancient Hindu book, the serpent is portrayed as Creator. In the also Indian *Aytareya Brahmana*, we read:

“Sarpa Rajni, the Queen of the Serpents, the mother of all that moves.....Caisha, the seven-headed serpent and Creator.” The Mayan Creator is Ahac-chapat, the Seven-Headed Serpent, and in the *Popol Vuh*, we find that Quetzalcoatl is Teacher of Wisdom and *“...the Creator, the Maker, the Dominator, the Serpent covered with feathers.”*

The serpent was also highly regarded and revered throughout the ancient world for its many curative and aphrodisiac properties, hence the adoption of its stylised image worldwide, precisely to identify the medical practice. Other literatures, notwithstanding, have featured the serpent as the adversary of God. In Greece, for example, Apollo is said to have overcome the serpent python and, in India, it was Vishnu, the Sun-God, who defeated Anatha, the Serpent. Krsna is often portrayed crushing the serpent under his feet, and in Catholicism, we have an identical portrayal of the Virgin Mary, illustrating her supremacy. In Genesis, as well as in the Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, we find that the serpent wins its first battle against Him, thereby succeeding in severing humanity’s link with the Creator. In Christianity, the serpent and Satan are one and the same, the word ‘satan’, having derived from the Hebrew verb *sitan*, which actually means ‘to oppose’. However, the Asian notion of enmity between the snake and mankind may well find its roots in the more ancient fungi culture, where the mushroom had enjoyed divine status. In this respect, Pliny (senior), who probably found inspiration in the earlier connection between the serpent and herbal medicine in Egypt, issued the following warning: *“If the hole of a serpent has been near the mushroom, or should a serpent have breathed on it as it first opened, its kingship to poison makes it capable of absorbing the venom. So it would not be well to eat mushrooms until the serpent has begun to hibernate.”*

The general concept of an adversarial supernatural being is also featured in Persian mythology, where Atar is seen defending man against the enterprises of the Evil One, and where we also read about the diabolical nature of the Daevas, whose sole task is to breed opposition against God. Here, and as in the Akkadian myth of Adepā, Meshia and Meshiane also lose their purity when deceived by the daemon Ahriman. Again, in the *Epic of*

Gilgamesh, we find that this early ruler of Uruk is deceived by the serpent. The 10th century Persian *Book of Kings* also includes God's adversary known as Matirkusha, the Demon. Lastly, in Egyptian tradition, we find the underground serpent, whose continuous mission is to impede Ra, the Sun-God, from rising every morning. After Rome's conversion to Christianity, the Bible was translated to Latin, and although the Roman Catholic Church would eventually succumb, she had initially resisted pressure to authorize further translations, arguing that Latin, a word that flows from *lat* and which means 'to lie hidden', was the language of God and uniquely unintelligible to Satan, His adversary.

In ancient religious writings, we should note, Sight and Distance invariably refer to degrees of knowledge. In Indian literature, we thus find: "*Rudra.....of immeasurable sight*" and, as we have already learned from the *Popol-Vuh*, the gods become so frightened of the Four Ancestors which they have created, that they think it fit to "*breath a cloud over their eyes that they might see a certain distance only, and not like the gods themselves.*" This legend has it that the gods Hurakan and Gucamatz actually "*shortened the sight*" of these ancestors, for they had become "*too perfect*" for comfort. This is the story in *Genesis*, where we find the serpent, urging Adam and Eve to partake of the Tree of Knowledge so that their eyes may be opened. Familiarly, this act of disobedience in the *Popol-Vuh* incurs the displeasure of the Almighty, who banishes them "*from His Sight*". In *Genesis*, we find: "*when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise...*" Further on, we read: "*...the eyes of them both were opened.*"

The ancient practice of anthropomorphizing (I think I got that right) deities is undeniable, and it is palpably evident that the God of the Bible was also subject to it. In fact, Yahweh had an extremely short fuse and often succumbed to bouts of uncontrolled frenzy. Exodus, for example, shows that had it not been for Moses' appeasing remonstrance, Yahweh would have callously caused further blood-letting among Jewish subverts. Yahweh was also an emulous god, who, like many of his earlier

foreign counterparts, as we have already seen, had clearly expressed hostility toward other deities. In Exodus, 34:14, once again, Yahweh is made to state: *“For thou shall worship no other god; for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”* Typically, Yahweh would display uncompromising cruelty in his obsession with commanding complete respect and obedience from His following. Those who dared neglect the Sabbath, for instance, would unhesitatingly be put to death by the deity. In another context, Exodus, 32:28, features Moses implementing Yahweh’s directives, summarily executing 3000 of his own people, who had simply refused to accede to this deity’s unappealing caprices. Shockingly, there was little regard for the sanctity of life, especially when it was foreign.

On average, women are less muscular than men, and this natural disadvantage may well have determined her future throughout most of the ancient world. In most cultures of the past, we find that women were banned from public life altogether. The ‘fairer-sex’ could not aspire to education at any level, for the woman was regarded fundamentally as a sex-object, child-bearer, and minder. To further compound matters, and as already discussed, the menopause would have signalled the end to the female’s already extremely limited social involvement. Old age was certainly no social asset. Contrariwise, the man would gain in respect with the passing of years, some even living on to become influential national role-models and, ultimately, religious icons. It is evident that the authors of the Bible had conceived God and religion as the preserves of man, and whereas the religious traditions of Babylonia, Greece, Rome, India and, particularly those of Egypt (where women had enjoyed over 800 years of uninterrupted rule) all abound in female participation, those of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are marked by its absence. The epithets for God, such as King, Lord, and Father, and the Judaeo-Christian canonicity of their patriarchs, together with its Major and Minor Prophets, underscores rampant male chauvinism. For its part, the New Testament highlights John the Baptist, the Twelve Disciples, and the later Apostles and, for political reasons, deliberately ignores the significance of Mary Magdalene’s role in the life of Jesus as recorded in the former’s

Coptic chronicle. We should mention that the exceptional and, in any case, unscriptural glorification of the Virgin Mary by the Catholic Church came after 500 A.D., and then only as symbolic of chastity as inspired by the earlier Babylonian Ashtarte. The truth of the matter is that most past Judaeo-Christian religious personalities were men, and that they were lionized to run the chauvinist Judaeo-Christian religious and political establishments. In the biblical Garden of Eden, we therefore have *Eve*, 'Woman', or 'Earth' being blamed for inciting *Adam*, 'Man', to sin, and for bringing about his perdition. Undoubtedly, this is basically the story of the earlier Greek Pandora, who had been created precisely to punish men. Even the Christian Saviour was born male, and the ensuing doctrine had no hesitation whatsoever in declaring the man to be the spiritual head of the woman. In communities of Afghanistan under the obscurant Taleban rule, women continue to suffer systemic repression and death. Although mild by comparison, religious fallout continues to menace South America and Africa, particularly in strict Catholic communities, where the submissive and stoic disposition of the mother of the biblical Jesus is still considered virtuous.

The overriding impression, to say the least, is that the biblical Word of God is but a reverberation of foreign religious utterances and a true global cocktail of myths and legends. The cuneiform library discovered in Mesopotamia late into the 1800's seriously undermined the then already suspect authenticity of the biblical accounts, inflicting damage from which, in fact, the Bible is unlikely to ever recover.

As examined, a plethora of extra-canonical accounts -over 300 stories, in fact- maintain that the universe and mankind were the creation of various deities and not of a single god. In some of these, the first Adam is a dyadic being, that is, both male and female, and in a couple of stories, these two elements are subsequently divorced to create the first couple. In summation, and taking the many external versions as basis, the biblical account should therefore be adjusted to read: "*And gods created man in their own image...male and female created them him.*" We should remember that the medieval kabbalist *Sohar*, the

‘Book of Splendour’, corroborates the above in part when it includes the Work Master, saying to the Lord: “*Let us make man in our image.*”

In today’s world of awesome scientific knowledge and exciting and revealing archaeological finds, we still find ourselves proposing theories on the creation of the Universe and its development, finding it almost impossible to even ascertain basic facts about human activity beyond 5000 B.C., a mere seven thousand years ago. Absurdly, the authors of *Genesis*, to name but one so-called divine source, encounter no difficulty when offering definitive statements on what had transpired not just a few hundred years before their time, but billions of years before their remotest ancestry.

As far as the Universal Flood is concerned, there are more than 170 extra-biblical reports, some of which, as already examined, speak of gods becoming increasingly discontent at mankind’s corruption and violence, and of their consequent decree to drown all humanity. Some stories further include a just personality, who having found ingratiating with the gods, is forewarned of the impending disaster and consequently advised to build a life-saving vessel to load with his family and two pairs of all existing terrestrial creatures. In most stories, the entire animal kingdom is said to have perished by drowning, and some legends speak precisely of three birds, including a dove. In a good number of these tales, the people scramble to higher ground for safety and, as in the biblical epic, an ark finally settles on the highest mountain peak once the diluvial rains subside and the water levels remit. In gratitude, some heroes end up raising altars to the gods, upon which they next present sweet smelling burnt-offerings that always happen to please their respective deities. Finally, most survivors are said to have perpetuated the human race, and some are promised by their respective gods that the world would never again be enveloped in water.

The Greek legend of the Flood of Deucalion, as well as that featured in the later Bible, could very well flow from either the Persian Epic of Gilgamesh, or from that found in the Fragments of Berossus. Sisithrus is the flood-hero in the latter. This

particular Babylonian epic was discovered in Greece, and must have reached Babylon -where some Jews were still residing as established free men- either by diffusion or through direct delivery. This account also mentions the ark running aground on Mount Ararat in Armenia -now eastern Turkey- which was the resting place of Noah's ark, according to the Bible. Flavius Josephus, the chronicler employed by the Roman authorities, reports such an event in the *History of the Jews*: "*The Armenians called this place 'The Place of Descent', for the Ark being saved in that place, its remains shown there by the inhabitants to this day.*" That Josephus had based his report on Berossus' discovery and not on the biblical version, there is little doubt, for the former includes: "...*With respect to the vessel, which yet remains in Armenia, it is a custom to the inhabitants to form bracelets and amulets of its wood.*" The historian Nicolaus of Damascus, a contemporary of Josephus, chronicles: "*There is in Armenia a great mountain called Baris, or rather Ararat, where many refugees found safety at the time of the Flood, and one man, transported on an Ark, grounded on the summit, and relics of the timbers were long preserved.*" About this, Nicolaus remarks: "...*this might be the same man of whom Moses, the Jewish legislator, wrote.*" Like Josephus, Nicolaus could only have based his particular report on either the Persian story of Gilgamesh, or on Berossus' own account.

Geologists tell us that 10,000 B.C. is the date for the last recorded magnetic reversal that affected the earth's axis which saw the area of earth-crust around the Bahamas undergoing a particularly gigantic upheaval. The archaeological record shows that world sea-levels rose to over 350 feet 15,000 years ago, sometimes at the rate of over 30 feet per century. Plato, the rigorous Greek sage, himself produced the date of 10,000 B.C. as the time of rapid rise in world sea-levels. *Science Magazine*, vol. 189, reported that laboratory tests carried out by scientists of the University of Miami on two deep-sea cores from the Gulf of Mexico, show how the global sea level rose substantially some 11,600 years ago. Most of the evidence would seem to point to either a global flood provoked by a series of natural agencies, such as excessive evaporation caused by fluctuations in the earth's magnetic field some 12,000 years ago, and which may

have destroyed civilization as it stood then, forcing survivors around the world to slip back into oblivion, or to catastrophic regional inundations at different times throughout the millennia. But we shall be examining the biblical account of the Flood further on, albeit in relation to its allegorical nature. What is undeniable and significant, although extraneous to this argument, is that comparative mythology silently reveals that trans-oceanic communication had been a reality thousands of years before Columbus set foot on American soil.

Although the biblical narrative, as well as its foreign equivalents just investigated, may well be founded on fact, Noah's epic, like all others, is evidently fabulous, its true message, at least in the case of the biblical version, as we shall unfurl further on, being clearly allegorical of a future messianic plan.

Take stock dear reader, as the implications are many, the Bible's genealogical record for one, having become irremediably suspect to say the least. Indeed, in the light of the overwhelming symmetry of universal mythology and religion, it would be wholly reasonable to conclude that the Jewish *Genesis*' long-held position as the authentic Word of God is now wholly untenable.

PART THREE

THREE UNIVERSAL ICONS

CHAPTER ONE

Abraham

Did the biblical Abraham, the Hebrew, ever exist? The Jews and Arabs profess he did, further predicating to be of his very blood-line. But whilst external writings partly agree with those of the *Torah*, these are not, however, supportive of this genealogy or of the pertinent territorial claim over Hebron and its vicinity.

The term 'Hebrew' is said to derive from *abar*, meaning 'to cross over' and, according to Genesis, this is what the biblical Abraham did when he traversed the Euphrates into Canaan. Ussher's Chronology places the Patriarch's family in Ur of the Chaldees around 2300 B.C., but neither Abraham nor Moses, his supposed biographer, could have existed during the time that Ur was under Chaldean rule, because, as already mentioned in part one, this nation would not settle the Mesopotamian Basin until the 11th century B.C. and, therefore, almost 1000 years after the biblical Abraham's demise and about 400 years after Moses is alleged to have given up the ghost. Nevertheless, many of the Bible's unconditional defenders would argue that the "*Ur of the Chaldees*" in *Genesis* actually refers to an earlier Babylonian city. Although convenient, this would appear to be historically unfounded. The truth is that this scribal blunder proves very revealing, as it shows that Moses, who is said to have existed around 1500 B.C., could not have written of Abraham as coming from Ur of the Chaldeans, and that the latter's biography must have thus been the work of Jewish religious regulators well after the biblical death of the Prophet. Let us now cite these exiguous extra-canonical Abrahamic reports.

Alexander Polyhistor concurs in part with the Bible producers, writing that Abram had come from Kamarina, or Uria. This historian, however, also speaks of Ur as "*a city of soothsayers*" where Abram had dedicated his life to astrology. Josephus corroborates this record, attesting that Terah, Abram's father, had also been an astrologer. The *Fragments of Berossus* speak of Abram as "*a learned man, well versed in astrology*", whilst the

rest of his tribe are classified as “*merchants, tinkers*”, and professional “*servants*”. “*All*”, it continues, “*were mercenaries, looking for money to buy a piece of land that they could call their own.*” Indeed, innumerable nomads, refugees, brigands, and rebels known as the *habiru*, had continually drifted out of the eastern steppes into the hilly periphery of the settled and affluent Canaanite states and kingdoms. They were mercenaries, both groups and individuals, mostly thriving outside the recognized social system. In Chaldean books, Abram is thus the *zerban*, meaning ‘one very rich in gold and silver’. The later Bible agrees, adding that he was a “*mighty prince*”, who owned concubines, plenty of cattle, and as was customary of the rich and powerful in those days, also a substantial coffle. About Abraham’s Canaanite home, Josephus writes that it was near ancient Damascus, also known as the Pearl of the Orient. Notwithstanding, some other foreign records unveil a fictive side to this ecumenical character. In Greek Mythology, for instance, *Abram* is one of the aliases applied to Saturn, the King of the Golden Age also called Old Man and Emblem of Time. We should not forget that the Greek Saturn had “*offered his only begotten son as a sacrifice to his father Ouranus*”, and that he had also circumcised himself, further persuading his entire household and allies to do likewise. Surprisingly, these had also been the accolades of the earlier Indian Brahma, whose name, if you notice, is almost identical to the Hebrew Patriarch’s. Brahma had been further widely known as Father of Many, and in the later *Qur’an*, Abraham is introduced as the leader of Monotheism. In Chaldean literature, this same character was the *zarman*, meaning ‘decrepit old man’. Most of these Abrahamic recollections are actually traceable to ancient Indian texts. The *Maha-Bharata*, for example, also features Ikshwaka and Yadu, later featured in the Bible as Isaac and Yudah, and who belonged to Abraham’s immediate line of descent.

As part of the plan to fabricate and thereafter nurture an image of ancestral godliness for Israel, and in order to further legitimize her return to Canaanite soil, among other reasons, the post-exilic Jewish reformers had transmuted the name *Abram* to *Abraham* by inserting ‘h’, thus conveying the notional ‘Father of a Multitude’ on a par with the Indian Brahma. *Sarai*, Abram’s

wife, also had her own name altered to *Sarah*, ‘Mother of Many Nations’. This latter name, incidentally, hides Chaldean esoteric connotations as connected to Breath and Spirit. The Hebrew character ‘h’ also reveals number 5, itself symbolic of religious initiation in Egypt at the time. It is, therefore, not surprising to discover that the Bible makes Abraham die at the age of 175, a figure, which according to *Pyramid Code*, as we shall be discussing later, was associated with the attainment of spiritual perfection by religious initiates.

The Bible itself does not assuage the deep doubts that now exist over Abraham’s authenticity. Historically, Canaan had worshipped one supreme god before the Israelite conquest, and this deity had always been El, the Sun-God. How then could Abraham have worshipped the “*I Am*” in this land as proposed? We have already seen that El is the story in the Babylonian *Enuma Elish* and also the Supreme God of Phoenician culture. So, if Abraham had worshipped Yahweh in Canaan, why does the Bible feature this deity introducing himself to the Patriarch as *El Shaddai*, *El Elion*, and *El Bethel*? These names, we must not forget, were traditional titles for the Canaanite Sun-God, the last two, incidentally, having been preserved in such Hebrew names as *Isra-El* and *Ishma-El*. Moreover, why would the Bible include Abraham paying tribute to the pagan king of Salem, the very priest of El? We must note that tithing is an act implicative of belief and acceptance, and that it was traditionally offered only to God through his representative. Melchizedek, the Monarch of Righteousness, is featured further blessing the consenting Abraham in the name of El: “*Blessed be Abraham of the most high God (El) possessor of heaven and earth.*” Conclusively, if Yahweh was El, it is obvious that the Jewish deity was also the Canaanite Sun-God. Conversely, if El and Yahweh were two separate and distinct gods, it would be wholly reasonable to conclude that Abraham never worshipped the latter.

