

AN APPROACH TO THE REVELATION OF JOHN

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DIFFICULT TIMES AND HOPEFUL LITERATURE

The book of Revelation belongs to a type of Jewish and early Christian literature called "Apocalyptic." The word *apocalypsis* in Greek is equivalent to *revelatio* in Latin which gives us the English word *revelation*. Many of these books were in circulation at the time of the early church and one of them (Daniel) had become part of the last grouping of books to be regarded by the Jews as part of the Old Testament. II Esdras is another Apocalyptic book, a part of the Old Testament Apocrypha. These books concern the future and are a little like the books of the prophets in the Old Testament. However, the form of their hope (visions and all sorts of fantastic imagery) and the nature of their hope (explained below) contained distinctive developments which went beyond the prophets. The prophets hoped for God's deliverance through human and historical forces and through human Messiahs, while Apocalyptic believed that the world had become so evil that only God's forces from heaven and a complete remaking of the world could make life into what God wanted it to be. Apocalyptic thought usually had several characteristics:

- 1) It talked a lot about the power of *Satan* in this world. In fact Satan is the ruler of this world, at least for this present Evil Age. Thus Satan in Jesus' Temptation experience can offer Jesus the kingdoms of this world. While Satan in Job was God's "district attorney", in Apocalyptic thought he became a fallen angel, against the background of Gen. 6 in which Judaism saw a fall of angelic beings. (In the NT see Jude vs. 6 and I Peter 3:18-20) To view Satan as world ruler shows how bad they thought life and world had become.
- 2) History was divided into at least *two distinct and separate ages*. This present evil age which God had abandoned to Satan and the eternal age to come when God would again become ruler over his creation.
- 3) There were *three worlds*. There was the upper world where God now rules and where angels are, along with some especially righteous humans who died and by-passed the lower world. There was this world which Satan now ruled. There was also the lower world, called *Sheol*, divided into places for the good and bad. To Sheol souls journeyed after they died (see II Esdras 7). The place for the good was sometimes called *Paradise* or *Abraham's Bosom*, while the place for the bad was called *Gehenna*, a word literally taken from the "valley of Hinnom" which was a valley below Jerusalem and which functioned as the city dump. In some literature the term Paradise was applied to the upper world.
- 4) There was often *hate for the enemies*, partially understandable because of suffering at their hands. Persons were urged to remain faithful to God and often this literature looked forward to the time when God would destroy their enemies. (see Rev. 19:11-21)
- 5) *History* was seen as working out very mechanically, just as if God had programmed a giant computer and now everything was going to work out just as set up. The concern of the authors and readers of this literature was to try to figure out the times when God's kingdom would be established by signs of the times and indications within Scripture and their visions.
- 6) Whereas revelation for the prophets was primarily a hearing of the word(s) of God, though visions are recorded in such as Isaiah and Ezekiel, in Apocalyptic literature there is extensive experience of *visions*. In official Jewish theology this time was a time when the Law was central and life was centered around interpreting the Law. Any contemporary experience of God or message from God was regarded with great suspicion. One can view the form of Apocalyptic as a rebirth of images from the Jewish psyche at a time when the imagination was denied. Some of these images come from images treasured within the Jewish tradition and reflected in OT literature. Others seem to be close to what the psychologist Carl Jung would regard as archetypal images, images giving expression to deep structures within the psyche reflecting the inherited experience of the human race.

- 7) This world and this age had become so bad that if anything was going to be done about it God had to *break-through from Heaven*, often making use of a heavenly Saviour, a "Man from heaven". This world, Satan, and all evil would be destroyed and a *new world* made.
- 8) God would have his leaders in the final struggle. The *Messiah* was often viewed as establishing a temporary kingdom since he was only human, at the end of which God's forces and God's "*Man from heaven*" would come. Satan would also have his representatives, including the *antichrist* (the one who was to stand over against the Christ, the Messiah). The idea of the "Man from heaven" was probably developed from Jewish interpretation of Gen. 1-3. Philo, a Jew in Egypt, understood that Gen. 1 was about the creation of an "ideal" heavenly Man, after the pattern of which the earthly "Man" of Gen. 2-3 was made. The earthly Man fell, but the heavenly Man was left as God's redeemer.
- 9) At the end there would be a *resurrection of the dead*. Here persons would receive new bodies in which to live. However, most Apocalyptic literature viewed this body as "spiritual", "like the angels", since the fleshly body was seen as greatly problematic, susceptible to sin, if not evil. (In the NT see I Cor. 15:42ff and Mk. 12:18-27) Until the resurrection they lived as disembodied souls in the underworld, though a few that were especially righteous went directly to heaven.
- 10) After the resurrection *God's judgement* would need to be faced, when God would hold persons accountable for what they did in the world. Often "salvation" in the New Testament is salvation from this final judgement.
- 11) Before the end actually came, things would get worse because of the struggles between Satan and his forces and God's people and forces. This period was technically known as the time of the "*Great Tribulation*" (Rev. 7:14). There would be signs on earth and in the heavens at the coming end (such as Rev. 6:12-17).

THE INFLUENCE OF APOCALYPTIC UPON CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

The Book of Revelation is a piece of Apocalyptic Literature. However, this is not the only book in the New Testament influenced by Apocalyptic thought. II Thessalonians is an Apocalyptic letter, jointly authored by Paul, Silas and Timothy, but likely written by Silas. The sermon of Jesus in Mark 13 predicting the fall of Jerusalem is often called "the Little Apocalypse." It has a parallel in Luke 21 and Matthew 24. In Matthew three parables about the coming of the end (and the use of the waiting period) are added in chpt. 25. In Luke 17:20-37 there is another Apocalyptic sermon of a different nature. Besides these distinctively Apocalyptic books and passages, it seems that Apocalyptic thought was so much a part of the world into which Christianity was born that its ideas appear in much of the New Testament literature. For example, the idea that Satan could offer Jesus the kingdoms of this world in the Temptation experience is affected by the views of Apocalyptic which saw Satan as the ruler of this world. Much early Christian expectation of suffering was affected by the Apocalyptic view of history which saw the period of the Great Tribulation preceding the end. In I Cor. 7 this is the reason that Paul advises Christians not to marry --- because of the difficulties of this time.

Judaism rejected Apocalyptic thought after the failure of the Kingdom of God to come in the Jewish revolts against the Romans in the first and second centuries. However, it is prevalent within Christian literature because this literature was written while Apocalyptic ideas were at their height. Christians always need to struggle with how to understand these hopes which have not, at least until now, found fulfillment. Apocalyptic is a form in which the faith and hope of the early church was cast. How seriously do we take this form? What can we learn from the hope that is expressed within it? What can we learn from the use of visions about the values of images as we cope with life?

As far as the book of Revelation is concerned, what happens to the meaning of the thought of this book once it is placed within the New Testament Canon, within the context of other New Testament literature? It can no longer be understood only in terms of itself, but its ideas become qualified by what else is in the New Testament. What is the symbolic significance of this book when it is placed at the end of the Canon?

It rethinking the value of Revelation and Apocalyptic, it is helpful to keep in mind the Gospel of John which did just that. In John there is a deemphasis of the concern for the future and an emphasis on what we possess in Christ in the present. The Gospel of John was written in its final form about the same time as the final form of the book of Revelation. Thus we see two quite different approaches existing at the same time in early Christian churches.

THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation is not only a book whose message is difficult to understand, but its structure and composition are difficult. One finds material which is quite "Christian" and other material which does not even mention Jesus. There seem to be materials which relate to three different historical periods. Some of the historical allusions seem to belong to the period before the Jewish war with the Romans. Whereas we know the Jewish Temple was destroyed in 70, the vision which predicts its destruction in 11:1-3 does not seem to know what actually happened, drawing primarily on what is said in Daniel. Some of the historical allusions, such as in 12-19, seem best understood in the context of the Jewish rebellion against the Romans (66-73), reflecting the conditions of the war and the destruction of Jerusalem. Others point to the situation of the Christian Church at the end of the first century when Christians were threatened with persecution during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian (e.g. chaps. 1-3 and 17:7-18).

There are not only several series of visions which seem to be repeated attempts to describe the final cataclysm, with variations, and the great difficulty in fitting all of the diverse materials into any integrated and cohesive scheme, but the last chapters contain two versions of the vision of the heavenly Jerusalem and an assortment of many short paragraphs or sayings in 22:6ff which seem to come from varied persons or sources.

The following description of Revelation presumes that it is composed of materials from several sources and has a *developmental history, containing both Christian and non-Christian or Jewish materials*. The non-Christian materials were used by the Christian communities much as O.T. prophetic materials were used and developed in a Christian direction by additions and modifications. The theories expressed here are rooted in the study of Revelation presented by J.M. Ford in the Anchor Bible Commentary. It is her conclusion, and subsequently mine, that major portions of this non-Christian or Jewish material in Revelation comes from John the Baptist. In John 1 it is affirmed that John the Baptist directed some of his disciples to Jesus, who then became Jesus' followers. They would have treasured John's teachings which then could have been used by early Christian churches at a time when they seemed relevant. The Jewish War against the Romans (66-73) would have provided such an occasion.

That the majority of Revelation contains non-Christian/Jewish material is evidenced by the way it differs from other distinctively Christian Apocalypses. II Esdras had a similar history, starting as Jewish Apocalyptic material to which a Christian beginning and ending was added in the first century. In the Christian Apocalypse the primary focus was on the *second coming of the Messiah*, Son of Man, bringing judgement and bliss, for the first coming had already occurred. There was little concern with cosmic or historical surveys, nor the two ages of Jewish Apocalyptic, for Christians already lived partially in the final age of history. Symbolic language and numerology decline and the Christian doesn't believe that one can calculate. Greek mythology affected the Christian literature while Babylonian and Persian affected the Jewish. Christian literature contained clear references to the life and teaching of Jesus. *In contrast to Jesus' message, the message of John and of Revelation are both about God's wrath and doom* It is to be noted that while "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" occurs 5 times in chpts. 1-3, these words do not occur at all in chpts. 4-11, and occur only 8 times in 12-22 (those references to Jesus in 12-20 could be removed without destroying the sense).

The Earliest Part: Chapters 4-11

These are regarded as being originally *tradition from John the Baptist* preserved within the Christian community by followers of the Baptist who became Christian. *Thus they originated at a time in history when the Baptist was active, contemporary to the ministry of Jesus*. These chapters do not mention the name of "Jesus". Chapter 11:1-3, which foretell the conquest of Jerusalem and the Temple by the

"nations", seem to derive their content from Jewish tradition, especially Daniel, and have no knowledge as to what actually happened when the Temple was destroyed (in 70) and afterwards. By the time that Revelation in its final form was written about 90, the Temple had already been destroyed for 20 years, not forty-two months. The "two witnesses" mentioned in 11:3 fit with the Essene (a Jewish sect) expectation of two Messiahs, and John the Baptist may have been associated with the Essenes.

There are interesting similarities between Revelation and the information about John the Baptist:

Image of the LAMB: This is applied to Jesus only in the John the Baptist traditions in the Gospel of John (Jn. 1:29, 36). Here John the Baptist identifies Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." John could have developed his understanding of this out of Is. 53:7, as Jesus' understanding of his suffering and sin-bearing probably also reflects Isaiah. In Revelation, though the Lamb has been slain and has ransomed people for God "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (5:9), it now becomes the conquering Ram of Apocalyptic literature, its "having been slain" not affecting its present mission of conquest.

"HE THAT COMES": This appears as a title for the Messiah in the N.T. sections related to traditions about the Baptist and in Revelation.

BAPTISM BY FIRE: This is seldom found in the N.T. except in passages about John the Baptist (who speaks of one coming to baptize with the Spirit and fire) and in Revelation where fire is often spoken of as descending upon humans to test them (e.g. Rev. 8:5).

BRIDEGROOM: Christ is not called the Bridegroom in Revelation, but the image of nuptial relations is used in 19:9, 21:9-14. In the N.T. the term "bride" is used only in Matt. 10:35, Lk. 12:53, Matt. 25:1; "bridegroom" is applied to Jesus only in texts related to the Baptist.

A TRANSLATION OF REVELATION 1:1-3

This passage may refer to John the Baptist. It can be translated:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show his servants what must happen soon, and he gave sign (of this) having sent (it) through his angel to his servant John (the Baptist), who bore witness to the word of God and the witness of Jesus Christ, which things he saw.