Either way, the biblical Abraham would appear to have experienced his particular god in ways not unfamiliar to universal legend. *Genesis*, chapter 18, for instance, features him in an epiphany, or theophany, which was a mythical experience

commonly accepted in many ancient foreign polytheistic communities including the Canaanite, and which was eventually anathematized in Jerusalem in harmony with the then prevailing Indian spiritual vision. The Old Testament god appears in human form and accepts to eat the food offered by Abraham, his coaxing host. The Greeks, we must remember, had themselves always reminisced of their national heroes whom they felt had physically associated with the gods. In Teutonic mythology, for instance, the god Odin often mingles in the affairs of men, sometimes disguised as a traveller. It would appear that the world was full of gods, who could be physically encountered unexpectedly at any time and around any corner and, as in Abraham's case, in the form of a transient stranger. The biblical claim that Abraham fathered Monotheism is casuistic, since Monotheism, as far as Asia is concerned, is well embedded in earlier fertility tradition, where it had evidently taken the form of sun-worship. Much later, this fundamental creed would be conceptualized by Pharaoh Akhenaton (*Aton*, being the Egyptian for 'Sun' and 'One God' -whence Atonism), only to reach neighbouring Canaan by diffusion around 1500 B.C., the approximate time of the biblical Moses and the subsequent incursion into Canaan and, therefore, eight centuries after the supposed birth of Abraham.

Although these reports on Abraham are somewhat nebulous and evidently convoluted, the universality of this character would appear unquestionable. Indeed, one further external source places Abraham beyond the biblical date. Bunsen's *Egypt's Place in Universal History*, volume 5, states: "*Abrahamic recollections go back at least three millennia beyond the grandfather of Jacob.*" In other words, more than 7000 years ago, the time when Ur, the Sumerian capital, would have reached its peak.

The Israelite patriarchal claim could well have some historical basis after all. One thing is certain; the etymology of both *Abraham* and *Brahma* does in fact unfold their true provenance. The authentic name and meaning, nevertheless, is not precisely what Bible adepts would like to hear, since like *Jacob*, which originates in the Sumerian IA-A-GUB, meaning 'pillar', or

‘stem’, the name *Abraham* is also rooted in Sumerian fungi culture. AN-BAR-NA-IM-A-AN means ‘canopy of the sky stretched out above’, and which together with the former composition, completes the outer image of a mushroom, consisting of stem and cap. From NAIMAN -the second part of the latter Sumerian name- flows *adonenu* and *Adonai*, whose vowels, incidentally, would be adopted by medieval European scribes to form the pronounceable *Yahweh* and *Jehovah*. From the first part of AN-BAR-NA-IM-A-AN, that is, from AN-BAR, derives AB-BA, which means ‘father’ and, literally, ‘heaven stretch’, and from which, in fact stems *Abram*, later altered to *Abraham* as we have already covered.

CHAPTER TWO

Moses

I have already taken the reader through some evidence that quietly shows why the quintessential biblical Genesis could not have been the origination of Moses, or even the brainchild of later Jewish scribes. Next, we will disclose Moses' altogether fabulous appointment.

It is unanimously accepted that after the Jewish immurement in Babylon, the responsibilities of Jewish historical and religious records had fallen upon the shoulders of Ezra and his associates. These were now fully engaged in the fabrication of a glorious, God-inspired ancestry for Israel. Moses, like Abraham before him in the narrative, was therefore rescued from the annals of foreign legend to play an instrumental role in an imaginary godly past.

Evidently, the High God of Fertility traditions had been revered in Canaan before, during, and well after the Jewish infiltration. El-Shaddai, as the very name reveals, "*lived on high*", and his frequent descents to earth had always been signalled by low clouds that hovered and often locked on high peaks. Consequently, some mountains were celebrated greatly. In some cultures, in fact, the cloudier the mountain the more sacred it was held to be, and the higher the climb to its zenith the more intimate the communion with God was supposed to become. Indeed, most ancient nations had mythical traditions that included a consecrated mountain on whose top a mediating hero either received or dispensed sacred instructions to an expectant and fearful gathering. Let us then cite some of the more prominent sacred mountains of universal mythology to prove the point.

In China, Mount K'un-lun was the Dwelling Place of the Immortals where one's "*divine path*" could be found, and where God and paradise were allegedly located. In commemoration, Wang, the Queen-Mother, had "*built a palace*" made of jade upon its zenith. In Persian mythology, we have the god Zal and

his exploits upon Mount Elburz, and also Hera, the Queen of the Sky and Celestial Virgin, who was “*venerated on mountain tops.*” In the *Zend-Avesta* of the same nation, Zoroaster becomes the “*recipient of holy revelations*” in a mountain-top cavern. In Greek mythology, Mount Cyllene was where the god Maia, daughter of Atlas and Pleione, had “*made her appearances*”, whilst Mount Cithaeron was the “*birth-place*” of the twin-gods Amphion and Zethus. The legend of *The Muses*, features the gods born of Uranus and Gaea, “*dwelling on Helicon*”, a high mountain in Boeotia. Jupiter “*resided on Capitoline*” where he was traditionally worshipped, whilst on Mount Etna, Hephaestus had his “*abode*” and “*workshop.*” Greek mythology also includes Mount Eryx, the location of the temple dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite, and also Mount Parthenius, Mount Atalanta Peleus, and Nereid of Mo Palso, where Asclepus had been carried and left by Apollo in the safe custody of Centaur Chiron. Zabazius was venerated on Mount Tumulus where, according to Orphic-Thracian legend, “*he delivered the infant Dionysus to Hippa.*” Cybelle, the Phrygian goddess, who personified earth in its primitive and savage states, was worshipped on Mount Ida, Berecynthus, Sipyle, and Dindymus. The Sacred Oracles of Delphus was placed on the south slope of Mount Parnassus, and Assyro-Babylonian mythology features the great king Etana being directed to the mountain top where “*Divine events*” had once taken place. The Indian god Indra “*lived on the sacred Mount Meru*”, and himself and other gods, including Meghavana, “*paid frequent visits to Siva on Mount Kailasi.*” In a volcanic country like Japan it was especially natural for mountains to be divinized. The mythology of this nation includes the “*chief mountain god/lord*” called O-Yama-Tsu-Mi, and the god Ninigi and his suite, who “*descended on Mount Takachiho*” in the province of Hyuga where “*a palace was built*” on Cape Kasasa in his honour. The extinct volcano Fujiyama was the most revered in Japan, and on its peak, we find the sanctuary of the goddess Sengen-Sama. Other Japanese sacred mountains include Nantai, Aso, and Sumeru, “*the place of the god Taishaku-Ten.*” In Brazil, Mount Anatina has been considered sacred since time-immemorial, and in Mexico, Tlaloc was the God of Mountains, particularly of the Great White Holy Mountain. In Mexico, furthermore, we find Mount Wiricuta, a

holy place and the very pillar of Huichole culture, on whose summit lived the goddess of natural toxins. In the *Aztec Calendar*, Mount Colhuacan is where the goddess of flowers and love resides. In Central America, we hear of Mount Teotihuacan, "*The House of the Gods*", whilst in Ecuador, Mount Huacaynan is to this very day regarded as holy. Thus, the Bible speaks of the sacredness of Mount Moriah, where Abraham had almost killed his son in sacrifice in the presence of God, and of Mount Gerizim, the Mount of Blessings, Mount Ebal, Mount Nebo, and Mount Carmel, where Yahweh finally triumphs over his opponent Ba'al. The Bible also features Mount Hermon and Mount Sinai, the Highest Region and the location of the Burning Bush, itself symbolic of sun-worship, by the way, and upon whose top Yahweh is said to have descended on a cloud to deliver the sacred Decalogue. On Mount Sinai, we must remember, Yahweh is made to ask Moses to remove his shoes, for he was standing on "*sacred ground.*" When Mount Moriah became the Temple Hill, the Jerusalem-based Ark of the Covenant was transferred to this elevated temple and the name Moriah then changed to The Zion, of Sumerian origin, and the most significant of all sacred places to the later Jewish prophets, for example. About Zion, Jeremiah says: "*...there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God*", whilst Zechariah declares: "*...and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the highest mountain.*" *Incidentally*, Yahweh's first public appearance upon Mount Horeb meets all the requirements for inclusion in the lengthy list of universal divine visitations, his own descents, having been marked by clouds, thunder, lightning and even earth tremors. Evidently, this was a tempestuous repertoire truly worthy of Zeus himself. For its part, and 600 years after Buddha had done so, the New Testament would feature Jesus, delivering his first major oration -the all embracing, unrealistic, and altogether utopian sermon upon the Mount of Beatitudes. The Christian Testament further records Jesus' favourite retreat spot called the Mount of Olives, also featuring Calvary, the mount where the Christian Saviour is alleged to have been eventually executed.

Having placed the Sinai experience in its true mythical context, let us now then turn to the man himself. Did Moses truly exist? Was he the author of the *Pentateuch*? Although there is no contemporary literary evidence on Moses outside the Bible, browsing through ancient literatures can actually elicit fascinating similarities.

We all know about the story of the baby Moses in his floating basket. Nevertheless, most of us ignore that this may well have been a repeat of either the Egyptian tradition that celebrated the Ceremony of the Nile Baptism and which included “*the offering of the new-born infant to the sacred waters*”, or of the offering of the first-born to Anahita, the Goddess of the Waters of Iranian tradition. Sargon, the Akkadian monarch who ruled Sumer around 1600 B.C., had also lived a similar experience: “*Sargona, the powerful king of Akkad am I. My mother was a princess, my father I did not know, a brother of my father ruled over the country. In the city of Azupirana which is by the river Euphrates. My mother, the princess, conceived me; in difficulty she brought me forth. She placed me in an ark of rushes, with bitumen my exit she sealed up. She launched me in the river which did not drown me. The river carried me to Akki, the water-carrier it brought me. Akki, the water-carrier, in tenderness of bowels, lifted me.*” Later, Sargon would become the legitimate King of Akkad, whence his name. In Greek mythology, Diomedes, the King of Argos, had also been saved from the rough seas by King Lycus’ daughter who “*drew him out*”, whilst Hera, the wife of Zeus, is also said to have been rescued from the river by “*the daughters of the river Asterion.*” Like Sargon, who would go on to become king and divine lawgiver, and like Hera, who would become queen and lawgiver thereafter, so did the biblical Moses promote to both priest and out-pourer of divine laws. There are further similarities between Sargon and Moses. For instance, Sargon reigned in Akkad during 40 years, which is about the same time that the Jews are reported to have come under the leadership of Moses in the desert. Moses, according to some foreign literary sources, including kabbalistic, had been the Chief of the Sodales, *sodale* being the name of the tribe of Levi, meaning ‘sun-worshipper’. About Sodalites, in fact, Cicero had written that “*they were constituted in the Idaean*

Mysteries of the Mighty Mother”, whilst Manetho, the Egyptian historian, reports that Moses was “a hierophant of Hieropolis” and a priest of Osiris, the Sun-God, whose real name is Osarsiph. Correlatively, Moses marries Zipporah, the daughter of the pagan priest of Midian and Zipporah, or Zippara, we should note, are two of the names for the City of the Sun near Akkad where Sargon is said to have reigned. Sargon, it would appear, was Moses’ Babylonian forerunner.

The ancient belief that lawgivers enjoyed closer intimacy with deities than ordinary mortals pervades ancient universal traditions. In pre-Jewish Canaan, for example, the goddess Ashtoreth was reputed to have issued oracles with her finger. The Indian Manu, the ancient lawgiver, had himself received and introduced the Divine Code, whilst the later Buddha is said to have been enveloped by God immediately before setting out to teach the Four Truths. In Akkad, as we have just mentioned, it had been King Sargon who delivered divine laws, and in Persian mythology, Zoroaster, The Prophet, and God’s ‘well loved’, by the way, received holy instructions in a mountain top cavern from his god Ahura-Mazda. The Assyro-Babylonian legends have Nabu, Marduk’s son and secretary of the assembled gods, engraving his god’s decisions on the Sacred Tablets of Fate, while Hammurabi, king and priest of Babylon, is depicted in the stele of his code, receiving the Symbols of Authority from the god Marduk, who had chosen him “to rule over man.” Kung-fu-tzu, better known as Confucius, was said to have been designated by Heaven to teach its doctrine. Moreover, from the *Diodorus Siculus*, we learn that the Egyptians believed their laws to have been communicated to Mnevis by Hermes. The Cretans maintained that Minos acquired the laws from Zeus. The Lacedaemonians claimed that Lykurgus received their sacred laws from the Good Spirit and, according to Gatel, Zamolscis obtained divine laws from the goddess Hestia. And so, the *Torah* teaches that Moses received the Ten Mandates, or Ten Words from his god, while the New Testament includes Jesus being empowered from on high immediately before embarking on his holy mission.

The original 10 precepts, or commandments are found in the Indian tract called the *Pratimoksha Sutra*, which is said to have been produced around 3000 B.C., and in the also ancient *Pali Burmese* and the later *Lotus de la Bonne Loi*. These Words are familiar: “*Thou shall not kill any living creature.*” “*Thou shall not steal.*” “*Thou shall not break thy vow of chastity.*” “*Thou shall not lie.*” “*Thou shall not betray the secret of others.*” “*Thou shall not wish for the death of thy enemies.*” “*Thou shall not desire the wealth of others.*” “*Thou shall not pronounce injurious and foul words.*” “*Thou shall not indulge in luxuries.*” “*Thou shall not accept gold or silver.*” The word ‘tablet’, incidentally, comes via the Greek and Latin *tabula*, a word rooted in the Sumerian TAB-BA-LI, meaning ‘twin cone’. In Sumeria, the ancient bun-shaped clay tablets where divine mandates were traditionally recorded were two in number, each accommodating precisely five words and each actually representing one half of the semi-circular split mushroom volva, or canopy in which, as already touched upon, could be found the then so-called Giver of Life and God’s Revelation.

The draconian but fair and reasonably effective Babylonian code of social law raised by King Hammurabi around 1700 B.C. and thereafter implemented throughout this land, is evidently one of the first if not the very first of its kind, and has had an enduring influence on legal thought. Clearly, and prior to the introduction of this civil and criminal code, the only law in existence in south-western Asia had been the unwritten whim of the strong and powerful citizens, who were, invariably, a law unto themselves. The later Decalogue, for instance, is ostensibly perfunctory by comparison, its tribal and cultic orientation being obviously inadequate to frame a complex cosmopolitan society. Mosaic Law, we must emphasize, deals largely with burnt-offerings and their stringent preparations. Whilst success in these preparations secured the holiness of participants, failure to conduct these exactly as mandated was seen as sinful and abominable, the culprits condemned to seclusion and often to death. About these inviolable laws, Yahweh reiterates: “*it shall be a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings of the Lord made by fire.*” Yahweh had threatened to punish Israel by spreading terrifying hunger, thirst, disease, and death

among her children if His statutes were not observed to the letter. As we shall examine in part four of this essay, these rituals were nevertheless later ignored in favour of the more fashionable and socially acceptable charity which would eventually become the most important *mitzvah* and, in the words of Rabbi Hillel, “*the very essence of the Torah.*” The religious nature of the Decalogue is evident. Hammurabi’s Code, on the other hand, comprised 282 exclusively civil laws with corresponding punitive provisions, and which would later give rise to the proverbial ‘an eye for an eye’. Although far from perfect, these laws were largely protective of the weak against the more influential and almost always irrepressibly cruel members of the community.

The following are examples of this civil code, including for the first time in south-western Asia, elements of restitution. But first, a portion of its preamble by King Hammurabi himself:

“...then Anu and Bel called by name me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evildoers, so that the strong should not harm the weak; so that I should rule over the land, to further the well-being of mankind.....Let any oppressed man who has a cause come into the presence of the statue of me, the King of justice, and then read carefully my inscribed stele, and give heed to my precious words, and may my stele make the case clear to him; may he understand his cause; may he set his mind at ease.”

“When a freeman charges another with murder without furnishing any evidence, the accuser shall be executed.

When a freeman steals an ox, or a sheep, or an ass, or a pig, or a boat that is the property of the crown, he shall make a thirty-fold restitution; however, if it is the property of a vassal, he shall make a ten-fold restitution; if the thief is destitute, he shall die.

When a freeman entrusts another with his silver, gold, or anything at all, he must do so in front of witnesses, providing contracts before handing over the goods for safe custody. If he does not, and the custodian then denies such transaction, the freeman will have no valid claim to his goods.

When a freeman has a debt outstanding against another, and Adad (god of rain) has inundated his field or a flood that has ravaged it, or through lack of water grain has not been produced in the field, he shall not make any return of grain to his creditor in that year; he shall cancel his credit-tablet, and he shall pay no interest for that year.

When a freeman's wife is caught in illicit sexual intercourse with a male, they shall both be tied up and thrown into the water; when and if the wife's husband pardons her, the king may relieve his servant.

When a freeman is caught raping another's virgin wife, he shall be executed and his wife freed.

When a freeman's wife is accused of infidelity with another man by her husband, but has not been caught in coitus, she must take an oath of innocence on god's name and return home.

When a freeman's wife is accused of a relationship with another man, but has not been caught in coitus with him, for her husband's sake she must throw herself in the river.

When a freeman takes a wife who suffers from intermittent fever, and he plans on taking another, he may do so, but he must not forsake his sick wife. She shall live in a house that he shall provide, and he must support her for life.

When a freeman destroys the eye of another freeman, his own eye shall be destroyed. If anyone breaks a freeman's bones, his own bones shall be broken."