Blessed be the one who reads aloud and those who hear the words (some MSS read "the word") of prophecy and keep what has been written in it (the prophecy); for the time is near.

Comments:

This interpretation of the first three verses would fit with Ford's theory that much of the material of the book of Revelation originated from the followers of the Baptist. Though the introductory words only speak of "his servant John", without identifying which "John", many things said about "John" here could be related to the Baptist. It is important to note the similarity of the description of the "servant John" to the Baptist in the Prologue to the Gospel of John. Here John comes to bear witness in 1:6-8. John 1 also emphasizes John the Baptist's seeing the Spirit come on Jesus and pointing his disciples to Jesus. In the translation of 1:1-3 it is said that John bore witness to both the message he received from God and the witness of Jesus, "which things he saw".

The John mentioned in 1:4 and 1:9 would then not be the Baptist, but *another John on the Isle of Patmos*, in exile for his faith, who in 1:1-3 was acknowledging the relationship of the materials in his book to John the Baptist, much in the same way each of the Gospels starts with the story of John the Baptist and his relation to Jesus..

The Addition During the Jewish War: Chapters 12-22

These are basically *materials from a disciple of the Baptist* (who may also have been Christian), are added to chapters 4-11, and *seem to reflect the historical situation of the rebellion of the Jews against Rome in 66-73, Jerusalem being destroyed in 70*. It would be natural to assume that the materials from the Baptist and these other materials would have had special value for Christians during this very difficult historical period.

Final Additions: Chapters 1-3, 17:7-18, 19:9-10, 22:16-21

These are *the work of the "John on Patmos"*, including some Christian modifications in chapters 14-20 where Jesus name is added in synonymous parallelism (synonymous parallelism is the placing in a following line thoughts or words similar to those if the previous line, e.g. 17:6). In time they would be placed *during the reign of Domitian, perhaps about the year 90*.

1:1-3:22 - Christian beginning - Introduction and
Letters to 7 Churches

17:7-18 - Interpretation of the Beast with 7 Heads (emperors/kings)
which places the book of Revelation in its final
form in the time of Domitian

19:9-10 - Comment and doublet to 22:8-9

22:6-21 - Christian conclusion

OUTLINE

Chapters 4-11 TRADITION FROM JOHN THE BAPTIST

4 Vision: The Throne of God

5 Vision: The Lamb- Worthy to open the scroll of history - Creator of
a Priestly People

6-8:1 Vision: The Seven Seals

6:1-8 Four Horsemen: Conquest, Famine, War, Death

9-11 Call of Martyrs for vengeance - must await completion of their
number

12-17 Signs

7:1-8 Sealing of God's Servants for protection (144,000 out of 12 tribes)

9-12 Multitudes from every nation (Diaspora Jews
or Gentiles)

13-17 The White-Robed from the Great Tribulation

8:1 Silence

8:2-11 Vision: Seven Trumpets

8:2-5 Prayers of Saints ascend to God

6-12 Destruction of cosmic thirds: earth, sea, rivers & fountains, heavens

13 An Eagle - Woe!

9:1-12 Locusts from the bottomless Pit-torture humans without
the seal

13-19 Four angels kill 1/3 humankind

20-21 Unrepentent humankind

10:1-11 Angel with Scroll of Prophecy which is eaten by John

11:1-2 Court outside Temple to be given to Gentiles (Temple
is preserved - actually the whole Temple was destroyed in 70,
which would located this prophecy before its destruction)

3-13 The two witnesses (two Messiahs ? - the Essenes expected two)

14-19 Coming of the Kingdom and Heavenly Temple opened - "The
kingdom

of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord (God) and of his Christ..."

12-22:5 TRADITION FROM A BAPTIST DISCIPLE -- during the time of the Jewish Revolution

12 Woman (Israel), with symbols of priesthood, bears a child (the Messiah) and the Dragon (Satan) seeks to destroy him. The woman flees into the wilderness and God takes her child into heaven. The Dragon is defeated by Michael and is cast down to earth.

(vs. 13-17 describe conditions during the Jewish War, including the flight of the Zealots to Masada)

13 The Beast from the Sea (Roman Empire) and the Beast from the Land

(The beast from the land would seem to represent the Roman authority in Palestine and the image mentioned in 14-15 probably refers to the previous attempt of Caligula to have an image erected in the Temple.)

14 14:1-5 The Lamb and the "virgin" 144,000 who are the "first fruits" for God (the first part of the harvest)

6-11 Three Messages - an eternal Gospel proclaimed to all nations

-Fear God

-Babylon fallen

-God's wrath

12-13 Call for endurance-Blessing

14-20 Son of Man, Judgement - Winepress of God's wrath, Destruction of the City

15-16 Vision using Exodus themes: Seven Plagues/Bowls of Wrath

15:1-4 Song of Moses- and the Lamb

5-8 Tent of Witness opened

16:1-11 First five plagues

12-16 Kings from East, 3 demonic spirits, Armageddon

17-21 Fall of the Great City and the cities

17 Judgement of the Harlot "Babylon" seated on the Scarlet Beast with Seven Heads

The woman is Jerusalem, for this is the city that can be described as being unfaithful to God, according to OT tradition, not Rome. Some of the imagery is reminiscent of the symbols of the Jewish priesthood. Also it would not make sense to have the woman Rome seated on the seven hills of Rome, the seven heads of the beast. However, vs. 18 makes a later identification of the woman as Rome and would represent the period when under Domitian Christians could identify the Harlot with Rome.

vs. 7-14 are an interpretation of the seven heads of the beast. Five were, they are in the time of the sixth, one is to come, and then the eighth is a return of one of the seven. This interpretation indicates that the book was written during the time of Vespasian - the sixth emperor - with the fulfillment of the prophecies happening during the time of Domitian, the eighth, who was to be Nero Returned - the wounded one. (There were Roman stories about Nero not really being dead and going to return with the armies of the Parthians from the East, Rome's traditional enemy.) This interpretation was added to the final form of the book to reapply the material in 4-22 to the situation of the Christian churches in Asia at the end of the

first century (the time of the eighth: Domitian). (Much as the book of Daniel was written in the Seleucid period - 2nd cent BCE - to look like it was written during the Babylonian period - 6th cent. BCE. - predicting events in the Seleucid period.) Thus one may say that this supports the idea that 4-22 was originally assembled in the time of the 6th (Vespasian) but reworked in the time of the eighth.

- 18 Lamentation over the Fallen City
- 19 Heavenly Rejoicing, the Word of God on a white horse, and the Marriage Supper
- 20 The Intermediate Kingdom of the Messiah

20:1-3 Satan bound

4-6 First Resurrection of Martyrs as Priests -

Millennial Kingdom (Here the reign of the Messiah/Christ is future while for much of the N. T. church it was present in Jesus Christ - e.g. I Cor. 15:23-28)

7-10 Satan Unchained and gathers his forces Gog and Magog (Ez. 38-39)

11-15 Final Resurrection and Judgement

21-22:5 THE NEW CREATION

21:1- New Cosmos

2-4 New Jerusalem

5-8 I make all things new

9-27 New Jerusalem (The two descriptions of the New Jerusalem would seem to come from different sources. This vision is connected to the angels with the bowls of plagues in vs. 9.)

22:1-5 New Eden/Jerusalem

1-3; 22:6-19 JOHN OF PATMOS - added to the Apocalyptic prophecies of 4-22 during time of Domitian, while John was in exile on Patmos.

1:1-3 Introduction providing information on the origin of the prophecies in the book, perhaps referring to John the Baptist

1:4-8 Prescript of the letters
- John to seven churches, opening prayer/doxology, etc.

1:9-11 I, John
share tribulation, kingdom, patient endurance on Patmos - on account of word of God in Spirit on the Lord's day

To the seven churches

1:12-20 Vision of One like a son of man - the One who provides John of Patmos with the messages to the churches, who has freed us from our sins, is coming again, and now stands in the midst of his churches (lampstands), holding their destiny in his hand (the stars he holds stand for the angels of the churches, that is, their heavenly representatives).

2-3 The Letters

These letters follow a common pattern:

-To the angel of _____

-The words of him who (description of Son of Man from chapter 1)

- I know- for and against (problems and commendations)
- Call to repentance and threat
- He who has an ear, let him hear
- Promise- To him who conquers I will grant

2:1-7 Ephesus

Him who: 7 stars in hand, walks among golden lampstands
situation:

for: endurance, reject evil men, hate works of Nicolaitans

against: abandoned first love

promise: eat tree of life in paradise of God

2:8-11 Smyrna

Him who: first and last, died and came to life

situation: tribulation, poverty, slandered by

synagogue of Satan, to be tested by devil in prison

promise: crown of life

2:12-17 Pergamum

Him who: has sharp two edged sword

situation: Satan's throne, Antipas killed

for: did not deny faith

against: some hold teaching of Balaam and
Nicolaitans

promise: hidden manna and white stone with new name

3:18-29 Thyatira

Him who: eyes like flames of fire and feet like burnished bronze

situation:

for: works, love, faith, service, patient

endurance, many have not learned the deep
things of Satan

against: tolerate prophetess Jezebel

promise: given power over nations and the morning star

3:1-6 Sardis

Him who: has seven spirits of God and the seven stars

situation:

for: still a few unsoiled

against: soiled, dead

promise: white garment, book of life, confessed before the Father and angels

3:7-13 Philadelphia

Him who: holy, true one; has key of David

situation: open door, synagogue of Satan

for: kept my word and not denied my name, kept
word of endurance

against:

promise: pillar in Temple of God

3:14-22 Laodicea

Him who: the Amen, faithful and true witness, beginning of God's creation

situation: rich, prosperous

for:

against: neither hot or cold

promise: sit with Son of Man on his throne

[In 3:20 there is the famous passage: "Behold, I stand at the door and
knock..."]

(The words describing the "speaker" and the promises at the end of each letter provide rich material for
Christian reflection.)

PROBLEMS as reflected in the letters

- 1) Loss of enthusiasm 2:4, 3:1, 3:15

Prosperity 3:17

These issues portray the problems of the delay of the realization of God's kingdom and the institutional development of Christianity through which it began to adjust to its world and become more a part of it, probably losing some its original radical commitment

- 2) Synagogue of Satan 2:9, 3:9

The continuing controversy of Christianity with Judaism is reflected in both Jewish and Christian literature. The extreme nature of the attitude to Jews in Revelation may be due to the fact that, since it was now illegal to be a Christian in the Roman world, Jews could issue complaints against Christians and get them in difficulty with Roman authorities. It is important for Christians to recognize that these anti-Semitic attitudes were part of a historical conflict and are not God's word for us now.

- 3) Opponents within the community

Evil men and false apostles are mentioned in 2:2. Elsewhere the identification becomes more specific. The issue seems to focus around meat offered to idols and practicing immorality. The latter is probably to be understood religiously rather than sexually, in the light of the use of this term in O.T. prophets where unfaithfulness to God was compared to unfaithfulness to one's spouse. These issues concerned how Christians could relate to the Greco-Roman culture, whether they could attend celebrations and societies with their neighbors where such meat might be used. Syncretism "soiled" them (3:4). Those who advocated this, and subsequently closer relationship with their communities, were the Nicolaitans and followers of Balaam (2:14) and Jezebel (2:20), a prophetess. Balaam and Jezebel are probably not actually the names of persons at the time of John's writing, but were names from OT history which had come to symbolize the evil of opening oneself to the influence of foreign religions, and thus were applied to certain persons in the churches. (See Num. 22-24 where Balaam serves the Lord and 31 where he is regarded as betraying the Lord -- and I Ki. 16:31 and II Ki. 9:22,30 for Jezebel.) Compare I Cor. 8-10 where Paul also deals with the issue of meat offered to idols and note how differently he treats this.

Paul says that there is nothing wrong with meat offered to idols except as it raises issues for others. The author of the letters in Revelation would probably place Paul alongside the opponents he lists.

22:6-19 Conclusion - Various Sayings from Various Sources

6-7 Affirmation and Blessing

8-9 I John- a prophet

10-11 Don't seal the prophecy-time near

12-13 I am coming soon

14-15 Insiders and Outsiders

16 I Jesus

17 "Come!"