Finally, in the Code's epilogue, King Hammurabi reasserts his divine employment: "*...the great gods have called me, I am the salvation-bearing shepherd....set up these my precious words, written upon my memorial stone, before the image of me, as king of righteousness.*"

Moses, the iconic priest, is palpably the renamed universal legendary hero, who could never have written the *Pentateuch*. Most scholars would now agree that the Five Scrolls are composed of several literary works and probably written between the ninth and fifth centuries B.C. and, therefore, at least four centuries after the biblical demise of the Prophet. However, even this consensus should be considered generous and

misleading, because the oldest extant Hebrew religious works do not date beyond the 4th century B.C. The crude fact is that there is only indirect evidence for the case of Jewish religious writings existing before this nation's disjuncting, but also educative internment at Babylon. If Moses is the author of the *Pentateuch*, and if Ussher's Chronology that places him around 1500 B.C. is correct, the Prophet's work would still, in any case, have been completed centuries after the Babylonians, the Indians, and the Egyptians had themselves taken turns to produce similar epics based on their respective national oral traditions which, as unanimously accepted by scholars, predate by many centuries the Bible's date for the birth of Abraham.

Finally, and judging only by the evidence here presented, it is not only easy to reject Moses' authorship of the *Torah*, but also fair to conclude that these five books were not entirely original to the Jewish inventors of the Prophet. Although he may have existed, "*the meekest man who ever lived*", like Abraham, was evidently lionized and raised to stardom, his true life-story obviously dressed out of all possible recognition.

CHAPTER THREE

The Messiah

The concept of a divinely anointed emissary primed to regenerate the world abounds in universal literature.

The *Sibylline Books* is a collection of Greek literatures from before Christ. In *Gallaeus*, for instance, we find: “*New Light has arisen, coming from Heaven, it is assured a mortal form...Virgin, receive God in thy pure bosom. And the Word flew into her womb. Becoming incarnate in Time, and animated by her body, it was found in a mortal image, and a Boy was created by a Virgin...the new God-sent Star was adored by the Mai, the infant swathed was shown in a manger...and Bethlehem was called God-called country of the Word.*” About the Anointed One, pre-Christian Indian religious works predict:

“He shall come, crowned with lights, the pure fluid issuing from the great soul...dispersing darkness.

He shall come, and life will defy death...and he shall revivify the blood of all beings, shall regenerate all bodies, and purify all souls.

He shall come, and all animated beings, all the flowers, plants, men, women, the infants, the slaves...shall together intone the chant of joy, for he is the Lord of all creatures...he is infinite, for he is power, for he is wisdom, for he is beauty, for he is all and in all.

He shall come, more sweet than honey and ambrosia, more pure than the lamb without spot.

Happy is the blessed womb that shall bear him. And God shall manifest his glory, and make his power resound, and shall reconcile himself with his creatures. It is in the bosom of a woman that the ray of the Divine splendour will receive human form, and she shall bring forth, being a virgin, for no impure contact shall have defiled her.”

The even older Egyptian *Hermetic Writings* feature Hermes, its alleged author, declaring: “*God’s only Son, the only man, through the will of God, is the answer to the heathen.*” In this work we also read: “*God’s first-born who is the Holy Veil, the*

Light of Lights, is he who sends the revolution of the Delegates for he is the First Power.” The Egyptian Thoth, better known as Hermes, was credited as the Good Saviour and Logos and, like Osiris, he had been sent by God to save the world. Thoth also loved his people, and for their benefit he taught and instituted the Arts and the Sciences. In Alexandria, there are writings that speak of Serapis as anointed from above, whilst the *Idra Magna* includes: “*God’s first-born emanated from the Most High, and is the anointed of the Highest.*” Phoenician literature features Aleyin, son of Ba’al, claiming: “*Make ready then, the sacrifice. I am the lamb which is made ready with pure wheat to be sacrificed in expiation.*” In Armenian literature, Eznik, the Final Saviour, is immaculately conceived by the virgin Vispataurvi as the reincarnation of Gayomart. Of Sosiosh, the Persian *Book of Dehesh* claims that he will be “*born of a virgin*” and that he will come as “*redeemer to regenerate the world.*” Like the Jewish Mashiach -who has had Elijah and Moses- Sosiosh, the Final Saviour, is to be preceded by two prophets who will announce his coming. Mithras, the God of the Sun and Persian Saviour, is said to have spent his life in good works, labouring for the redemption of sinners. He, too, we are told, had gathered his disciples in a last supper, after which he died and ascended to Heaven. From the *Zend-Avesta* we learn that Zoroaster, the Divine Law-Giver, and God’s “*Only Seed*”, had also descended to Hell after being crucified upon the Tree of Knowledge. In the *Maha-Bharata*, we find the *Bhagavad-Gita*, a poem that features Lord Krsna as the Eighth reincarnation of Vishnu and Son of Brahma, who had been immaculately conceived. Interestingly, Krsna’s birth had also been announced by a bright star in heaven and he, too, was eventually pinned to a tree until dead, after which he is said to have paid the underworld a brief visit before finally ascending to Heaven. Gautama Buddha, the Light of Asia, is quoted as saying: “*Let all sins that have been committed in this world fall on me that the world may be delivered.*” According to Buddhist prophecy, Maitraya will be the future Messiah, and in Greek Mythology, we find that Bacchus, Adonis, Herakles, Apollo, and Aesculapius had all been virgin-born saviours, the first three of these, having allegedly visited the underworld after their demise. There are other minor *salvadores* in South and Central America, and also similar

characters in Scandinavia, Oceania and, particularly, in Africa, where the Dogon tribes of Mali have familiar things to say. They speak of their *Nommo*, meaning ‘redeemer’ and ‘monitor’, who was crucified and resurrected on the third day to return to Sirius B, known to them as The Beyond. Osiris, the Egyptian Saviour, was slain by Seth and his body dismembered into fourteen parts, which were then dispersed across the Egyptian territory. It was believed at the time that a disparted body could not possibly resurrect into eternal bliss. To do so, it simply had to remain intact. In this context, and arguably about Jesus, *Psalms*, 34.20, declares: “*He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*” The Romans commonly broke the legs of crucified criminals to collapse their lungs and so provoke almost immediate death by asphyxia. In this context, and to allay possible fears among the still superstitious Christians, the authors of the New Testament found convenient recourse in the ancient conviction, writing: “*But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.*” And so, Isis, Osiris’s wife, collected the remains of her husband and successfully recomposed his anatomy. Osiris, like Jesus, had then been able to rise from the dead in a transformed and glorified immortal body to produce the virgin-born Horus -his eventual avenger. Horus and Zoroaster, by the way, were two other messiahs delivered at the end of December, “*about the time of the Winter Solstice*”, in fact.

The Jewish concept of an Anointed One (generically meaning one who is appointed with blessings) post-dates most Asian equivalents, the same having reached this nation’s priesthood, either through Chaldean literature, or Zoroastrian *gathas*, ‘scriptures’, when in detention at Babylon, or directly from independent Buddhist groups when these later proselytized in Jerusalem. The fact is that Israel expects her nationalistic saviour to fulfil four basal prophecies; firstly, that he will be king, arising from the House of David, and that he will cause the renewal of the Davidic Dynasty, further restoring the same to its initial sovereignty. Secondly, that he will gather in the dispersed remnants of Israel (the Diaspora Jewry) and compel these to observe the *Torah* and its mitzvos completely. Thirdly, that he will fight the wars of God, and then proceed to rebuild the Beis

HaMikdash (the Temple) on its site, exalting only Israel as she rules from sea to sea. Fourthly, that he will perfect the entire world and, as predicted of the Indian Saviour afore-mentioned, also motivate all nations to serve God together.

The inclusion of religious liberators in extra-biblical literatures is evident and undeniable, and the foregoing examples are obvious national variations on the same universal theme. Authenticating a particular version by simply dismissing the rest as mythical is thus not good enough. The New Testament, for instance, does just this as it foists its own candidate: "*All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers.*" Krsna and Buddha, to name but two so-called anointed emissaries, are evidently rendered imposters, but no credible argument has ever been produced to sustain this otherwise loudly intolerant and separatist statement attributed to Jesus. Evidently, messianic notions are not unique to the Judaeo-Christian systems. To sum up this particular comparative exercise, I would like to point out that the universal notions of the Virgin-Birth and Salvation may well flow from ancient fungi culture. The fact that mushrooms reproduce agamously may well have ultimately prompted the view of a flawlessly conceived messiah. Moreover, and as explained earlier, fungi contain no *chlorophyll* and thus only obtain their nourishment directly from other organisms either living or dead, whilst the fungi known as *saprophytes* survives exclusively from decaying and dead organic matter, whence, perhaps, John the Baptist's exposition that we are all "*dead in trespasses*", thereby paving the way for the incoming life-restoring Christian Saviour to play his reviving role. Mary's pregnancy by the Holy Ghost, furthermore, probably derives from the concept of the divine sexual congress earlier referred to, its resulting harvest, like Mary's offspring, having represented salvation for all.

Mainstream Christians argue that Jesus of Nazareth (the Nazarenes were an essene religious group that Jesus is said to have led, and which had almost disappeared by 58 A.D. The Nazarene message, together with that of the ensuing Gnostics, was ultimately overtaken by what many have since alleged to be a counterfeit version of the true message of Jesus -the Pauline Doctrine) is the Messiah foretold in Jewish Scriptures, and that

his credentials more than satisfy and fulfil biblical prophecy. Let us, therefore, cite the more significant of these alleged biblical predictions, some of which, as we shall now see, are identical to the foregoing foreign versions.

About the Throne of David, *Isaiah*, 9.7 has this to say: *“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this”*. In *Mathew*, 1.1 we read: *“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”*

About the Messiah’s place of birth, we find the following in *Micah*, 5.2: *“But Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”* Again, in *Mathew*, 2, we come across the following: *“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east of Jerusalem.”*

About the time of birth, the prophet has this to say in *Daniel*, 9.2: *“Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in problematic times.”* In the New Testament’s *Luke*, 2.1-2, we find: *“And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world should be taxed.”*

About the Saviour’s Virgin-Birth, *Isaiah*, 7.14 again prophesies: *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* In *Mathew*, 1.18, we can locate its corresponding fulfilment: *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”*

About the rejection of Jesus by the Jews, *Isaiah*, 53.3 predicts: *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from*

him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” John, 1.11 declares: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

About his death, *Isaiah*, 53, 4-5, reads: “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he has poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” From *Mathew*, 27.38 we learn: “Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.”

There are many more supposed prophecies found in the Old Testament, and just as many alleged fulfilments featured in the New. To facilitate the identification of these in the Bible I have included the following key; P for prophecy and F for its corresponding fulfilment:

P: Genesis 3.15 - F: Ga. 4.4 & Luke 2.7 & Re. 12.5. P: Genesis 17.19 - F: Mathew 1.2 & Lu. 3.34. P: Genesis 18.18 & 12.3 - F: Acts 3.25 & Mathew 1.1 & Luke 3.34. P: Genesis 49.10 - F: Luke 3.33 & Mathew 2.3. P: Genesis 28.14 & Numbers 24.17 - F: Luke 3.34 & Mathew 1.2. P: Jeremiah 31.15 - F: Mathew 2.16 & 2.17, 18. P: Hosea 11.1 - F: Mathew 2.14 & 2.17, 18. P: Isaiah 9. 1.2 - F: Mathew 4.12-16. P: Deuteronomy 18.15 - F: John 6.14 & 1.45 & Acts 3.19-26. P: Psalms 16.10 - F: Mathew 28.9 & Luke 24.36-48. P: Psalms 22.16 - F: John 20.27 & 19.37 & 20.25. P: Zechariah 12.10 - F: John 19.34.

The bivalence of the foregoing is evident. In the final analysis, nevertheless, all Asian messianic ideas, including those of the Bible, are demonstrably rooted in fertility tradition. The Sumerian word for ‘water’ (IA-U-S U-A, meaning ‘semen’) is the authentic and incontestable Saviour, Regenerator, and Redeemer.

We have already identified the fantastic fertility origins of the name *Yahweh*, and the reader has already been filled with details of this deity’s altogether mythical characteristics. In view of the irrefutable evidence, it would appear unnecessary to discuss the authenticity of His “*Only Begotten*” progeny any

further. Nevertheless, and if only for the sake of argument, I would next like to evaluate and hopefully rebut the derision and vilification which bigoted Noahite covenanters, in particular, are currently hurling at the persona of the biblical Jesus and his entourage. These debunkers of Christianity do not only dismiss the authenticity of Jesus for failing to fulfil the Old Testament prophecies, they also argue, almost pathologically, that *Chrestus*, or *Khristos*, the Christian leader, was a schismatic and seditious militant who among other infractions had committed murder and arson in Jerusalem in protest against Roman occupation, and for which he was eventually justifiably sentenced to death. The ensuing Apostolic Church, they further claim, comprised unruly dissidents and depraved idol worshippers who threatened to tear apart the very fabric of Jewish society.

Firstly, and about the *korkoron*, the Christ embrocation, Pliny chronicles: “...those who have anointed themselves with the juice of the whole plant, mixed with oil, become more popular and obtain their wishes more easily...so great are its health-giving properties that some call it *Chreston*.” This oleaginous juice was rubbed, whence the Hebrew *mashiach*, meaning the ‘anointed one’. So salutary was its unction that it was called *khrestos* by the Greeks (a word rooted in Sanskrit -whence *Krsna*, which means, precisely, ‘anointed’), meaning ‘good’, ‘honest’, ‘health-bestowing’, etc. Before being admitted into the Mysteries of the Indian Sages, Apollonius and his partner had been rubbed with oil so powerful that “...they felt as if bathed with fire.” According to *Des Sciences Occultes*, “...these unctions were exceedingly frequent in ancient ceremonies. Before consulting the Oracle of Trophonius, they were rubbed with oil over the whole body. This preparation certainly concurred to produce the desired vision.” Philo Judaeus writes about this same anointed fraternity, adding that they were therapeutics, and Pliny chronicles: “The root of *Halicacabus* is taken in drink by those who, to confirm superstitious notions, wish to play the inspired prophet, and to be seen publicly raving in unpretended madness.” Tacitus endorses this view, further regarding Christians as “entirely despicable”, and although Suetonius Tranquillus, the Roman historian and Secretary to Emperor Hadrian during the first century A.D., further derives Christians

as “*a class of men given to a new and wicked superstition*”, it may well have been a case of anti-Christian propaganda by the Roman State. Other groups of therapeutics in and around Jerusalem at the time included the peaceful Indian *Christianites* and also the *Essenes* who at the time were crossing swords with the Jewish Orthodoxy and the Roman authorities in Jerusalem, and which would culminate both, in their butchery throughout Judaea and in the subsequent prohibition of Judaism. Lastly, but not least, there was the resident Jewish Christian movement that comprised the mushroom-crazed *Zealots*, whose wild notions and activities were now making a mockery of their noble masters -the Egyptian healers and peace-loving *Christians*. The Egyptian *Onnofre*, one of the titles of Osiris, actually translates ‘the goodness of God made manifest’, and the shorter version of this word, that is, *nofre*, means ‘Christus’, whose essential meaning, as already exposed, is ‘good’, or ‘bestowing’.

The flame of revolt, in view of the lack of evidence, may have been set alight not by Jesus’ followers, but by one of the other splinter groups at the time gravitating in the Holy City.

Secondly, the Eternal City, like imperial Persia, had opted for toleration of foreign religions, sects, and superstitions. Experience had taught Rome to adopt and absorb foreign gods as an effective strategy in the pursuit of social stability wherever she spread her imperialistic net. Evidently, this would account for the unique dynamism of their national pantheon. And so, Roman religious adaptability was certainly a key factor to the furtherance of this nation’s interests in Palestine. Indeed, the responsible Roman authorities had never hesitated to quell schismatic elements that threatened the millennial *status-quo* throughout Roman jurisdictions, the *Zealots*, the radical Jewish energumenes, among others, having eventually discovered this to be absolutely correct. Contrastingly, Jesus’ innocence of the character assassination-type charges brought against him by the Jews is evident from the reluctance to execute him shown by Pontius Pilate, who, contrary to recent criteria, incidentally, is an historical character. About Jesus’ ministry and his above-board conduct, the Palestinian-born historian Josephus clarifies: “*Now there was about this time Jesus a wise man, if it be lawful to call*

him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure, he drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. He was (the) Christ.” Clearly, this was not the demagogue and priggish rebel some would have us believe. Why then did Rome continue with her crackdown on Christian activities? Why and how was Christian behaviour proving inimical to Rome? Why exactly was it breeding bad blood at the time? After all, the Christian movement was already gaining in popularity for its many charitable deeds, further calling for political conformity, love, and piety. In answer, I would next like to feature court records and correspondence that date to the Apostolic Era, that is, the time of the undivided Church during the first generations after Christ. These, which I am taking from David Winter’s book titled *After the Gospels*, prove very valuable, as they reveal the early Christian stance against idolatry.

After teaching in Ephesus for a while, Justin, the 2nd century Samarian-born and later Christian apologist, opened a Christian school in Rome. In the *Dialogue with Typho*, we find court records on his martyrdom.

For breaking a decree that ordered everyone to make sacrifices to idols, several leading Christians led by Justin were arrested and arraigned before Rusticus, the Prefect of Rome:

Rusticus: “*What beliefs do you follow?*”

Justin: “*We believe in the Christian God, the one God who has existed from the beginning, the Maker and Designer of the whole creation, visible and invisible. And we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was foretold by the prophets as the one who was to come to declare salvation and lead his followers to the truth. And we don’t believe this as a matter of human opinion, but as something revealed by God and confirmed by prophecy.*”

Rusticus: “*Where is your meeting place?*”

Justin: “*Anywhere and everywhere -we meet wherever we can. The Christian God is not confined to any one place. He fills heaven and earth, and those who believe can worship him anywhere.*”

Rusticus: “*Where does this group of disciples meet?*”

Justin: *“I’m staying in Martin’s house -I have an upstairs room. That’s near the Baths of Timothy. This is my second visit to Rome, and so far as I know the Christians have always met in his home. But if people seeking the truth came to me, I would meet them in my room.”*

Rusticus: *“So you don’t deny that you are a Christian?”*

Justin: *“No. I am a Christian.”*

Rusticus: *“And you others, are you all Christians?”*

The others: *“We are, by God’s gift.”*

Rusticus: *“And did Justin convert you to Christianity?”*

Paeon: *“No. I received the truth from my parents.”*

Euelpistus: *“So did I, though I was glad to learn more from Justin.”*

Rusticus: *“Where are your parents?”*

Euelpistus: *“In Cappadocia.”*

Hierax: *“Our real father is Christ, and our real mother is our faith in him. My earthly parents are dead. I was brought from Iconium as a captive.”*

Rusticus: *“And you-what do you say? Are you an unbeliever like the rest of them?”*

Liberian: *“Not an unbeliever. I am a Christian. I believe in and love the only true God. That is not unbelief.”*

The Prefect, Rusticus, now turned his attention to Justin once again:

“You are supposed to be an intelligent man, and you claim that you know the truth, as you call it. Now tell me, if I order you to be beaten and then beheaded, do you really and truly believe you will go up to heaven?”

Justin: *“If I endure these things-if I don’t deny Christ-then I expect to receive his gift of eternal life. That is the promise of God to all who live in him, until the end of the age.”*

Rusticus: *“You think you will go to heaven then?”*

Justin: *“I don’t think I know it. I’m totally persuaded.”*

Rusticus: *“Ah well, let’s turn our attention to a more urgent question. Will you all agree to make a sacrifice to the Roman gods?”*

Justin: *“No one in his right mind turns from true belief to false.”*

Rusticus: *“If you refuse to sacrifice, you will all be punished without mercy.”*

Justin: *“There is an even more terrible seat of judgement than a Roman Prefect’s, the judgement seat of our Lord, who will one day judge the whole world. We would rather suffer now and please him, than please you and suffer then. You must do whatever you decide. We are Christians, and we do not sacrifice to idols.”*

The intransigent and incoercible Christians, now prescient of their immediate future, were led out and beheaded as they glorified their god and confessed Christ.

It is clear that the resident foreign authority had expected all citizens to also duly recognize the gods of the Roman State and, as decreed, to offer sacrifices to their graven images. Refusal to do so was punishable by death and the 2nd century Christian monotheists, as just exposed, had preferred to die rather than succumb to idolatry.

Despite the Imperial City’s traditional appeasing policy, the rage against Christians would continue unabated. The following letter was written by a member of the Churches at Vienne and Lyons, and it is one of many from a collection known as *The Martyrs of Vienne*, a true testimony to both religious zealotry and human cruelty. The first section of this letter, incidentally, will remind us of the early arbitrary persecution and despicable torture suffered by innocent Jews in Nazi Germany last century:

“The servants of Christ living in Vienne and Lyons in France send their Christian greetings to the brethren in Asia who share our hope and our redemption. Peace, grace and glory to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ! This letter is to tell you of the things we have suffered recently, and of the courage of our martyrs.

It began in a small way. With official encouragement, the people-our neighbours-began to turn against us. We were first of all banned from the public baths and the market, and then from appearing in public at all. This we were able to bear. In fact, it served to unify our churches and bring some who had been backsliders into a more committed faith.

The next stage was harder to bear. The people began to conduct a campaign of physical harassment against us. We were

jostled and punched if we ventured out of doors. Our possessions were stolen or damaged, and a noisy crowd gathered outside our homes, shouting insults and throwing stones at our windows.

In the end, the authorities intervened-not to protect us, as you might have imagined, but by arresting most of our leading Christians and putting them on public trial before the tribune in the market place. When they had been questioned, they were locked up in the town jail to await the governor's arrival.

When the governor arrived, we were all flogged, and then brought before him. At this point, one of our young men, Vettius Epagathus, stepped forward and asked if he could speak. He was a highly respected man in the town, and an outstanding young Christian full of the Holy Spirit.

Unable to stand silently by and watch the Christians being treated so unfairly, he spoke up forcefully that we were not blasphemers or irreligious people, but honest and hard-working citizens. The governor interrupted him, "Are you a Christian?" he asked him. When Vettius said that he was, in a clear and steady voice, the governor ordered him to be killed there and then.

The sight of this brother of ours being martyred caused some of our number to waver. Most of us, though appalled at the prospect, were ready to be put to the sword. A few, mostly new believers or those who were uninstructed or weak in the faith, denied Christ in the hope that they would then escape execution. There were about ten whose courage failed them, but they were quickly replaced by other Christians who had previously been overlooked but were now brought in by the soldiers and locked up with us. Eventually, all the committed members of both churches were in custody. At this point, needing some 'evidence' with which to convict us, the governor ordered that all our heathen domestic servants should be arrested. The threat of torture by the soldiers was enough to produce from among them witnesses who were ready to witness that the Christians engaged in private orgies and all kinds of sexual perversions. These accusations served to turn the general population against us, and even those who had been sympathetic toward us now joined in demanding our deaths. It was another fulfilment of our Lord's

prophecy: "The time will come when those who kill you will think they are doing God a service."

All of us, from that point, were tortured every day, but the brunt of the ill-treatment was borne by three of the Christians: Sanctus, a deacon from the Vienne church; Maturus, a comparatively new convert but a brave man; and a servant-girl called Blandina. She was incredible-a living proof of the apostle Paul's words that those who count for little in the world's eyes may gain great glory in the sight of God.

She was a woman from the lowest ranks of the community, physically unattractive and despised by most of those who knew her. Yet when her mistress, a Christian who was with us in prison, began to waver in her faith, it was Blandina who strengthened her. Seeing what a strength she was to us all, the soldiers took her away and tortured her unbelievably, until her body was mangled and covered with gaping wounds, so that they couldn't believe she was still alive. But she was, and she just kept on saying, "I am a Christian, and evil cannot find a place among us."

Now it was the turn of Sanctus to suffer again. The soldiers hoped that if they tortured him enough, he would say something incriminatory. In fact, whatever they asked him, he simply answered, "I am a Christian." His calmness infuriated his tormentors, who then began to torture him even more sadistically. They applied red hot brass plates to the most sensitive parts of his body, so that his frame contracted under the pain and his limbs became swollen and inflamed.

A few days later they dragged him out again to his raw and distorted body, expecting that the pain would be so intolerable that he would at last deny Christ, or else die under the strain. Either way, they hoped that it would terrify the other Christians. In fact, a miracle happened. As the instruments of pain touched him, his deformed frame, which had been contracted, straightened out, the swelling went down, and he regained the use of his limbs.

On the same day, one of the Christians who had, in the face of terrible threats denied the Lord-a woman called Biblis was brought in for torture to persuade her to produce evidence against her fellow-Christians. Once again there was a miracle, for the pain had the opposite effect! It appeared to wake her out

of spiritual sleep, so that she not only refused to incriminate the believers, but confessed Christ herself, and gladly accepted martyrdom.

The three Christian heroes, Maturus, Sanctus and Blandina, were tested yet again at the time of the local festival, when vast crowds had gathered in the amphitheatre for the games. The two men, Maturus and Sanctus, were made to run the gauntlet of scourges and then, to the hysterical shouts of the crowd, were set upon by wild beasts. Surviving that, they were strapped in the notorious 'iron chair' and slowly burnt over an open fire, making their final sacrifice as open spectacles before the world.

Blandina, who had already survived more than anyone could have imagined possible, was brought into the arena and suspended high on a wooden stake. Wild animals were then let loose around her, for whom she was intended to provide food. As she hung there, her lips moving in prayer, the Christians who were watching could not but be reminded of the One who was crucified for them, and into the fellowship of whose suffering their dear sister had entered.

In fact, not one of the wild beasts touched her, and after a while they took her down from the stake and put her back into prison. But already the courage of this small, despised, weak woman had put fresh heart in the Christians, and proving that to 'put on Christ' is to be made an invincible champion.

Because of these testimonies, and others, most of those who had earlier denied Christ were born again, or their spiritual life was rekindled, so that they boldly presented themselves to the tribunal, confessing Christ, and asking that they too should be numbered with the martyrs. And they were. Those who were Romans were beheaded. The others were given to the wild beasts. And Christ was glorified."

To further refute the slander against early Christians, I have chosen the following 2nd century letter. It encapsulates Christian ethos at this time:

"If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other cheek to him. If someone makes you go a mile, go two with him. If someone takes your coat, offer him your shirt as well. If someone seizes something that belongs to you, let it go (you

couldn't get it back, anyway!). Give to everyone who asks and don't expect to be paid back. Our Father loves to share his generosity through us with everybody.

A generous giver is blessed by God. But the taker should beware! If he takes only what he needs, then God excuses him. But if he goes beyond that, God will require an account of why he took it, and for what purpose. In fact, he won't be let off until his actions have been minutely examined-and if he has been greedy, then he will be expected to pay back every penny. Remember the old saying? 'Keep your gifts in your own hands until you know who you are giving them to'."

As discussed, religious toleration invariably brought Rome and her provinces together in a pragmatic embrace. Nevertheless, by the late 2nd century A.D. Roman politics had lost almost all control over this cogent, highly pervasive and now politically threatening movement that was Christianity. Overnight, the latter menaced to upset the established order throughout the empire, thereby provoking rage in Rome, where they were further declared the Empire's number one enemy. Those who had been led into professing Christianity through the enmeshing tactics afore-mentioned were executed as criminals. It would seem that Paranoia on the part of Rome and not strictly political rebellion and dissocial conduct by Christians, was the authentic reason for their persecution, which would only abate in 313A.D. after the convenient and timely conversion of Constantine The Great to this infant, but already unstoppable faith. Paradoxically, the subsequent Roman controlled Christian Orthodoxy would now inflict far more damage to Christianity than the military might of Rome could ever have. The former now became the maximum Christian authority, eventually assuming full responsibility for the definitive compilation of the New Testament that would exclude the human characteristics of the Christian Saviour found in the demonized *Gnostic Gospels* discovered centuries later, and which was unavailingly defended at the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (now known as Iznik, Turkey) in 325 A.D. by Arius, the founder of Arianism, against the well-placed Athanasius, the imperious Bishop of Alexandria, who now insisted on the wholly divine nature of Jesus. Mithras, the risen Saviour, had served the Roman armies well, and for centuries Roman legions had fought

under the banner of Mithraism with the promise of bodily resurrection if slain in battle. Politically, it would now be convenient for some of Mithras's credentials to be usurped by the in-coming Christian Messiah. Jesus ascent to heaven, for instance, would now be a physical and not a spiritual one as believed by most. The Roman Catholic Church, the great impostor, was now in the clear to complete the final compilation of the New Testament.

About spiritual resurrection, the Indian Vardhamana had "*risen on the third day when enlightenment was complete*", and the much maligned Gnostics, as already touched upon, had themselves understood and advocated the resurrection of Jesus as spiritual, further arguing that the mainstream belief in a physical resurrection was a metaphor for the former. Mithras' own resurrection, we should remember, had also been a spiritual one until Romanised. However, some would argue that if Jesus did not rise physically from the dead, how could Christianity have amassed such a following so early on? Surely, they would have discovered the truth, they insist. We must note that the *Jesus Papyrus* had already been written down and circulated around 50 A.D., and that it is believed to be an actual eye-witness account on the life of Jesus. Although not a credible source in the eyes of some critics, about the Resurrection, and just outside the crucial Eye-Witness period between 30 and 70 A.D., Josephus reports a physical and glorified Jesus: "*For he appeared to them alive again on the 3rd day as the Divine Prophet had foretold.*"

The Resurrectionist Ignatius, a contemporary of Josephus, was probably converted in adult life. Eventually, Ignatius would become Bishop of the church at Antioch. Condemned to death for his faith, he was taken on a last journey to distant Rome escorted by Roman guards and expecting to be fed to hungry beasts in the infamous gladiatorial arena of that city. Ignatius, nevertheless, had managed to produce and dispatch several letters to churches along his route, and the following is an extract of one such letter. Its message is a clear attempt at defending the authenticity of Jesus and his physical resurrection: "*If you come across somebody who says that Jesus Christ never lived or that*

he's just an idea, or a concept, or a myth –shut your ears to him. Jesus Christ was born into a human family, a descendant of David. His mother was Mary. He was persecuted and crucified under Pontius Pilate, a fact testified to us by some who are now in heaven, and some who are still alive on earth. How can this be a phantom, or an illusion, or a myth/ these are facts of history! It is also a fact that he rose from the dead (or rather, that his Father raised him up). And that is the most important 'fact' of all, because his promise is that the Father will also raise us up, if we believe in him. So if Christ Jesus is not alive, neither shall we be. There is nothing left for us to hope for if he is just an idea or a fantasy. In any case, if he only appeared to live, and only appeared to die, and only appeared to rise from the dead-why should I be in chains for this 'myth'? Why should I die to support an illusion? I am prepared to die for him, the true and real Son of God. But no man is prepared to die for a shadow."

Further to the Resurrection, sceptics have made the following suggestions: That Joseph of Arimathea, the landlord of the garden where the tomb was located had asked for the exhumation and return of the body, and had then arranged to inter it in another grave, keeping its resting place a secret; that the Roman authorities had removed the body and had then refused to disclose its whereabouts; that Jews, hostile to Christians, had removed the corpse to avoid future veneration of the tomb on the part of Christ's followers; that Jewish sympathisers had concealed the body to prevent the Romans from removing it, later dumping the same on one of the many burning rubbish heaps where the bodies of crucified criminals were usually disposed of; that the women visited the wrong sepulchre, and that finding it empty had imagined that Jesus was risen. Lastly, that Jesus did not die, and that he had somehow managed to recover. Nevertheless, it is not that simple. On the one hand, if enemies of infant Christianity -Roman or Jewish- had removed the body or knew of its whereabouts, they had only to exhibit the same to abort that embryonic faith. Evidently, this never happened. If, on the other hand, friends of Jesus had shifted the body before the women reached its resting place, the corpse must have been buried elsewhere, in which case, the tomb

would have become the cause of much veneration thereafter. More importantly, how could the Disciples honestly preach the resurrection of their Lord and even willingly march to their slaughter for this cause if the whereabouts of the body were known? Certainly, food for thought, unless of course, the foregoing records and letters are deemed fraudulent, which is an unlikely possibility in any case, given the many more reports on the reality of Jesus and the impeccable conduct of his earliest devotees. However, the foregoing argument for a physical resurrection -so deeply engrained in the Judaeo-Christian mind-appears to disintegrate when we consider, for instance, that the Indian Vardhamana had, after much meditation, "*risen on the third day when enlightenment was complete*". As already said, the Gnostics had themselves believed and proposed that Jesus' resurrection was a spiritual one. The Gospel of John records: "*A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.*" The Orthodox interpretation of this verse is literal, because translators failed to distinguish between the two different Greek meanings for the word 'see' employed in this verse, namely *blepo* and *theorao*, both meaning 'to behold', and which are exclusively used in connexion with what comes through the optical nerves, and *horao*, which gives prominence to spiritual discerning. The correct translation of this Greek verse would thus be: "*A little while, and ye shall not see (blepo) me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see (horao) me, because I go to the Father.*" As previously discussed, this is the 'sight' which Adam and Eve lost when banished from God's presence. Had these particular words received the attention which the writer intended them to receive, there certainly would have been substantially less debate and controversy over the nature of Christ's resurrection. We may now, therefore, begin to understand exactly what Jesus had meant when he said that he who saw him saw the Father, and also comprehend the true nature of Christ's resurrection.

In addition to his father's unquestionable mythical nature, Jesus, the Christ, seems to have also had some pagan forerunners. Although massively backed by Rome and heroically defended to the death by many, the truth is that the physical resurrection of Jesus clearly makes no sense and does nothing to promote

spirituality and much to adulterate the true and enlightening messages of Krisna, Buddha, and Jesus of Nazareth.

In any case, the foregoing spate of debasing allegations by its many detractors will neither debunk Christianity nor even stem her still massive tide of influence. Unless solid and tangible proof to the contrary is furnished, the Apostolic Church, as opposed to the religionists that made up the later state Orthodox *ekklesia* (from the Greek for 'political assembly') will continue to go down in history as having comprised sincere and humble people, their only recorded quest being the imitation of their peace-loving Lord.

The subjugation of Canaan, on the other hand, epitomizes not only the true nature of the biblical tribes, but also the total spiritual bankruptcy of those post-exilic Jewish religious reformers who were now revising their tribal records, fabricating a noble ancestry for themselves and crafting to embroil their as yet undefined tribal god in this historic military bloodbath. It is to this shocking biblical episode, then, that I would next like to draw the attention of my patient reader.

PART FOUR
DIVINE BI-POLARITY

CHAPTER ONE

The imperialistic Yahweh

Gods of war traditionally led imperialistic and belligerent nations, and it is thus no wonder to find that ancient history is plagued with so-called holy warfare and divine conquest. No matter how much it may be disguised today, the biblical episode that witnesses the Almighty, powering into Canaan and inciting widespread looting and genocide for the territorial furtherance of an exclusive few is indefensible and repulsive to the extreme, serving only to underline the spiritual void in those responsible for its fabrication. Evidently, this notion of divine partisanship is ridiculously futile and truly worthy of definitive rejection.

“Thou shall not kill”, commands the god of Moses. In *Genesis*, we further find: *“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by blood shall his life be shed for in the image of God made He man.”* We also read that Noah and Abraham are respected by their deity for their probity, both having abstained from robbery and murder among other fractious activities reportedly rife at the time. Contradictorily enough, the Bible features this same deity, drowning the world’s population earlier on and later instigating despicable acts of cruelty throughout the land of Canaan. There is no need to scour external sources to compile this list of gruesome events, as most of the lurid evidence, surprisingly enough, is to be found within the pages of the popular Old Testament itself. Clearly, the taking of the land of Canaan was pure and simply a military operation, and a pretty vicious one at that. Now, then, let us peruse the same.