18-19 Warning

20 Promise to come

21 Benediction

DESCRIPTION OF THE HISTORICAL PROCESS IN REVELATION

Persons who develop historical schemes out of Revelation frequently presuppose that the book is a singular inspired production. Seeing the book as produced from various traditions in a historical process, including at least three historical stages, complicates this. Information contained in one tradition cannot be merely worked together with information from another. For example, the future nature of the Messianic Kingdom in chapter 20 cannot be easily fitted with the present nature of it in chapter 1 (where the Son of Man reigns NOW in the midst of his churches). Also the several series of seven visions describing sequences of events overlap. All that we can say is that those who seek to build a prophetic historical outline utilize the following:

The ascended Son of Man in the midst of his churches (1; cf. 14:15ff)
The figure of the LAMB -- with authority to open the seven seals of history (5)

Longing

Calls of martyrs for vengeance (6:9-11)
Prayers of saints (8:1-5)

The Time of Great Tribulation has arrived

White-robed (7:13-17)
Dragon, beasts and war (12-13)
Letters presume living in this time (2-3)
Satan falls (12)
Sealing of 144,000 (7:1-8; 14:1-5)

Processes

Seven Seals (6-7)
Seven Trumpets (8-11)
Temple given to Gentiles 42 months (11:1-2)
Two witnesses (Messiahs-?, 1260 days) (11:3-13)
War of Woman, Dragon, Beasts (12-13)
Satan cast down
Woman gives birth, child (Messiah?) hidden
Details of war described
Number of beast 666 (or 616)
Seven Plagues (styled after Exodus) (15-16)
Song of Moses
Armageddon - the final battle (16:12-16)
Judgement of Harlot (17-19)
Destruction of a world power
History described in terms of eight kings (17:7-14)
The Word comes from heaven (19:11-16)

The End (20-22)

Satan bound
First resurrection of martyrs
Millenium- Messianic Kingdom
Satan loosed

Gog and Magog
Second resurrection, Death and Hades destroyed
God's Kingdom (also 19: 11:15-19)
The New Jerusalem/Eden (21-22)

REFERENCES IN DANIEL 7-12 USED FOR DESCRIBING THE HISTORICAL PROCESS

[Christians have often made use of the indication of events and times in Daniel for predicting the future. Revelation also borrows from Daniel. References to Revelation are in bold type.]

- 7 2-12 Four Beasts (Rev. 13:1-4)
 Lion with eagle's wings
 Bear
 Leopard, 4 wings, 4 heads
 Beast with iron teeth, ten horns and a little horn
 (beasts are often used to describe kingdoms - see Rev. 13)
 9-10 Ancient of Days (God) **(Rev. 1:12ff)**
 13-14 One like a son of man to whom kingdom given **(Rev. 1:12ff)**
 15-28 Interpretation of above
 (Modern scholarship concludes that Daniel was written during the period of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, a Seleucid ruler of the second century B.C.E., who tried to proscribe Jewish religion. He is the little horn spoken of here. The Temple area was taken over for 3 1/2 years until the Maccabean revolution returned it to the Jews. This is the "time, two times and half a time" This is also referred to in 9:27; 12:7, 11, 12; 8:14, sometimes with other equivalents: 1,260 days, 1/2 week of years, 2,300 evenings and mornings, 1,335 days.) **(used in Rev. 11:3, 12:6,14)**
- 8 1-14 Ram and He-Goat
 - Ram's two horns broken by He-Goat, He-Goat's horn broken and four horns come from it, one a little horn which grew great
 -giving over of the Sanctuary for 2,300 evenings and mornings before restoration
 15-26 Interpretation
- 9 1-2 70 years before the end of Jerusalem's desolation (from Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10)
 3-19 Daniel's prayer of confession
 20-27 Interpretation of 70 years -- 70 weeks of years (490) from the word to rebuild Jerusalem after Exile, 1/2 week being the time of foreign rule of the Temple
- 11 Interpretation of History
 1-20 Five kings, with breakup of kingdom of the fifth (Alexander's) into four
 king of south (Ptolemies)
 king of north (Seleucids)
 21ff the contemptible person (Antiochus Epiphanes)
 30 ships of the Kittim (Romans) restrain (Antiochus Epiphanes restrained by Romans in Egypt)
 31ff profanation of Temple (cf. **Rev. 11:1-2**) --profanation of Temple referred to in each Daniel prophetic sequence)
- 12 1 Great Tribulation **(Rev. 7:13-17)**
 2-4 Resurrection of dead **(Rev. 20)**
 5ff How long?
 7 Time, two times and half a time
 12 1,335 days

HISTORY AND THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Roman History	Palestine	Christian History
500-30 B.C. Roman Republic	586-538 Babylon Rules Palestine (name Babylon used as a name for Rome in Rev.) 538-330 Persia Rules 330-168 Alexander the Great and the the remnants of his kingdom in Egypt (Ptolemies) and Syria (Seleucids) rule 167ff. Maccabean Revolt, Decline of Syrian Influence and Development of Hasmonean Rule (a Jewish Kingdom)	
49-46 Civil War 44 Death of Julius Caesar	63 Rome takes over Palestine and rules partly through local kings (the Herods) and through its own governors (e.g. Pontius Pilate)	5 B.C. Jesus is born 28-30 A.D. Jesus ministry - <u>John the Baptist</u> 31 Beginning of the Christian Church- Pentecost (Acts 2)
27 B.C.-A.D. 14 Augustus (rule of the Emperors begins) 14-37 Tiberius 37-41 Caligula 41-54 Claudius 54-68 Nero 68-69 Galba, Otho, Vitellius 69-79 Vespasian 79-81 Titus 81-96 Domitian	63-73 Jewish revolt against Rome Rome destroys Jerusalem in 70 A.D.. <u>Rev. 4-22 perhaps written at this time.</u>	31-65 Paul is converted and is active as a Christian missionary -most of Paul's letters written 49-62 64 City of Rome burns and Christians are blamed-persecuted under Nero 65 First story of Jesus life, Gospel of Mark, written 90 <u>Book of Revelation written about this time in its final form (during persecution under Domitian) by John of Patmos</u>
(Rome and her emperors are represented in much of the symbolism of chapters 13 and 17 in Revelation)		

This chart follows the theory that Rev. 4-11 comes from the preaching of John the Baptist, preserved in the early church. To this was added 12-22 during the years of the Jewish War with the Romans (66-73) in order to help Christians cope with this difficult period. The tragedies of this time, which included the destruction of Jerusalem, and was preceded by the persecution of Christians by Nero after the burning of Rome, would cause the author of Rev. 4-22 to feel that the time of the Great Tribulations had arrived and that the end must be near. His experience with Rome caused him to represent Rome as a Beast, quite contrary to what was said of Rome by Paul in Rom. 13, where the state is ordained by God. The last stage of Revelation was when John of Patmos added the seven letters of Rev. 1-3 and the conclusion of 22:6-21 to speak to the needs of persecution and social pressures during the time of Domitian. The various stages in the development of Revelation are marked above with underlining.