The biblical desert rambles were not the humble and pious people celebrated in Hollywood classics. Like most other contemporary mobile communities, these were unrefined and unprincipled folk, who, in their majority, were also consummate killers, whose inherent lust for carnage had no limits. The Bible asserts that the Jews had exiled Egypt and that they had then taken forty years to traverse the desert into Canaan. This is surprising, as it would normally take only a few days to both

negotiate the region's mountain range, and to then walk across the awaiting sea of sand. Evidently, the Jews, like other autochthonous Semites of the Arabian Peninsula, were full-time desert dwellers, starvation and despair having created in them an almost natural proclivity to cross boundaries, ambush and kill. When sentenced to seek out pastures new away from paradisiacal Eden, Cain had expressed his horror to God: "...everyone that findeth me shall slay me." The Hebrew Bible cites a typical foray on Isaac's own wells of water by thirsty desert bandits. Although this man is said to have been of a gentle and conformist nature, other intractably territorial communities would take preventive measures by raising walls to resist assault and thus protect their hard-earned assets. These migrant groups must have therefore tired of drifting, and must have longed for a permanent, secure, and fruitful home of their own. Eventually, when they had amassed an army commensurate with their imperialist ambitions, the invasion of civilized Jericho became the first and fateful military objective. Armed to the teeth, this Army of God and Nation of Priests mobilized troops, kick-starting their holy campaign not by preaching righteousness, as we would expect of a godly nation, but by assailing foreign territory, engulfing the same in death and grief. No moral reason can ever justify the carnage of countless indigenous communities at the hands of these *conquistadores*. The fact is that no excess was too monstrous for them to commit. This Semite expansionism, as described in the Bible, compares partly with that of the Spaniards in South America much later. Both had been unrequested visitations by unknown gods in whose names were perpetrated systematic acts of brutality and murder. The Spaniards stole American gold that would subsidise their European conquests, whilst these desert tribes ransacked Canaanite homes to augment "*the treasure of the Lord.*" During the conquest of the Americas, moreover, the Spanish religious Inquisition is commonly believed to have murdered innumerable religious incorrigibles, whilst the biblical tribes are featured remorselessly taking the lives of thousands of Canaanites who would not capitulate to Yahweh. In mitigation, and in all fairness, wholesale annihilation, although perhaps not on such a huge scale as the one we are about to examine, had always been the perfect stratagem in the prevention of possible future

retaliation and revenge by the vanquished and their descent. Unsurprisingly, invasion, conquest, and pogrom, in this particular order, were the right things to do until only a few centuries ago, and this must be why these events were unashamedly included in the Bible. Indeed, the popularity and success of blood-thirsty foreign war-gods such as, Ashtoreth, Dionysus Sabazios, Zeus, Saturn, Siva, Iida Baoth, Iao Sabaoth, Kiyun, and Seth, had actually inspired the Bible authors to create their own historical divine destroyer and to then embroil him in this orgy of killings.

The *Pentateuch* includes Moses being tasked by the Lord of Hosts, or God of Armies with the implementation of a panoply of measures against Canaan, aiming to eradicate the depravity and decadence there. According to the narrative, however, the obliquity prevailing in Canaanite territory at the time appears to have related almost exclusively to idolatry and to traditional burnt and blood offerings, but whose preparations, nevertheless, did not happen to meet the peculiar requirements of the incoming Yahweh. We must remember that the Canaanites had already established El, their god, as loving and compassionate. In any case, the violence allegedly endemic in Canaan at the time must have been mild in comparison to what would later be unleashed upon it by these homeless rovers.

Although the tumbling of Erihu's (Jericho) walls by the Jews, as we shall unfurl in a later chapter, is allegorical, and therefore, non-historical, it is unanimously accepted that the storming of this city by these people did actually take place.

This ancient city is now believed by experts to date back to 5000 B.C. There, had flourished a great civilization, a true community of sybarites, living it out in a splendid arcadia. The double-wall system in place around Jericho at the time had been erected to protect not only its many valuables and harvested crops, but also its traditions and culture, very much like those that would later enclose Jerusalem to equally secure God's new kingdom on earth. Both walls encircling Jericho had measured a total of 5.5 metres in thickness, and each had stood majestically over 10 metres high. It is thus inconceivable, unless one resorts to the all

magical and explicative formula that nothing is impossible for God, that these solid stone walls should have fallen down flat at the blowing of animal horns and the concerted shouts of the people however loud or numerous. Moreover, the Bible's story holds that Jericho had stood between the Promised Land and Yahweh's people, but even the most cursory of glances at Jericho's recently discovered geographical position -15 miles northeast of Jerusalem- will reveal that it would have been possible to avoid its storming altogether by entering Canaan through many other viable avenues. It would be fairer to say that the reason for the taking of Jericho had lain in the fact that this ancient illustrious city was at the time emblematic of the established socio-religious order that the desert rambles were intent on decapitating. Sometime after the charting of Canaan's destiny and the death of Moses, Joshua, urged on by the "*Captain of the Lord of Hosts*" -a truly weird mythical warrior fallen from heaven- girded for battle and proceeded to siege the city. The ensuing victory was comprehensive as it was swift. Following the storming of Jericho, tens of thousands of men and women, children, oxen, sheep, and asses were slain by about 30,000 swords. Upon the murder of its king, the city was set on fire and soon reduced to ashes. After these first atrocities came Joshua's only military reverse at the hands of Ai's armies. The reason offered for this frustrated assault was that there had been looting during their capture of the citadel. The plundering of holy cities, we should note, had always been forbidden by most contemporary nations. After the culprit's execution, according to the story, the second attack proved a rampant success. Ai's garrison was promptly brought to its knees as a result, and the city's inhabitants were then cruelly slain. Even those who had scampered to safety were later mercilessly cut down. The convulsive invaders then added to their godly pursuits, pillaging this city and its king, who, like the later King of the Jews of the Christian Gospels, "*was hanged on a tree*" until dead. *Deuteronomy* declares: "*he that is hanged is accursed of God*", and this may well be why the New Testament features its god, turning his back on his own crucified son. Kings, as we have already laboured on in a previous chapter, were invariably divine mediators, and regicide was thus believed to entail a cessation in divine mediation. Because there could now be no such future

intercession for these hapless Canaanites, it was hoped that they would cave in to the entrant alternative.

After the carnage at Ai, we read that the ambitious Joshua defeated and enslaved the Gibeonites. This was followed by the hanging of a further five kings. Spurred on by success, the invaders then turned their swords on the inhabitants of Makkedah and its king, and on all who lived in Libnah and Lachish, including their respective priests. King Horam of Gezer and all his people were also massacred, after which Eglon and its inhabitants were also wiped out. Even Hebron and its many cities were stormed by Joshua and all its inhabitants and king likewise disposed of. Canaan had by now become a funeral pyre. The triumphant *Book of Joshua* records Yahweh's rise to fame as a conquering sabaoth: "...he (Joshua) left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded." Recoiling in fear at Israel's unabated and relentless march of terror, other Canaanite nations, now also bent on exacting revenge, blundered into war against them. In retaliation, the victorious aliens had thousands of these people killed and their belongings stolen before finally razing their cities of Hazor, Madon, Shimron, and Achshaph to the ground. Joshua, however, would leave no stone unturned in his quest to overrun the Canaanite population. The peoples to the north of the mountains and those of the plains south of Chinneroth, those of the valley and those of Doron on the west, the Canaanites to the east and west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the mountains, and the Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh, were all stamped out. The death-toll must have been truly astronomical. An entire chapter -Joshua, 12- is dedicated to these heinous events.

Joshua's ultimatum had left the Canaanite remnants with no option but to worship the new deity or die. Those still faithful to El and Ba'al were mercilessly executed. It was crucial that Yahweh should be seen by the later unsuspecting and emancipated post-exilic Jews to have reigned not just supreme, but also alone and uncontested. The whole of Israel is said to have indeed witnessed "...all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel." As *Zechariah* evidently corroborates: "Thus says

the Lord of hosts, (Lord of Armies) in those days it shall come to pass, that ten men of all languages of the nation shall take hold of the corner of the garment, of him who is a Jew, saying 'we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you'." The stark reality, however, painted an altogether different picture. Indeed, Canaan was now a heap of ruins, exuding death, and enveloped in a cloak of fear.

The *Amarna Correspondence*, unearthed at Tel Amarna in 1887, is a set of over 350 cuneiform tablets, covering the time between 1,417 and 1379 B.C. This find is considered part of the archives from the foreign office of the Egyptian pharaohs, and it reveals much about Canaanite rulers and their agonizing pleas for help during Joshua's pugnacious campaigns. In the latter half of the 2nd millennium, Palestine and part of Syria were annexed to Egypt's new kingdom, and diplomatic correspondence between the pharaohs and their subject Canaanite princes have survived. The biblical tribes are here described as "*an aggressive tribe of bandits.*" In part, one of the letters reads: "*To the king my lord, say. Thus says Abdi-Heba, thy servant. At the feet of the King, my lord, seven times and seven times I prostrate myself...The whole land of the King has revolted. There is not one governor that is loyal to the King, all have rebelled. May the King harken unto Abdi-Heba and send troops, for if no troops come this year, the whole territory of my lord the King will be lost. The Khabiri (Habiru) are capturing the fortresses of the King. May the King care for his land. The Habiru are taking the cities of the King...If there are no archers this year, then let the King send a deputy that he may take me to himself together with my brothers and we die with the King, our Lord.*" In another letter, the officer in charge at Gezer wrote to his pharaoh, pleading: "*Let my lord the king, the sun in heaven, take heed unto his land, for the Habiru are mighty against us; and let the king, my lord, stretch out his hand unto me and let him deliver me from their hands, so that they may not make an end of us.*" Another interesting piece on this onslaught -as seen through the eyes of the victims- comes from inscriptions on stone pillars erected by Phoenicians in the northern African land of Mauretania where they had eventually found refuge. These pillars apparently still stand today, their inscriptions reading: "*We are those who fled before the brigand*

Joshua, the son of Nun.” Finally, among some inscribed monuments found in Beth-Shan is one stele attributed to the Egyptian Seti 1. Surprisingly, it records various failed raids by incisive Jews and the successful repulsion from the Jordanian mountains of the *habiru*, who for years had persistently sought expansion on Canaanite soil.

The years went by, and although the venomous Joshua was now dead and buried, the gruesome cycle of ethnic cleansing and banditry would nevertheless continue implacably. Judah, the new predacious military leader, is said to have been expressly commissioned by the insatiable Yahweh to spread a fresh epidemic of mass killings in order to obliterate the last vestiges of Canaanite culture. Judah and the incandescent Simon now also made genocide their consuming passion, proceeding to reactivate the Jewish expansionist programme. These denizens of oppression unleashed their military might on neighbouring settlements, and many houses -each comprising no less than seventy members- were reduced to nothing and their kingship cruelly dismembered. This done, and as Assyria would do to Israelites much later, they exhibited their broken bodies outside the gates of conquered cities so that all could see that unlike Osiris, these would not resurrect to haunt them. Jehu, another inveterate terminator, later continued with the bloodbath, beheading seventy of Ahab’s children and butchering all of the house priests. They then lashed out at the brethren of A-ha-ziah, who were all slain in one frenzied session, followed by the treacherous murder of Ba’al’s 450 prophets, priests, and servants at the hands of Elijah.

The systematic repression and barbarity would continue to prevail high on Israel’s agenda. Indeed, more than 500 years on, the power-intoxicated King David would evoke bloody memories, marshalling his armies to resume the feral killings and the depredation of gold and silver, which, according to the embroidered narrative, he likewise dedicated to Yahweh.

Water was scarce during Elijah’s time, and when Yahweh pulverizes Ba’al’s image upon Mount Carmel, the imitative Jewish god is featured coming to the rescue. It was then that a

low black cloud appears to signal the end to the miserable drought. The increscent Yahweh would now also be seen by post-exilic Israel as the only true god of fertility and, more significantly, as the ancient Canaanite *supremo*, who had finally out-rivalled his traditional enemy. As for the narrative's Chosen Nation, she too would thus later be seen as the divine denizen of this entire territory.

Before closing this sad chapter, allow me to make an incision to take a brief look at some of Israel's martial past. Like other nations, Israel had also tinkered with her historical records in order to satisfy national interests. The inscribed stone belonging to the Egyptian Seti I just cited, for instance, records unsuccessful raids in Canaan by combative desert dwellers, and further includes their expulsion from the mountains of this land. The Bible, however, mentions no such events. Moreover, the Moabite Stone records not Israel's victory, as the Bible asserts, but her defeasance at the hands of Moabites in 850 B.C. Another conflicting and discordant report comes from the Assyrian hexagonal clay prism, which details Sennacherib's eight military campaigns, including the bloody invasion of Judea and his siege of Jerusalem. This report does not account for the biblical debacle of the Assyrian armies that had forced their King into a hasty retreat. Importantly, no mention is made of the Angel of the Lord, who, according to Isaiah, had smitten the Assyrians as they slept. Although they contradict the biblical, these other foreign records -unlike the Israelite inflated claims, which, as we shall examine in our last chapter, were raised well in retrospect of such events and at a time when public support for the new emerging Yahweh would have been crucial to the unity of this nation- are much older and, perhaps, even eyewitness accounts. Evidently, the perspicacious Israelite priesthood were now pressing ahead with recalibrating the Jewish vision of the Almighty to that of an infallible god in full control of his chosen people's past, present, and future.

The opportunistic view, at least for now, would therefore be that Yahweh had driven Israel out in punishment, not Assyria, and that both Jerusalem's swift fall for refusing to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar and Israel's subsequent expatriation to

Babylon, had been masterminded by Him who had used the Babylonians precisely as instrument to punish her. The truth however is that these events had now marked a defining moment in the history of this covetous nation of priests who had in fact finally met her nemesis.

CHAPTER TWO

The compassionate Yahweh

After centuries of chronic barbarity and two hundred years of refinement at Babylon, the time for reconvening Israel to embrace love and compassion had finally come.

By 800 B.C., Hinduism had developed from the fertility worship controlled by the *brahmins*, ‘priests’, into the stage of speculative philosophy known as the *Upanishads*, meaning, literally, ‘Approaches’. The latter would focus not on magic rites and sacrifices to manipulate the gods, but on salvation through inner knowledge. By the 2nd century B.C., Vedic doctrine had come into vogue in Jerusalem, compounding an already escalating crisis within the local Jewish citadel of religion -still reeling from the recent captivity and still coming to terms with the confluence of pagan beliefs and cults that had trickled into Jerusalem during their repatriation- also inspiring resident Essenes and, ultimately, heralding Gnosticism (from *gnosis*, meaning ‘knowledge’). About this Knowledge, the *Bhagavad-Gita* clarifies:

“It is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed.

In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has achieved this enjoys the self within himself in due course of time.

One is understood to be in full knowledge whose every act is devoid of desire for sense gratification.

A faithful man who is absorbed in transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.

To these who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.

One who is thus transcendently situated at once realises the Supreme Brahman. He never laments or desires to have anything; he is equally disposed to every living entity."

Vedic Knowledge was not the compliance with the old typical rituals. It was *prayascitta*, meaning 'true atonement', which is "...the awakening of our dormant (god) consciousness which involves coming to real knowledge." Yahweh was now therefore reconstructed to utter clearly uncharacteristic words: "What I want is love, not sacrifice, knowledge of God not holocausts." Certainly, this was a clear *volte-face* on the part of Israel. Harmonizing with the gestating undercurrents in the area, the renewed Essenes and the Qumran would now consider the temple at Jerusalem venal and corrupt, adding to the religious wrangle that would in fact climax during the life of Jesus, who is featured in the New Testament, venting his frustration and castigating those who were reportedly turning the House of God into a den of thieves. "The Kingdom of God is within", includes the New Testament, this being a newly borrowed revivalist and totally imbuing notion that proclaimed a superlative alternative - that of the temple being built not of defaceable stone, but of incorruptible spirit. Henceforth, God would reside in a loving brotherhood and not within four walls, whence Christianity's "Wherever two or more are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them", and its ensuing doctrine that qualifies the human body as the very temple and the congregation of the faithful as the authentic church. These contagious religious imports were now eclipsing the fusty and mostly irrelevant Mosaic tradition, sending the latter's more orthodox representatives into a quandary, while simultaneously seeding the minds of other more liberal rabbis in Jerusalem. Hillel was one of these. This saintly Jewish religious leader now pumped out this new and unteaching religious dispensation: "Do not do unto others as you would not have done unto you." He further argued that sincerity, loyalty, and piety were the very essence and golden rule of the *Torah*. Other formerly dogma-entrenched Pharisees would jump on the bandwagon after the final exile had begun, arguing that Israel could now atone for her sins by acts of loving-kindness. Holiness would no longer be associated with the fertility-based Mosaic burnt-offerings. Indeed, charity would

now become the new premise to religious teaching in Jerusalem and the most important and holy *mitzvah*. Unbelievably, and underlining the deeper Indian religious vision, offences against a fellow human were now contrary to God's will, and Israel would be consequently encouraged to cultivate compassion instead. Echoing Buddha, the Jews now trumpeted that only love, not hate, can defeat hate itself. Dying for one's friends had now become the apex of this new and more profound religious ethos. Clearly, this ultimate Jewish god of compassion contrasts sharply from the one who drowns humanity earlier on, and has very little in common with the Sabaoth that had recently stormed Canaanite territory.

Three hundred years before this religious diversion, the Hellenic presence in Jerusalem had helped to erect the scaffolds for a new Jewish *modus-vivendi*, adding further impetus to the Jewish recovery kick-started in earnest when the latter were repatriated from Babylon, where the Jewish priesthood would have been instructed in all the arts and sciences. The influence of Greek philosophers, mathematicians, grammarians, and master-cryptographers in particular, would also eventually contribute to the establishment of a fresh Jewish seat of mystic learning, heralding the rectangular-based and numerically-valued Hebrew alphabet, and the subsequent numero-grammatical encryption of the Hebrew canon that we shall examine in our next chapter.

PART FIVE

THE PROPHETIC SCRIPTURES

CHAPTER ONE

Allegory and enlightenment

The foregoing analysis discloses not only the universality of much biblical scripture, but also the fantasy of it all. It would, therefore, be wholly reasonable to conclude that the "*I Am*" was only real in the hearts and minds of the deceived many. Notwithstanding, the recent discovery of Bible code has revived religious sentiment, inducing in some quarters the unwitting opinion that such a masterly work can only be attributable to the living Judaeo-Christian Almighty. This is not surprising. Interestingly, anthropology and psychology have both shown how when confronted with the inexplicable, the imaginative and creative mind invariably resorts to fantasy. The preceding chapters, in fact amply illustrate not only the fantastic features of Yahweh, but also reveal the ability of this deity's creators and propagandists to uphold his office and public worship by transforming him in answer to and in-tune with foreign and domestic socio-political exigencies, trends, and developments.

The more familiar and often delirious prognostications in the Bible are those of its prophets and visionaries. Two other types of prophecy are of a cryptic nature, one coming in allegorical form and the other via numeric values. The reason for the current excitement is that there is allegedly one further class of biblical prophecy carefully couched in phraseology and vocabulary, a sort of word riddle, if you like, concealed in many different ways beneath biblical literature. Let us then firstly dwell on prophetic allegory.

Although probably partly based on fact, as we have already appreciated, the general absence of accuracy and detail in the biblical story of the flood would appear to signal an inner meaning. For instance, the dimensions of the ark are uncertain, and these depend upon the interpretation of the length of the ancient cubit. The accepted standard length, nevertheless, is that of twenty-one inches, in which case, Noah's ark would have measured 87 feet in width, 52 feet in height, and 525 feet in

length. Evidently, this would have made it an incondite sea vessel. Furthermore, how God could expect poor Noah to move hell and high water to reach distant lands and there capture polar bears, kangaroos, and elephants -to name but three continentally distanced animals- and to then, upon his return, herd these into such a confined area, commands no credence whatsoever. The fowl employed by Noah raise further suspicion. One inaccuracy involves the raven, the first of the birds released by Noah and commonly used by ancient sailors for shore-sighting purposes. It is thus surprising to read that the bird is released once the mountains have become visible. Moreover, the tale's olive branch and dove are deliberately representative of peace. We should note that this particular symbolism first emerged in Phoenicia only to be adopted as such in Greece well after the biblical date for Noah's epic. Olive trees, in any case, have never been known to grow on the top of Ararat, a 17,000 feet-high mountain range that has been covered in snow for more than 100,000 years. Incidentally, the migrant turtle-dove would later become emblematic in Israel not of faithfulness and peace, as in these two other nations, but of the roving nature of the Ishmaelites and Edomites. The raven -one other bird used in the story- is universally known for its scavenging activities. This bird gathers and salvages what is still edible from death and destruction, and this may well be why, according to kabbalists, the Flood raven represents the Spiritual Reformer, that is to say, the Moses and Elias of the Old Testament, both in effect reforming the way for the Messiah's arrival. As for the story's dove, it eventually flies for the fourth and last time, and finding peace on Earth decides not to make a return. Again, and as far as kabbalists are concerned, this refers to the Messiah's last coming at the onset of the "*Final Age*". Another discordant element takes us to God's covenant with Noah. To commemorate this event and His benevolence, the Jewish deity had introduced the rainbow, which, according to the account, no-one had ever witnessed before. As we all know, the rainbow is the result of the doubly refracted sun rays passing through drops of water in the air, the reflection of which is seen by the human optical nerves in the form of a brilliant arch of prismatic colours. So, if there had been no rainbow before the Covenant was sealed, it gathers that there could not have been a deluge, for instance, or

in fact, a people to drown in it in the first place. Moreover, the claim that the present *kingdom animalia*, including the *homo-sapiens* (from the Latin for 'man the wise') dispersed throughout the world is descended from Noah's family and the uprooted beasts, is clearly nonsensical, this being both genetically and demographically impossible, especially when we consider that according to accepted Bible chronology, Noah lived a mere 4000 years ago. Given the erudition of the Old Testament authors, it is certain that these inaccuracies are deliberate. Where and how then, does prophetic allegory come in?

In *1 Corinthians* 10:11, we read: "*All of these things that happened to them (Noah and Moses) were symbolic, and were recorded for our benefit as a warning.*" The *Kabbalah*, which comprises the Jewish *Sohar*, the *Midrash Berasheth*, or the universal *Genesis*, and the *Merkaba*, also teaches that "*Noah is a revolution of Adam, as Moses is himself a revolution of Abel and Seth.*" Also about Noah, the *Talmud* recognizes that he was the Dove, thus identifying him further with the Indian and Chaldean *Nuah*, or 'Dove' and, therefore, with the Messianic Spirit.

"And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made", state both the *Enuma Elish* and the later Bible. According to Bible numerics, number 7 is associated with Divine Impregnation and as symbolically representative of completed work, stillness, quiescence and, therefore, of the attainment of enlightenment. This number is preceded by number 6, itself the start of the devotee's journey towards the 7, which represents escape from a godless (unspiritual) system. Number 7, however, does not only symbolize the foregoing, but also the start of a spiritual journey towards number 8, itself allegorical of resurrection, life, and new beginnings in the presence of God, or rather, in spiritual plenitude. But let's move on with numerology, focusing on the use of number 7 in ancient religious literatures, traditions and customs.

Religious septuplication may well stem from either the human climacteric cycles that renew the entire biological entity every seven years -arguably affording systemic opportunities to

rekindle the human spirit in the process, or from the Seven Universal Laws, which are said to complete and govern Creation, or even from either the Chaldean tradition that includes Lida-Baath, residing “*over the seven orbits (planets)*”, or the 7 stanzas of the Lemurian Creation earlier mentioned. In the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, the oldest bible in the opinion of many, we come across the number 7 and its perspicuous association with matter and spirit. The 7 here represents the “*Seven Celestial Boats*” that carry the spirits of the dead to their place of reincarnation. The Old Testament features the seven feasts of the Lord: Passover, Unleavened, First-Fruits, Pentecost, Atonement, Trumpets, and Tabernacle, all, by the way, unavailing attempts at invoking the presence of God, whilst the *Kabbalah* speaks of the animals shut up in the ark as the “*seven human passions*”, or as Hindus would know it, the *seven shakras*, meaning ‘seven wheels’ in Sanskrit and, which once conquered are said to lead the devotee out of *samsara* (‘reincarnation cycle’) straight into *nirvana*, which is the final freeing of the soul from its fetters and the perfection of compassion. Buddha, we should not forget, had travelled tirelessly during 7 years in search of *nirvana*, and the torrential rains of the Babylonian deluge, we are told, had washed away the “*filth*” of mankind by the 7th day. In the Bible, and when the inundation recedes on the seventh day, Noah is asked by God to observe 7 laws so that he and his descendants could walk righteously before Him, an event itself symbolized by the 7-colour covenantal rainbow just referred to. Elijah, if we remember, asks his servant to climb Mount Carmel a total of 7 times, after which the latter spots a black cloud that heralds the end to the devastating drought, bringing with it reprieve and salvation for all. Of Solomon, the Bible states that he completed the laborious construction of the Temple in 7 years after which he rested and celebrated joyfully during the following 7 days. Significantly, from the thirst for God of King David to the thirst-quenching Jesus, there are seven generations. In *Psalms*, we thus read of King David’s love for God and, as already said, about his frustrating toils in his quest to know Him: “*Seven times do I praise you*”, and “*A just man falleth seven times*”, both, incidentally, reminiscent of the prerequisite to spiritual initiation of Egyptian worship. As we saw earlier, part of the *Amarna*

Correspondence features a Canaanite prince in desperate supplication, prostrating himself a total of 7 times before his distant pharaoh in the hope of thus securing the military assistance that would bring deliverance and salvation from cruel Jewish invaders. Finally, we have the 7 sentences, or statements attributed to Jesus as he died on the cross after his trying mission, the last of these appropriately reading: “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*” The list is endless. Evidently, number 7 is the occult emblem of successful spiritual awakening and freedom. This is why it was customary of Israel to liberate slaves precisely on a septennial basis, that is, every sabbatical year.

The Greek name for Jesus pronounced as *lésous* amounts to 888 and his title “Christ”, *Kristós*, adds to 1480, or 185x8. Number 8 is thus symbolic of spiritual perfection in the Presence of God. Noah was in fact carrying 7 members of his family tasked with giving birth to the Eighth Son, itself universally representative of the regenerated soul primed to repopulate a filth-free earth. Circumcision on the Eighth Day is thus a mental and spiritual act, the moment when a devotee finally realizes that he or she is the tabernacle of the Living God. When a student foregoes the Self, divesting himself of name, nationality, social status, and of all things appertaining to his personality, he also discovers that he is unveiling the God Presence, the Eighth Day and the Eighth Hour. The Gnostic *Discourse on the Eighth and the Ninth* includes guidance on this ascent to a higher plain. Written in dialogue form, the *Discourse* opens as the student reminds his spiritual master of a promise: “*Oh my father, yesterday you promised me that you would bring my mind into the eighth and afterwards you would bring me into the ninth. You said that this is the order of the tradition.*” About this state, the earlier *Bhagavad-Gita* declares: “*For one who has conquered the mind, the Super soul is already reached, for he has attained tranquility. To such a man, happiness and distress, heat and cold, honour and dishonour, are all the same.*” Like the messianic crucifixion featured in the New Testament, among others, the story of the universal Inundation seems to symbolise both the death of the Old Man and the birth of the New, whence, it would appear, the Christian regenerating baptism -courtesy of

the Holy Ghost on the one hand, and the Indian Nirvana afforded by Kundalini on the other. The biblical Promised Land was thus always parabolic of the resurgence of this New or Higher Man in a future age of purity as also featured in the Indian *Bhagavad-Gita*. It therefore is no wonder that the occupation of Palestine by Israel in the twenty-first century should continue to breed bad blood.

After escaping Egypt, Moses remains in the company of Jethro, the Priest, during 40 years, this being exactly the amount of time that Jesus would later spend in retreat out in the wilderness just before embarking on his holy mission on the one hand, and the precise duration of his disciples' anxious wait for the all-empowering Pentecostal Holy Ghost on the other. Moreover, like Buddha, who spent 40 years teaching the Four Truths, the Jewish Prophet is said to have himself spent just as long, leading his freed 'flock' out of Egypt where it is claimed they had remained in detention during 400 years. It is not particularly alarming, therefore, to find that this last figure is actually the numerical value of the 22nd character that completes the alphabet of the 'Language of God' (Hebrew), according to Jews. Lastly, when he dies, Moses is said to have been 120 years of age. The fact is that 40, 120, and 400, as well as 8 and even 5, are all numerical figures associated with the ancient religious initiation and spiritual attainment of the Persian, Hindu, Egyptian, and the later Chaldean faithful.

Canaan had always been self-reliant, and during the 2nd millennium B.C., nothing short of paradise to some hapless communities such as the marauding *bedouin*. Conveniently, in Exodus, Moses is seen to lead his flock away from confinement through the featureless and dispiriting desert and onto the very threshold of the liberating agricultural paradise that was Canaan. This story is evidently that of the ecumenical Saviour, whose dual task it is to deliver mankind from spiritual wilderness and to restore the same to spiritual plenitude. This, incidentally, is the true, but covert meaning of the Jewish Passover. In the pertinent narrative, we should note, the pharaoh's daughter is made to name the baby *Mosheh*, a name that is not dissimilar to the Hebrew verb *mascha*, and which like the Greek *khristos*

mentioned earlier, means ‘to anoint’, *maschiach* itself meaning precisely, ‘anointed’, or ‘messiah’. Not surprisingly, *Aaron*, who was Moses’ coadjutor and articulate interpreter, actually means ‘enlightened’, whilst *Aron* -completing the illuminated trio-means ‘sacred coffer’, or ‘ark/enlightenment’. The three evidently bear a close relationship with the Messianic Plan designed to lure souls to the Land of Milk and Honey. Others, however, maintain that the child Moses is called *Mosheh*, because the pharaoh’s daughter had drawn him out of the river, *mashah* being the Hebrew verb ‘to draw’. However, this would also suggest the distinct messianic view that this child was one who had previously escaped from the Waters of Immortality symbolized by the decreed drowning of all Jewish babies at birth in the narrative, and who was now in fact returning to help rescue his fellowmen. The *Kabbalah Desnudata*, volume 2, thus teaches: “*Moshah is the reincarnation of Seth and Hebel*”, the last two having also been deliverers of their people. Some scholars would, nevertheless, deny this etymology, insisting that *Mosheh* is a component of such Egyptian names as *Ahmo*se and *Thutmose*, and that it means ‘son of’, or ‘is born of’. Either way, the story in Exodus is clearly the tale of Noah repeated. Indeed, according to the Bible, Egypt’s hot-pursuit of God’s people ends when her armies are drowned at sea and, as for the tribes, these escape unscathed. Moses, then, is seen to succeed in leading his people away from enslavement and onto the very threshold of God’s Promised Land. It appears that this is the essential story of Noah once again, where the evil ones drown and the protagonist’s family is spared in order that it may give birth to a new God-fearing generation in a spotless new world. We should bear in mind that the parting of seas, as well as the tumbling of walls, are symbolic, and that they belong to universal antiquity where they can represent both the transfer of power and the actual transition from one socio-religious order to another, and the resurgence of mankind from the very depths of spiritual darkness. In this latter context, Jesus would add that new wine should never be kept in old bottles, whilst almost two thousand years on, Karl Marx would insist that to build the new social system the old one would have to be done away with first. This is why the biblical decapitation of Jericho’s allegedly decadent social order is symbolized by the narrative’s tumbling of this

city's walls, reportedly caused by 7 priests, blowing 7 trumpets and, precisely, on the 7th day and on the 7th time around the citadel.

Suspicion of an allegorical exercise deepens when we discover that there is no significant external contemporary evidence for the biblical single mass exodus from Egypt, or for the subsequent drowning of the Egyptian armies. Strangely, nothing of the sort was ever recorded in Egypt, although it must be said that Egypt was not in the habit of recording military defeats. Interestingly, however, there is not a single shred of coetaneous evidence that will confirm the mass employment or enslavement of Jews or Arabs in this land, and certainly no valid proof to corroborate a prolonged Jewish presence in the Sinai Desert either. Not unless we consider that the biblical Jews may have actually been the Hyksos. According to Josephus, the Hyksos were a pastoral people known as the Shepherd Kings, who professed to be a nation of priests and the keepers of Seth's Laws. Of Semitic origin, the Hyksos settled the region that surrounds the Nile Delta around 1730 B.C., pushing the resident Egyptians farther to the south. Here, they enjoyed a century of splendour, much like the biblical tribes, who at this same time are also reported to have been settling Egypt. Eventually, also like the tribes in Exodus, the Hyksos were themselves ousted by an Egyptian pharaoh (Ahmose, according to some and Ramses the Great, according to others) around 1580 B.C. About these people, and although written centuries later, the work by Josephus entitled *Against Apion*, reports: "*The Egyptians took many occasions to hate and envy us: in the first place because our ancestors had had the dominion over their country, and when they were delivered from them and gone to their own country, they lived there in prosperity.*" We should also bear in mind, now that we are at it, that no hard evidence has ever been produced to authenticate eleven of the twelve tribes of Israel. Only the Levites or *Sodales* ('Sun-Worshippers', as they are referred to in various literatures) are historical, the remaining eleven being imaginary and allegorically employed in the Bible as we have already shown in the context of the Twelve Titans.

It does seem that Noah and Moses are the fabulous protagonists in sagas that allegorize the new universal Age of Enlightenment, or Messianic Age. This is crucially significant when assessing the origination date for the stories that appear in the Old Testament, for research shows quite unequivocally that matters of spiritual values had reached the Jews either during their captivity in Babylon, or just after their return to Jerusalem, when they would have been in a state of religious limbo, also inundated by massive tides of Indian and Greek philosophical speculation and mysticism as already touched upon. In Babylon, conceptions of spiritual enlightenment had found expression in the *Zodiac* (from the Greek for ‘animal’), which is a system based on an imaginary representation of planetary movements. We thus find that *Aquarius*, the Water Bearer and the purifier and regenerator by implication, is now setting in, appropriately marking the dawn of the universally announced Age of Purity, as we shall elaborate on in this present chapter, this being the time that Astrology predicts for the alignment of Jupiter with Mars and for the moon to be precisely in the Seventh House.