JEWISH UNDERSTANDING OF WORLD AND HISTORY - FIRST CENTURY A.D.

UPPER WORLD	GOD'S REALM	The HEAVENLY MAN (sometimes called "Son of Man")	HEAVEN COMES TO EARTH
THIS WORLD	Angels Sometimes especially righteous dead	SIGNS of approaching end	FINAL JUDGEMENT
Created by God, but now so bad it is seen as ruled by SATAN Affected by "elemental spirits," spiritual beings behind natural and astral powers	Final struggles between God and his representatives and Satan and his representatives	MESSIANIC KINGDOM - INTERMEDIATE KINGDOM	GOD'S KINGDOM (Old earth and heavens destroyed, new heavens and earth made by God)
Historical process indicates a worsening of conditions until	THE GREAT TRIBULATION	(Messiahs were human figures either of lineage of David or Aaron or Both. Some also believed a Prophet would appear. This was based on O.T. prophecy. Some saw God's Kingdom coming without Mess. Kingdom.)	
UNDER WORLD (SHEOL/HADES)		RESURRECTION of good dead to share in God's Kingdom and the evil dead to judgement.	Under World destroyed
Where most went when they died. PARADISE for the good GEHENNA for the bad			

At the time of Jesus Judaism was much influenced by the thought of Jewish Apocalyptic literature which had become much more pessimistic about the world and life than was the Old Testament. The world had become so bad it was ruled by Satan. No human process could save the world so human saviours (Messiahs) were only seen to have a part in a temporary or intermediate kingdom. Real deliverance came from Heaven through a heavenly "Man" (Gen. 1 was interpreted as speaking of a heavenly MAN while Gen. 2-3 spoke of his earthly copy). The old world is destroyed and a new one made when God takes over. The resurrection body is a spiritual one, like the angels, for the physical one has been proven inadequate. Examples of Jewish Apocalyptic literature are Daniel, Ezekiel (OT), II Esdras (OT Apocrypha) and Revelation (NT). Although Revelation is the primary example in the NT, there are many instances of the influence of this type of thought on the N.T.. It was the air which the N.T. writers breathed.

ISSUES IN REV. 20-22

There are difficulties in Rev. 20-22, though one must admit that the same difficulties reside in the rest of the book. What I have reference to is the problem of seeing the events described in any logical or chronological sequence and then the very nature of this material in the last chapters which seems to indicate a number of additions done at different times or by different persons. It is easier to indicate the problems than to offer a solution which has some probability.

chapter 19 ends with the beast (from the sea?) and its prophet (the beast from the land -- see chpt. 13) being thrown into the lake of fire and the rest of the opposition slain "by the sword of him who sits upon the horse" (the "Word of God").

20:1-3 This sounds as if chpt. 19 did not happen. Satan (whose representatives the beasts were in chpt. 13) is bound and a thousand year period is mentioned, though the millennium has not yet been mentioned. And the nations seem still to be around.

20:4-6 This describes the millennial reign of the Messiah (note that the name of Jesus is not mentioned here). [*Mille* is the Latin word for "thousand", for which the Greek is *chilioi*. Both terms are used theologically to describe the thousand year reign.] It is likely that this was developed from an interpretation of the seven days of creation. Each day was seen as a thousand year period, since a thousand years are as a day in God's sight. (II Peter 3:8; Ps. 90:4) That would mean that history was symbolized in the six days of creation, and the seventh was the millennial reign. The Messianic reign as a temporary kingdom resulted from the prophecies of the Messiah not being rejected as Judaism moved towards Apocalyptic. Though the Man from Heaven, the heavenly Adam, was needed to change the world, the Messianic prophecies were not rejected, but turned into a temporary kingdom. In II Esdras (7:28) it was four hundred years. The righteous and martyred dead are raised to reign with the Messiah.

This perspective does not fit with Rev. 1 or the whole of Christian faith, **for the Messiah has already come**. In Paul, I Cor. 15:20-28, Christ is described as subjecting all the cosmic powers to himself after his ascension, extending the Messianic reign **now** -- until he hands over everything to God.

20:7-10 After the Messianic reign Satan is loosed to deceive the nations (which are still around). The nations are named Gog and Magog. According to intertestamental interpretation of Ezekiel 38-39, Gog of the land of Magog becomes two persons. There is another surrounding of the holy city by the nations, and they are destroyed by fire and the devil is thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and its prophet were, to be tormented forever.

20:11-15 Then the throne of God appears (note the mystical vision of God's throne in chpt. 4), all the dead are raised for judgment, and Death and Hades (the place of the departed) are thrown into the lake of fire with the others and all those not in the book of life.

21:1-8 We now have a vision of the new heavens and earth, with the destruction of the old earth, heavens and sea (the negative and mysterious divider of heaven from earth). The new Jerusalem appears as a Bride adorned for her husband. God will dwell with his people and will wipe away their tears, abolishing death and mourning. The one on the throne announces the accomplishment of this as Beginning (creator) and End (goal, *telos*). The water of life is given freely to those who conquer. The ungodly are condemned to the lake of fire. It is then strange that the next section presumes that the vision of the heavenly bride had not occurred.

21:9-22:5 This vision is connected by the author with the vision of the seven plagues, since it is one of the angels connected with the plagues who invites the visionary to see the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. It is amazing that no incongruity is seen by placing this vision after another vision of the heavenly Jerusalem. The bride is not God's earthly people, but the heavenly city. The radiance, wall, gates, foundations, size and materials are then described in ways which build upon the twelve tribes, the twelve apostles, and the twelve stones of the high priest's breast plate. As in the previous vision, there is no temple in the city, for its temple is God who also becomes its light (no need of sun or moon). The glory of the nations will be brought into it by the kings of the earth, but nothing unclean.