It gathers that the only land that a true devotee strives to conquer is a spiritual one. That the present state of Israel is not the Promised Land there can thus be little doubt. History reveals that like a frail and oppressed old man who looks confidently upon his stronger son for protection and survival, Judaism has for centuries sought protection under the ever spreading wings of mighty Christianity. Although he would be rejected by Israel, history shows, paradoxically enough, that wherever the Christian Saviour took roots, so did Yahweh to a significant extent, the former finding his *raison d’etre* precisely in the latter. Significantly, the official recognition of Israel and her subsequent admission to the U.N. in the 1940’s was achieved because Christian Britain, succumbing to Jewish pressure at home, among other reasons, had firstly contemplated allowing Jews to settle and buy land in impoverished Palestine under the infamous Anglo-French experiment of 1917 known as the Balfour Declaration. The benefits of having a future grateful friend in a key area like Palestine was summarized by Lord Melchett a decade later: “*A great deal of the future of the British Empire depends upon our having in that corner of the*

Mediterranean a friendly people, depending upon us and, therefore, reliable. It is of the utmost importance to the future of the British Empire that we should have the co-operation of the Jews in the further extension of our Empire." In this same context, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, a British publication of the 1930's, featured the following: *"From a strategic point of view, such a development (referring to the extension of the Jewish State into Trans-Jordania) is of tremendous importance to the British Empire. Palestine stands as a vital link in the chain of Imperial communications between the East and the West. It holds the key position for all air routes, and, in view of the Egyptian situation, must always be a vital factor in the development of air routes to East and South Africa."* Soon after the Second World War, independent Israel would be practically sustained by the continued infusion of money from the American Jewry. As Doctor Weizmann had put it some years earlier, *"The Key to the doors of Palestine is not in the pocket of the High Commissioner for Palestine, but in the pockets of the Jews of America!"* Indeed, so much private Palestinian soil has been negotiated and sold to Jews abroad over the years, that not long ago the Palestinian Government were persuaded to introduce the death penalty precisely to deter landowners from contracting further sales. American financial assistance to Israel, however, has recently come under serious threat. It appears that despite the pressure brought to bear upon this nation by the diaspora Jewry in New York, the ultra-religionists in Jerusalem are, as I write, resisting the abolition of a law that openly discriminates against converts to Judaism outside the so-called Promised Land, that is to say, the present State of Israel. The powerful American Jewry have retorted angrily, threatening to pull the plug on this funding if the reluctance to amend this law persists. Amazingly, in spite of the evidently wily international political and financial arrangements that have helped turn Jewish geographical dreams and desire for nationhood into reality, religious Israel continues to denounce Christianity as a mere hoax, uncannily proposing that Yahweh has worked in *"mysterious ways"* to fulfil biblical prophecy.

Allow me, after this parenthetical insertion, to continue with our messianic argument. Each of the 22 characters -all consonants-

that configures the Hebrew alphabet carries a numeric value, so that a letter stands also for a number. A word, therefore, also has numeric value, since it is created by two or more characters. The same principle thus applies to Hebrew sentences, verses, paragraphs, chapters, and books of the Old Testament. All biblical text is actually numerically valued. Indeed, in the *Torah*, we find that “*In the beginning*” equals 913, and that the word “*God*” totals 86, whilst “*Created*” amounts to 203, “*the heavens*” to 395 and “*the Earth*” to 296. Surprisingly, these figures divide evenly by 7, “*God, heaven & earth*” in fact totalling 777, or 111X7. Furthermore, the arithmetical value of the verb in this first verse in *Genesis*, that is, “*created*”, is 203 (29X7). The value of the first, middle, and last Hebrew letters also in this verse is a number which divides evenly by 7, the total of these three letters amounting to 133. The value of the first and last characters of all seven words in this same verse is also a multiple of 7, that is, 1,393. The value of the first and last letters of the first and last words, is a number that is accurately dividable by 7; 497. The value of the first and last characters of the words remaining between the first and last words also divides perfectly by 7, the numeric value in this case being 896. Amazingly, 497+896 =1,393, and this is the value of the first and last letters of all of the seven words in this first verse in *Genesis*. *Eth*, the Hebrew participle, which is not translatable into English, occurs twice in the sentence of seven words, whilst the article *the* also occurs twice. These two words carry a composite value of 406 (58X7). Finally, the last characters of the first and last words carry a total value of 490 (70X7). Further septuplication also comes couched in various other interesting ways under the structure of this first biblical verse and also under the entire Hebrew Testament.

Surprisingly, this same arithmetical wizardry devoted to the Messianic 7 is also hidden in the Greek-written New Testament. Indeed, the Greek alphabet also serves this same dual purpose. Attic’s period of official use stretched from 300 B.C. to 300 A.D., the same being one of four ancient Greek dialects from which stems Koine (*koine dialectos*, in full), meaning ‘common dialect’. Classic Koine was the tongue of Plato, Saphocles, and Demosthenes, among others, and also the language that

Alexandrian Jews employed to render the *Septuagint*, which by the way, means ‘Seventy’. This Athenian dialect is understood by all Greek-speaking peoples, as it is the basis for Modern Greek. Its alphabet comprises 24 characters, and the first of these, that is, *Alpha*, represents 1 and *Beta*, the second letter, stands for 2, etc. *Alphabet*, incidentally, is a Greek combination of both these characters. It has been demonstrated that the entire *Greek New Testament* also conceals this same awesome numeric design. From *Genesis* in the Hebrew language down to *Revelations* in the Greek, we thus find identical numerical patterns and, more significantly, we discover that both testaments are numerically interwoven, each in accord with the other.

Early last century, and after more than fifty years of exclusive research and 40,000 pages of calculations, Ivan Panin, a Russian scientist and mathematician, presented a volume of 514 pages thereafter called the *Numeric Greek New Testament* and which, as its name well indicates, represents the complete Greek New Testament exclusively in numbers. As is the case of the Hebrew Old Testament, if one or more Greek letters in the New Testament were to be substituted for another, the entire arithmetical structure would dislocate as a result. Fortunately, the numeric system in place is such, that any character or word that may have been added, omitted or transposed inadvertently or by design, is immediately detectable. About the transmission and translations of Bible text in fact, *The Text of the Old Testament* includes: “no pains were spared in preventing errors from entering the sacred text, or in discovering and eliminating them if they should creep in.” Panin showed how the first chapter of *Matthew*, verses 1-7, replicates the arithmetical composition extant in the Old Testament. There are seventy-two Greek vocabulary words in these first seventeen verses, and the numeric value of these is a figure which divides perfectly by 7, that is, 42,364. Moreover, these seventy words occur in 90 different forms, because, like their Hebrew counterparts, Greek words were often meant to convey more than one meaning. Amazingly, the numeric value of these 90 forms, that of 54,075, is also a sum which septuples -7,725X7, in fact. The abstruse arithmetical reticulation continues. The Greek *the* also occurs a

total of 56 times in the passage, and the number of different forms or different meanings attached in which this article occurs is, accurately, 7. The first section of these seventeen verses in *Matthew*, verses 1-11, is composed of 49 words and the number of these which begin with a vowel is exactly 28, whilst the number of words that begin with a consonant is 21. Furthermore, the number of letters in these 49 words is 265 (38X7). Of these 266 letters, the number of vowels is, precisely, 140 (20X7), and the number of consonants is 126 (18X7). Again, of these 49 words, the number of words which occur more than once throughout these eleven passages is 35, and the number of words which occur only once in the same is 14. Moreover, of these 49 words, the number which appears in only one form (single meaning) is 42, and the number which appears in more than one form is 7. Of the 49 Greek vocabulary words, the number of nouns is 42, whilst the number of words which are not nouns is 7. Of these 42 nouns in the first eleven verses, the number of proper names is 35 and the number of times the 35 proper names occur is 63. Of these 35 proper names in the vocabulary of the first eleven verses of *Mathew*, the number of male names amounts to 28 and the number of times that these 28 male names appear is 56, whilst the number of female names is 7. The three female names that occur in these eleven verses, that is, Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth, amount to a total numeric value of 14, whilst the city mentioned in this passage -Babylon, is composed of seven Greek characters. Likewise, the number of common nouns in this passage is 7 and the number of Greek characters in these 7 common nouns is, precisely, 49. Septuplication apparently extends to all parts of the Christian text, vocabulary, grammatical forms, and parts of speech, etc. Often, as many as one hundred or more features are strangely secreted below the surface of passages, and these may consist of no more than 175 words (again, the Egyptian numerical symbol for the completion of religious initiation) and also beneath single passages and special words that are separated by great distances. Before closing this paragraph, let me add that number seven is overtly featured in the Bible a total of 700 times.

Further interlinked numerological configurations feature submersed in both testaments, but for reasons of space, I must

ask the interested reader to consult Panin's work, or, failing its availability, the book by Karl G. Sabiers, originally entitled *Astounding New Discoveries*, published in 1941 by Robertson Publishing Company, and which is actually the source from which I have drawn the arithmetical constructions that I have just presented.

Finally, it does seem that the Judaeo-Christian scriptures allude to either an individual's transition from mundaneness to spirituality, or to the purification of mankind in preparation for a new world order, this being probably why the Essenes, the reputed authors of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, had awaited the End of Days, seeking retreat and the purification of their souls in the wild and infertile honey-combed mountains of Qumran.

CHAPTER TWO

Millennial oblivion and Bible code

On May 30th, 1997, the British *Daily Mail* featured a sensationalist article on Dr Eli Rips, outlining how he had helped Michael Drosnin crack encrypted prophecy in the *Torah*. Here is an extract of that article: "...to find the Bible code, Dr Eli Rips first eliminated all the spaces between the words and turned the entire original Bible into one continuous letter strand, 304,805 letters long. In doing that, he was actually restoring the Old Testament to what some believe was its original form. According to legend, it was the way Moses received the Bible from God - 'contiguous, without break of words'. We should remember that the Ten Commandments are also known as the Ten Words. The computer then searches the strand of letters for names, words, and phrases hidden by a particular skip code, which is best explained by reading the following paragraph, starting at the first letter, and skipping every three letters: 'Rips ExplAineD thaT each code is a Case Of adDing Every fourth or twelfth or fiftieth letter to form a word.' The hidden message is READ THE CODE. The program starts at the first letter of the Bible, and looks for every possible skip sequence -words spelled out with skips of one, two, three, all the way up to several thousand. The computer then cuts the letter strand into rows of equal length, and stacks them one upon another, so that the hidden word appears vertically, or diagonally, with each letter highlighted." Suffice it to say at this early stage that only time will tell if Dr Rips and Michael Drosnin are correct in their analysis of the Jewish grammarians' work. In the meantime, allow me to gather some of the many ancient, medieval, and contemporary overt prophetic utterances, which like the alleged Bible enciphering, also appear to predict the imminent collapse of the present world order.

The Central American Maya predicted: "Every age must come to its final end. Each age brings with it people, who like the last, will also be destroyed as our very own age will also be in due course. The rain-serpent, reaching across the firmament, will deliver torrential rains, the sun and moon doing likewise. The

ancient goddess waits, with her tiger claws, the crossbones –the emblem of death, adorns her skirt, and a crown of live serpents worn upon her head. She halts the waters temporarily, until the black god steps out, ready to destroy us all and on his fearsome head an owl screeches in fury.” Also in Central America, the Aztecs taught of the existence and destruction of four suns before our own. About the fifth sun -our present sun- they wrote: *“...now we live in the age of the fifth sun, which is our own, the sun of the centre, the sun of earthquakes, which will destroy us in the end, if we let it -if we cease to try to redeem ourselves by work and sacrifice.”* The Okanaga, a North American Indian tribe, insist: *“In time to come, the lakes will melt, the foundations of the world and the rivers will cut the world loose. Then it will float and that will be the end of the world.”* In Brazil, Xingu legend has it that *“Finally, Sinoa showed the Javuna visitor, an enormous forked stick that supported the sky saying, ‘the day our people die out entirely, I shall pull this down, and the sky will collapse and the people disappear. That will be the end of everything.”* The Egyptians also anticipated a final destruction: *“...furthermore, I shall destroy all that I have created, and the earth will cease, becoming but a deep abyss and a flood in its primeval chaos, and I, remain together with Osiris.”* Indian literature advises us to *“Listen how Brahma, who is eternal and undecaying, without beginning and without end, repeatedly creates and destroys all creation. When his day expires and night comes, he longs for sleep, and at such a time he urges the being called Maharadh, one conscious of great powers, who having assembled himself in the form of hundreds and thousands of rays, is then divided into a dozen portions each resembling a blazing fire, and so consumes with his energy the four kinds of created beings. All mobile and immobile creatures thus destroyed within the twinkling of an eye, the earth is left as bare as a tortoise shell. Then Rudra of immeasurable sight first swiftly overwhelms the earth with water, then creates the Yuga fire which dries up that water. Then comes the mighty wind, immeasurably powerful in his eight forms. Having swallowed up that blazing fire with its seven flames, he courses in all directions, upwards, downwards, across every part. Then an immeasurable space swallows up that transcendent wind, then the mind cheerfully swallows up the immeasurable space, then*

consciousness - the Lord of all creatures, swallows up the mind and is in turn swallowed by the soul that knows past, present and future, which soul or universe is swallowed at the last by Brahma -Lord of all things. His hands and feet extend over every part. His eyes and head and face are everywhere, his ears reach every place, he overwhelms all things. He is the heart of all things and he is the measure of a digit of a thumb. That infinite and supreme soul that utters Lord, he swallows up the universe and falls asleep at last.” The Emerald Tablet includes: “...when mankind will once again conquer the ocean and fly in the air on wings like the birds (airplane?), when he has learned to harness the lightning (electricity?), then shall the time of warfare begin. Great shall the battle be between the forces, great the warfare of darkness and light...Weapons of force (nuclear?) shall wipe out the Earthman, until half of the races of men shall be gone.” Line 206-13 of the *Sibylline Oracles* of Lower Egypt, warns the Indians and Ethiopians to beware of a coming “great heavenly fire on earth and a new nature from the fighting stars, when the entire land of the Ethiopians will be destroyed in fire and wailing”.

Evidently, apocalyptic prophecy occurs in the mythology of the most diverse areas of the globe. In fact, many extra-canonical literatures further raise a date for this impending oblivion.

According to some well informed sources, the internal geometry of the Great Pyramid at Gizeh, Egypt, reveals the great Messianic Plan later announced in most ancient religious texts. From the advent of man coded in at two million years ago, to his spiritual revival, commencing, precisely on December the 24th, 2,010, all is reputedly prophesied. Those who wish to delve into pyramidology in this context should refer to books currently on offer, among which should be found Peter Le Mesurier’s excellent essay entitled *The Great Pyramid Decoded*. The abrogated Jewish *Book of Esdras*, one of the Apocrypha books included in the *Septuagint*, predicts: “mighty clouds (mushroom clouds?) shall rise to destroy earth and its inhabitants.” Jesus, we must remember, prophesied that the Final Judgement would follow the military siege of Jerusalem. To Tibetans, the Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of Buddhism, and this nation’s

prophecy warns that the end of the present world shall come to pass after the 14th Dalai Lama is forced into exile. Curiously, the present Dalai Lama, the 14th spiritual leader, was forced into exile on the 17th March, 1959, nine years after China invaded Tibet. According to a 5th century B.C. Buddhist prophecy, Buddhism itself will last a further 2500 years, that is to say, it is predicted to crumble any time now. Basing his calculations on the past destructions of earth as reported by Solon, Heracles of Ephesus, a philosopher of the Greek *Ionoan School of Thought*, publicly concluded that the final catastrophe would take place at the end of the 2nd millennium. The *Puranas*, moreover, point to the annihilation of humanity at the end of the 4th yuga, which is, in fact, now drawing to a close. The only partly deciphered Mayan Calendar has often been claimed by experts to be the most accurate. It is said to provide the date for the advent of modern man (the equivalent of 3114 B.C.), and to further predict his annihilation on the 21st December 2010 A.D. Interestingly, this is also the time predicted by scientists for a potentially catastrophic solar storm. Two ancient South American peoples, the *Toltecs*, meaning 'the Builders', and the later Aztecs, predicted that the next world devastation would strike during this present era. The Hopi, a North American Indian tribe, have a legend about the Earth having once faltered in its spin, unleashing a tidal surge that drowned the old world and produced the present. Like some Asian nations, the Hopi also maintain that the world has seen a total of three similar natural catastrophes to date, and that the fourth and final one will strike around the end of the second millennium A.D.

Other later international seers, who could not have known of the Bible code and prophecy in question, also had their say. In the 11th century A.D., for instance, St. Malachi, an Irish monk, would attain fame for his ability to foretell future events. Among these is the Final Judgement predicted for the end of the second millennium. During the Middle Ages, Mother Shipton published poems that centred on the final cataclysm at the end of the 21st century, and Nostradamus, the Jewish doctor and astrologer, envisioned some sort of world upheaval around the year 1999. More recently, Jules Verne and H.G. Wells envisioned a flagitious future, most of which has unfortunately come true.

The list is long. Evidently, submissions of dates for the supposedly ominous Final Age also abound in international literatures.

The occupation of prophecy had formed an integral part of ancient fertility worship millennia before being adopted and sophisticated by many nations, particularly Israel, whose prophecy and divination would eventually be elevated to divine status. The ability to diagnose disease and the skill to identify and manipulate curative herbs, together with the expertise at anticipating the weather, were the qualifications necessary to join the ancient circle of prophets. Indeed, when these two talents had combined successfully, the ancient practitioner were hailed both as prophet and healer, the word 'prophet', as we have already noted, flowing precisely from the Sumerian A-ZU, or IZU, from which also develops *essene*, meaning, precisely, 'healer', or 'life-giver'. About the Essenes, and although much later, the Romanised Josephus confirmed that they had been concerned with the welfare of the body as conducive to the purification of the soul, and that for this purpose they had investigated the properties of herbs and stones. The evidence so far unveiled indicates that only prophylactic and meteorological concerns comprised the prophet's earliest tenure.

In the Middle East, prophecy had been traditionally delivered in two ways; consciously by the astrologers and magicians, and unconsciously by those, who, like the biblical prophets, acted under what is called Divine Inspiration. About the latter type, Pliny explained that *"those who have anointed themselves with the juice of the whole plant, mixed with oil, become more popular and obtain their wishes more easily...so great are its health-giving properties that some have called it Chreston."* The judgemental Plato soberly joined in the criticism, adding: *"No man when in his senses, attains prophetic truth and inspiration... only when demented by some distemper or possession...and are not to be called prophets; they do not know that they are only repeaters...and are not to be called prophets at all, but transmitters of visions and prophecy."* Cicero, however, pontificated: *"And what can be more divine than the exhalations of the earth, which affect the human soul so as to enable it to*

predict the future.” The *De Occulto Philosophia*, written during the Middle Ages, includes Cornelius Agrippa’s words: “...*the human soul possesses, from the fact of its being of the same essence as all creation, a marvellous power. One who possesses the secret is enabled to rise in science and knowledge as high as his imagination will carry him; but he does that only on the condition of becoming closely united to this universal force...Truth, even the future, can be then made ever present to the eyes of the soul; and this fact has been many times demonstrated by things coming to pass as they were seen and described beforehand.*” It appears that even at this early stage in recorded history prophecy was already being hotly discepted.

Divination by astrology was always the most popular medium. It is the study of the supposed influence of the stars and other heavenly bodies on human affairs. From the movements of celestial elements, astrologers claim that they can deduce the fate of nations and the characters and fortunes of individuals. Much later, from Isaiah we learn that contemporaries of his were astrologers and stargazers, who prognosticated regularly on a monthly basis. Elsewhere, in the Bible, we read that God “*gave the stars for a sign*”, and about Nostradamus, we know that he had once explained that it was through astrological revelation that the future would often unfold before his very eyes.

Divination by numerology was once a matter of high mysticism. The ancient Chaldean Magi had organised a system of belief based on the universe being inter-connected, and Pythagoras, a pivotal figure of the era, would later elaborate that it was possible to express all things and relationships between them mathematically. Encouraged by public ignorance on this subject, astute opportunists promptly focused on it, only to zoom out and claim that all could be reduced to the level of numbers, and that such things as names, dates, and keywords could thus very well reveal the future. Indeed, today’s date -August 12th, 1,997- for instance, may be reduced thus: 6 for August (the 6th month), 3 for the date ($12=1+2=3$), and 8 for the year ($1+9+9+7=26=2+6=8$), the total being $6+3+8=17=1+7=8$. This done, the traditional meanings of number 8 are supposed to unfurl this particular date’s prospects.

As already remarked upon, the codes recently discovered in the Bible have induced the hasty conviction that they are God-inspired. Only Yahweh -some argue- could have masterminded such impossibly intricate work. However, to attribute the said production to the tribal God of Armies would be absurd to the extreme and would carry little weight if any at all. The reality is that in both its overt and covert aspects, the religious Bible springs mostly from the very depths of man's soul, and it is thus, demonstrably, earthly in origin. It is not unusual, however, to find the occasional biased scientist, attempting to validate such things as the biblical Creation, and to lecture on absolute truths, for instance, when man has not yet ventured beyond his nearest celestial neighbour -the moon. Even if the former were correct, it would still not prove that the universe is the work of Yahweh as Bible enthusiasts seek to propagate, or indeed the work of any other deity. The fact that the Bible evinces a degree of scientific knowledge and numero-grammatical wizardry at a time when man is believed to have been immersed in ignorance, may well have another more rational explanation. Somehow and sometime in the distant past, mankind may have indeed possessed advance knowledge that it subsequently lost. A simple cursory glance at ancient Egypt's sublime architecture could be enough to tantalize the most obstinate of sceptics. Bearing this in mind, it would not be overly surprising to discover astounding facts not only in the *Torah*, but also in foreign literatures as we have seen. All may well be residual of either a knowledgeable proto-civilization that may have escaped our notice or, and less likely perhaps, of early human interaction with a superior extra-terrestrial intelligence.

Indeed, whilst the *Emerald Tablet*, the *Book of Esdras*, and the biblical books of *Ezekiel*, *Zechariah*, and *Revelations*, among others, all describe what appears to be an immense future atomic holocaust and its deadly radio-active fallout, the Indian *Maha-Bharata*, in its sections *Mausala Purva* and *Drona Darva*, equally describes, although in greater detail, a similar apocalyptic scenario. This one, however, appears to be not a prophesy, but an actual pre-historic event: "*A projectile charged with all the power of the Universe, an incandescent column of*

smoke and flame as bright as 10,000 suns, rose up in all its splendour...it was an unknown weapon, an iron thunderbolt, a gigantic messenger of death which reduced to ashes the entire race of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas....the corpses were so burned as to be unrecognizable. Their hair and nails fell out, pottery broke without apparent cause, and the birds turned white. After a few hours, all foodstuffs were contaminated...To escape from this fire, the soldiers threw themselves in streams to wash themselves and their equipment." The Ramayana includes another out-of time projectile so powerful that "it could destroy the earth in an instant. It was a great soaring sound in smoke and flames...and on it sits death." Also in the Ramayana, we find an amazing passage on aerial craft: "...Later Rama climbed aboard the craft which was called Pushpaka, and to depart. The craft was large, brightly painted and self-propelled. It had two decks, many windows and cabins. As it lifted off majestically, into the air it gave forth a melodious hum." These flying machines were the 'vimara', which could "move in the sky from place to place, country to country, world to world... They do not break, and cannot be divided or destroyed. They stand still in the air, they disappear."

Who, then, were these super-beings involved in such awe-inspiring prehistoric ballistics and aviation? Despite the historical arson of complete libraries in Constantinople, China, Carthage, South America, and the celebrated collection at Alexandria in particular -where more than 700,000 scrolls were reportedly destroyed by Arabs in 641 A.D., and where some of the evidence would have perhaps lain- some other intriguing literary fragments have survived the arsonists and, albeit dimly, they nevertheless do shine some further light on the subject.

For instance, the Assyrian King Ashurbanipal appeared to know: "I understand the enigmatic words in the stone carvings from the days before the Deluge." Interestingly, and according to a history of ancient Egypt written by Masoudi, a medieval Coptic historian, the two great pyramids commonly attributed to Cheops and Chaphren were built by Surid, one of the kings of Egypt "before the Flood" (meaning, either before the last recorded ice-age, or immediately after it, which would make the pyramids

10,500 years old, this being the approximate time of the end of the last ice-age and the ensuing incessant downpours), who had erected these as a result of prophetic dreams on the drowning of mankind. Although no less puzzling, and contradicting the above, another ancient Egyptian tablet indicates that Isis had made a covenant with the gods for the construction of the pyramids. About this, furthermore, the Egyptian treatise known as the *Virgin of the World*, declares that Isis and Osiris had been sent to provide mankind with the arts of civilization, and that Thoth had been a representative of an unknown race of super-beings tasked with teaching mankind the arts of civilization. This treatise concludes: "...with charge unto his kinsmen of the gods to keep sure watch, he (Thoth) mounted to the stars." Manetho, the Egyptian priest-historian, is quoted by the neo-Platonist Iamblichus as saying that Thoth had produced 36,525 books of wisdom that were then bequeathed to the Egyptians as the *Hermetic Writings*, this being a figure identical to the number of primitive inches in the Great Pyramid's designed perimeter, incidentally. According to some records then, Isis, Osiris, and Thoth are the alleged founders of civilization in Egypt.

As far as Sumeria is concerned, Tablet VI of the *Enuma Elish* mentions the *Anunnakis*, the Fifty Gods, who "*fell from heaven*" to educate and marry the Sumerians. These gods were the children of *An*, or *Anu*, the Great God, meaning, precisely, 'heaven', whence the Cult of Anubis, one of the two oldest Egyptian cults, and the very reason for its connection with Sirius. Although extremely conservative regarding the date of the Egyptian cultural explosion, according to some, in his book *Archaic Egypt*, Professor W.E. Emery wrote: "*At a period approximating 3,400 B.C., a great change took place in Egypt, and the country passed rapidly from a state of advance Neolithic culture with a complex tribal character to two well organised monarchies/kingdoms (Lower and Upper Egypt). Just then, the art of writing appears. Monumental architecture and arts and crafts developed to an astonishing degree. All achieved within a short period of time, for there appears to be little or no background to these fundamental developments in writing and architecture.*"

The *Fragments of Berossus* includes the Babylonian tradition that civilization was originally founded by aquatic creatures known as the *Oannes*, the *Musari*, and the *Annedoti*: “*In the first year there made its appearance (from a part of the Erythraean Sea which bordered upon Babylonia) an animal endowed with reason called Oannes.*” According to the account: “*the whole body of the animal was like that of a fish; and had under a fish’s head another head, and also feet below, similar to those of a man, subjoined to the fish’s tail. His voice too, and language, was articulate and human; and a representation of him is preserved even to this day. This Being in the day-time used to converse with men; but took no food at that season; and he gave them an insight into letters and sciences, and every kind of art. He taught them to construct houses, to found temples, to compile laws, and explained to them the principles of geometric knowledge. He made them distinguish the seeds of the earth, and showed them how to collect fruits; in short, he instructed them in everything which could tend to soften manners and humanize mankind. From that time, so universal were the instructions, that nothing has been added material by way of improvement. When the sun set, it was the custom of this Being to plunge again into the sea, and abide all night in the deep; for he was amphibious.*” In Slavonic mythology, we come across the amphibious *Rusalki* creatures, and a similar Greek legend speaks of the *Chimaeras* as monsters composed of incongruous parts. These are reported as having the head of a lion, the body of a goat and the tail of a serpent. The biblical *Ezekiel*, as we all know, was himself visited by some bizarre hybrid creatures.

The case for an intelligent people in our prehistory is too compelling to dismiss lightly. Judging by the foregoing literary evidence alone, it would be prudent to consider that at best, Bible enciphering is but one further addition to an already lengthy list of universal enigma.

Irrespective of the fashion in which it is delivered, universal prophecy in general and the biblical in particular, as we have read, would seem to revolve mostly around the supposedly ominous end to the present age and, in a broad sense, the subsequent emergence of a new global order. Some could be

excused for assuming that this new era -the predicted Age of Enlightenment- relates to today's world of technology, and that the spotless Promised Land could well be referential to planet Mars. After all, some ancient literatures point to a worldwide catastrophe caused by fire, and experts are today telling us that unless remedied, global warming is capable of consuming us even before the resulting melting Arctic ice unleashes a lethal tidal flow to surge across the earth's cortex and cause the globe to possibly falter in its spin and, given the right combination of factors, even change its present polarity. Although terra-forming would need to precede our presence there, Mars could, nevertheless, ultimately emerge as a viable refuge. 2020, we should bear in mind, is the date that NASA scientists are venturing for the first manned operation to Mars, a time which fits in well with the universal predictions for the dawn of a new world. Nevertheless, and despite the compelling evidence to the contrary just examined, it would be wise to note that the future does not exist, and that it is therefore impossible to see it. Although he may profess to visualize it, the fact of the matter remains unchanged. The plain truth is that humanity could never possibly experience beyond its present, and that only tomorrow will indeed unravel today's future.

Before closing, let me dwell briefly on Bible code once again. A code, by definition, is a system of prearranged symbols, signs, and numbers by which messages can be communicated secretly. The prerequisites for producing numerically encoded text are: 1- to create an alphabet. 2- to apply a numerical value to each and every character that comprises this alphabet. 3- to write a text, employing this alphabet to encode it. This sequence of action is significant, for it exposes the relative recency of the final rendition of the Hebrew Bible.

The Hebrew *Pentateuch*, the alleged delivery of Moses around 1500 B.C., incorporates at least one such covert numeric system which, as already examined in the preceding chapter, runs in uninterrupted sequence through the five books of the *Torah*, the *Prophets*, and the *Writings*. Among others, Michael Drosnin, the co-discoverer of Bible code and an apparent believer in the Bible's infallible chronological accuracy, therefore assumes that

the same is over 3000 years old. This, however, would be impossible for various significant reasons that I will now labour.

Firstly, and about the five books that compose the *Torah*, it would be important to note that these could not have originated in the Hebrew language if the date for the same, that is to say, 1500 B.C., is insisted on as correct. Amazingly, it is Archbishop Ussher's date for the fantastic epic of Moses that has led scholars to date Hebrew to 1500 B.C. If, as reported, Moses had written and encoded the present *Pentateuch* in Hebrew for the people of God way back during the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C., it would mean both, that the Hebrew alphabet was extant at the time, and that its 22 characters already incorporated a system or code of numeric value. But this, however, would be a fallacious claim, because there is no evidence to support that Hebrew, the Speaking Face of the Heart and Holy Tongue, according to rabbis, existed beyond the 10th century B.C., this being the origination date of the still extant *Gezer Calendar* inscribed in old Canaanite Hebrew. That the *Torah* in its present literary and grammatical state is not 3000 years old gathers credibility when we consider that the vocabulary, phraseology, and literary style employed in its rendition are no different to those used in the *Writings* reportedly completed in 200 B.C. The tripartite Old Testament actually evinces no linguistic difference between these sections as would certainly be the case were it the direct work of many generations of writers as is unanimously proposed. If the biblical Hebrew had not changed since 1500 B.C., how, then, could Aramaic -a language that developed as from the 10th century- be commonly said to have influenced the Hebrew of the Old Testament? Again, it is this unchanging literary style and structure evident in the Bible that has moved linguists to claim that this language has hardly evolved since its inception and that the 21 redactors involved in the rendition of the Old Testament spanned over a period of 1500 years. However, the type of code in the Bible, coupled to the fact that its three main sections are both conceptually and spatially linked, indicate that only after the incorporation of the *Writings* to the Hebrew Testament could this codification have been possible to apply. Perhaps, we should now note that the first drawn list of the Old Testament books

comes from Melito, Bishop of Sardis, as late as 170 A.D. The square-based character that composes the present Hebrew alphabet and religious Testament, the *Masoretic Text*, we should note, did not exist before 200 B.C., when only the Paleo-Hebrew Script, comprising the horny-type characters was in use. The longest surviving example of this latter script is the *Nash Papyrus*, which includes the Decalogue, and which has been dated to the 1st century. But it was now, in the 2nd century B.C., and as had happened to its Greek counterpart centuries earlier, that the present rectangular-type Hebrew alphabet (the Masoretic Text) was introduced and subsequently numerically-valued. Secondly and as already discussed, most of the religious concepts that adorn and divinize the encoded Book of *Genesis* are actually also allegorical of the universally predicted Messianic Age, which would have reached the nation of Israel during, or shortly after her Babylonian internment. Interestingly, recent NASA tests on the *Dead Sea Scrolls* (a find that comprised precisely 175 copies of Bible books that date to between 150 B.C. and 100 A.D.) show this work to be somewhat of a palimpsest. Indeed, evidence collected from these sources actually reveals that the ancient books of Judaism were still at hand at the time of the Roman devastation of Jerusalem, the definitive production of the Hebrew Bible it would appear, having not yet quite commenced. It would seem, at least from what has been explicated here, that the final and complete 3-part rendition of Jewish religious canon is far more recent than previously believed.

Importantly there is yet no scholarly consensus as to when the Jewish canon was finally set, because incomprehensively enough, no-one seems to have stopped to think that if the Judaeo-Christian written expositions actually veil the same astounding arithmetical structures, both testaments having in fact reportedly employed the number 7 in exactly the same way and context, further according with each other mathematically, it must be because the final Christian expositions were revised and completed in the 4th century to include the same numeric code evident in the Hebrew Bible already in place for more than 300 years. As token of gratitude for their co-operation, the resident Pharisees were granted permission to canonize their previously

censored scriptures, thereafter also receiving, importantly enough, the blessings of the new and all-powerful Roman Catholic Church in appreciation. That the compilers of the New Testament were indeed privy to the arithmetical code present in the Hebrew equivalent there can be little doubt, especially when we consider that the New Testament's four sections; the four Gospels, *Acts*, the Epistles, and *Revelations*, together with the Old Testament's eventual three, that is, the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Writings*, actually represent the definitive *seven* part Bible.

Conclusion

As discussed, the fear and despair of south-western Asian primitive agriculturists together with their unrestricted ingestion of psychogenetic botanicals, may well have engendered the first notions of a heavenly intelligence. This, it seems, was followed by the deification of the area's climatic characteristics which, once established, were manipulated and made to descend to earth, subsequently anthropomorphised and thereafter subjected to the same joy and anguish experienced by mere mortals. In some cases, these gods veered from frightening cruelty to absolute goodness until ultimately condensed into one supreme god, whose increasing wisdom, compassion, and love would filter down to Israel, for instance, charting a new religious course that would become fundamental to this nation's transition from savagery. Gradually, the god was dehumanized and, finally, considered pure spirit and, ironically enough, as incognoscible and unapproachable as the celestial force that had originally frustrated the delusional agrarian fraternity. Evidently, the Judaeo-Christian expositions are fact and fiction conjoined, representing a cleverly woven multi-religious tapestry that was ultimately legitimized, particularly by the Hebrew Old Testament.

Indeed, most pagan traditions include at least one deity, a cosmogony, a variety of epics and legendary characters, and a religious system that often share essential views on God and worship. The act of adoption and adaptation of foreign deities and their laws was common throughout the entirety of Asia during the latter half of the first millennium B.C., and, according to what has been expounded in this essay, Israel had certainly been no exception. The foregoing comparative exercise shows quite clearly how the Old Testament borrowed heavily from external sources, the very Jewish deity himself, ultimately becoming a type of divine hybrid composed of all the main distinguishing and tested features of many of his foreign fabled counterparts. The foregoing evidence definitively relegates the biblical celestial vision to the realm of sheer fantasy.

Philology uncovers the root meaning of words, whilst etymology discloses their development at the hands of their employers. Similarly, scriptures unveil much of the ancient minds and souls that produced them. Mostly plagiaristic and met-empirical as shown, the Israelite canon completed after the Roman invasion of Jerusalem is thus hardly representative of the ancient Jewish religious psyche. Conclusively, the Jewish Testament, in its broad religious context, is history and myth intertwined, and a conflation of global fiction that was ultimately structured in part to secretly parabolise the ascent to a higher spiritual plain in the presence of God.

As for the biblical Promised Land, it is thus evident that it was always a spiritual abode, and if western diplomatic efforts do not succeed in luring Jews and Palestinians to a territorial settlement and a process of reconciliation and amnesty, this simmering conflict may finally boil over and, ironically enough, make good the prophesied end to the present world order.

Whilst it is undeniable that spirituality can afford unequalled therapeutic benefits to those who find it, it is also true that traditions will reveal that it was always alien to religiosity, the latter having only managed to mar human existence by breeding nationalism and brutality among nations. Perhaps, now that we are allegedly stepping over the threshold of the new Age of Enlightenment, we should undertake to sow the seeds of spiritual love and understanding.