Then we have added material which seems to derive from Gen. 2-3, the garden of creation. On each side of the river is the tree of life, with 12 fruits and leaves "for the healing of the nations." Nothing shall anymore be accursed, and the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it. And, again, no light or lamp is needed because God will be their light, repeating 21:23-24. In my poem on the Apocalypse I have suggested that 21:9-22:5 may be an addition of John of Patmos, representing a shift in thought from the wrath of God portrayed in the earlier material. Here the nations have a place, they are healed, and there is no longer anything accursed. A vision seemingly embodying the repentance of God's wrath.

22:6-7 An affirmation of the truth of this prophecy, and a blessing for those that keep the words of prophecy.

22:8-11 An angel places John with the prophets and asks that the prophecy not be sealed, for the time is near.

22:11-16 Here Jesus speaks and announces his coming soon for those who have the right to the tree of life. Those "outside" are described in terms reminiscent of 21:8.

22:17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And those who hear are asked to say, "Come." Let those who desire the free water of life, come. This sounds liturgical.

22:18-19 Anyone who adds to or detracts from the book is warned with judgment. Note that this curse has its counterpart in the blessing of 22:7.

22:20 He who testifies (Jesus - see my translation for 1:1-3 for "the witness of Jesus".) affirms his coming soon, to which the liturgical response is "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." (See the liturgical Aramaic prayer in I Cor. 16:22, "Maranatha".)

22:21 A concluding benediction.

It is hard to avoid the feeling much of chapter 22 consists of addenda by various persons. Some of this could have belonged to an earlier form of the book (e.g. the form of chapters 4-22 which came into being during the Jewish War in the late 60s CE).

THE ORIGIN OF A VISION REV. 1:12-17

How does a vision originate? One can only speculate on this. I would like to choose the vision in Rev. 1:12-17, the heavenly Son of Man, for this is an image in the undoubtedly Christian section of the book. Whatever Jewish antecedents it had, it would also have been shaped by Christian faith.

The supposition here is that the vision originates in the deep structures of the human psyche. Jung sees archetypes as part of this deep structure, but the imagic forms which the archetypes take are determined by what is available within experience and culture and has been introjected into the psyche. Thus we would suppose the psyche of John of Patmos to have absorbed the Jewish and Jewish Apocalyptic traditions and images which were part of his culture and religious background, besides being affected by the history through which he lived. We would also expect him to have absorbed certain elements of Christian tradition, though Revelation is sorely lacking in reference to Jesus life and teaching and the history of the early church.

John was in the Spirit on the Lords day (vs. 10). It is not clear what sort of practice or experience is meant. At least we can say that he understood himself to be in close communion with God. In such a moment the vision occurs in which he sees:

- seven golden lampstands
- in their midst one like a son of man
 - clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast
 - his head and hair are white as wool, white as snow
 - his eyes like a flame of fire
 - his feet like burnished bronze
 - his voice like the sound of many waters
 - seven stars in his right hand, sharp two-edged sword from his mouth, face like the sun in full strength

It would seem to me appropriate to assume that this happened to John as he indicated, that is, he did not think up and put together this vision. It happened to him from what was in him and whatever God was doing with him.

This vision seems to bear a striking relationship to material in Daniel and Ezekiel. In trying to indicate similarities, it is important to note that we cannot without a doubt establish the O.T. text familiar to John. It could have been the Hebrew, Aramaic (then in the form of an oral Targum), or Greek textual tradition -- and we can't be absolutely sure of the first century text of any of these versions.

Let us look first at Daniel 7. Here, after the initial vision of the four world kingdoms in the form of beasts, we come to 7:9-14. This begins with a vision of God, "one that was ancient of days" followed by the coming of "one like a son of man", to whom dominion is given over all peoples. In Daniel this "son of man" was not "the Son of Man" in later Apocalyptic, but was portrayed as having a human appearance in contrast to the beast-like appearance of the previous world powers.

The Daniel material seems to become very important as a basis for Apocalyptic predictions in later Apocalyptic. While in Daniel the "son of man" is only one from heaven with a human appearance, and while in Ezekiel the term "son of man" is applied largely to the prophet himself, in later Apocalyptic it is developed as "the Man from Heaven". This seems to be based on speculation about the creation narratives. Philo indicates that the "Man" of Genesis 1 was the ideal heavenly "Man", Adam, after the pattern of which (in Platonic fashion) the earthly humans in Gen. 2-3 were made. Though the humans of Gen. 2-3 went wrong, the heavenly Adam still remained to lead God's transformation of the world from heaven. Some think this is behind the Kenosis passage in Phil. 2:5ff. This Son of Man appears in the Apocalypse of Enoch and in II Esdras as "the Man", who is the son of God, whom God has been keeping in heaven. It is important to remember that in Aramaic and Hebrew "man" and "son of man" are really two ways of saying "man". Thus they are equivalents.

What the psyche of John borrows from Daniel is not precise, as is often true of visions and dreams. His description of "one like a son of man" is really derived partially from Daniel's vision of God:

As I looked, thrones were placed and one that was ancient of days took his seat; his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. (9-10)

In Daniel 10:2-9, Daniel has a vision after a fast which this time is of a man in heaven:

I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with gold of Uphaz. His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the noise of a multitude. (10:5-6)

In Ezekiel 1:26-28 a vision of God's throne is described where God appears in the likeness of a human form:

And above the firmament over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness as it were of a human form. And upward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were gleaming bronze, like the appearance of fire enclosed round about; and downward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him. Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.

All of these passages seem to contribute elements to the image that the psyche of John has constructed. To this we must add the possible influence of what Jung calls the archetype of the Self, the structure within the psyche which becomes the impetus and structure for wholeness. This archetype often borrows religious images for its expression. For Jung one of the primary expressions of the Self is Christ.

One has difficulty finding what of this image is influenced by the historical Jesus and the tradition about him. It is possible that elements of 17-20 come from Christian tradition. 17-20 do present the church's sense of the resurrected Christ who lives in their midst, their future in his hand ... as indicated by the interpretation of the "mystery" in vs. 20. It has sometimes been said that this vision reflects the Transfiguration of Jesus, but none of this imagery appears in the Transfiguration story. Certainly one can say that it reflects the church's faith in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus as event is reflected though the description of the Son of Man is post-ascension.

Though this section of the vision does not so specifically refer to the historical context in which John wrote, one must remember that this vision is prelude to what is said to the seven churches. Thus the vision originated within the context of John's exile and the tensions of the churches with the society in which they existed.

THE PRIESTLY COMMUNITY OF REVELATION

There are various understandings of the Christian community and various images used to describe it. In Revelation it is seen as a priestly community redeemed by the Lamb that was slain. This means that its life is focused around the worship of God and loyalty to God, whose transcendent reality is glimpsed at a number of points in Revelation. If John the Baptist was priestly in background, as indicated in Luke 1, and the Qumran community was priestly in background, this may explain the emergence of the priestly perspective in Revelation. (See other material for theory of the origin of Revelation, where the original tradition is viewed as coming from John the Baptist.) The only comparable use of priestly imagery in the N.T. is in Hebrews where Christ is seen as the High Priest, analogous to the Day of Atonement, who takes his own blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies. A priestly prophet in the O.T. is Ezekiel who prophesied the restoration of Israel and particularly of the Temple (chpts 40-47). Revelation borrows some of its imagery from Ezekiel.

Revelation has mystical qualities, helping the reader to enter into the heavenly realities portrayed by the authors. Scholars indicate mystical elements in Jewish Apocalyptic. With the ascendance of the Law in Jesus' day mystical experience was not appropriate. All truth was in the Law. However, there were still the needs for experience of the Transcendent. Thus mystical experiences were written in Apocalyptic literature as if they happened to Enoch, Adam, Moses, Ezra, persons from long ago. However, the reader could also enter the mystical experience through these "ancient visions."

[Please note that the following material is not written in poetic form to save space.]

Some key passages in presenting the priestly perspective:

1:5-6 Doxology

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

2-3 Note that there is a priestly concern for separateness and purity in the letters to the seven churches

5:9-10 New Song

Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth.

7:15 Those who in white robes have come out of the Great Tribulation:

...are before the throne of God and serve him day and night within his temple...

14:4-5 144,000 redeemed are virgins, have not defiled themselves with women, spotless.

Liturgical Materials:

4:8 Four living creatures - to God:

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!

4:11 Twenty-four elders - to God:

Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created.

5:9-10 Four living creatures and 24 elders, a new song:

See above.

5:12 Living creatures, elders and angels:

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!

7:10 Great multitude with white robes:

Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!

7:12 Angels, elders and living creatures:

Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.

11:15 Loud voices in heaven:

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

11:17-18 Twenty-four elders worship God:

We give thanks to thee, Lord God Almighty, who art and who wast, that thou hast taken thy great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but thy wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear thy name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.

14:1-5 144,000 sing the new song, with harpers.

15:3 The song of Moses and the song of the Lamb:

Great and wonderful are thy deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, O King of the ages! Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord? For thou alone art holy. All nations shall come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed.

18 Note the oratorio on the fall of the harlot Babylon

19:1-3 Great multitude:

Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just; he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants. ... Amen. Hallelujah!

19:6-8 Great Multitude:

Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure...

REVELATION AND SPIRITUALITY

I feel that the clue to the use of Revelation is to be found in its spirituality. Spirituality may be seen as a special and separate dimension of life having to do with that which transcends us (e.g. God) and that which has to do with personal piety and devotion. Thus if we approached the spirituality of Matthew, we could see it as having to do with obedience to Jesus as a giver of commandments and the practice of the cardinal areas of piety in Matt. 6: almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. Yet to do so would neglect Matthew's presentation of Jesus as one who calls for righteousness in all areas of life, and who sees righteousness as practiced before God, not humankind (6:1). Righteousness in 6:1 is often translated "piety", but this is misleading. For it concerns the whole of life and not merely almsgiving, fasting and prayer.

I would rather, then, see spirituality defined as the way all of life is lived before God, life lived with a conscious spiritual dimension. The character of one's spirituality is not merely determined by one's desire to acknowledge this, but all that one is as a human and all that constitutes one's historical context becomes a part of one's spirituality. Thus one might define spirituality as how one lives before God in the *force fields* of life, understanding force fields as constituted by all within and outside the person that affects the living of life.

When one considers the different authors, religious communities, historical and cultural contexts of the pieces of NT literature, it becomes clear that they have differing spiritualities which, like the different manifestations of the Spirit in I Cor. 12, all have their particular gifts to bear.

It is the task of many of us to be interpreters of the Word. What does this mean? Does it mean merely to seek to understand what the author intended? If the interpretive task is so simply framed, we neglect the complexity of the author's expression: that it arose out of the force fields of life in a time different than our own. We in our context need to seek to allow the experience of the author to come to expression and to affect our engagement with the force fields of our life, before God. The language of the writer is what linguistic analysis calls "primary language", language from the context of the writer which is borrowed to express the experience and soul of the writer, with little thought as to precision and logic in its meaning. It is convenient and available language, parabolic or symbolic in nature, not precise and scientific. Its being spoken may involve unconscious process as well as conscious. Of course, there are places in the New Testament where an author will use language with reflection upon its meaning, taking care to order and refine it. One might say that this is where proclamation turns into explanation, teaching, theology (a logos of God). Yet Paul, where this most frequently happens, recognizes the limits of our knowledge (I Cor. 13) and the foundational nature of the experience of Christ and the Spirit upon which we reflect. Communication, he says in I Cor. 2, happens from those who have the Spirit (the reality of God) to those who have the Spirit. Without the underlying reality the words have nowhere to point.

The Gospel of John is also helpful here. In the Departure Discourses (14-16) Jesus speaks about the role of the Spirit in the creative remembrance of the tradition about his life and sayings (14:25ff, 16:12ff). The tradition of Jesus is remembered creatively in such a way that its truth emerges in new forms of expression in the new contexts of the Johannine community, and God (the Spirit) is seen as involved in this process (as an example see John 2:13-22). The spirituality of the Johannine community is then the living of their tradition in creative tension with their present context and the leading of God.

DIAGRAM OF THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SPIRITUALITY OF REVELATION

Force fields of history, culture, tradition, **GOD**, psyche (including archetypal)
 (Those forces which operate upon the person from within and without and are part of the total "field" within which one lives.)

[The tragic nature of the times: in 60 BCE Rome conquered Palestine and the Jewish Hasmonean Kingdom ceased to exist; in 66-73 CE the Jewish War ravaged Palestine and Jerusalem was destroyed in 70.]

Tradition	Jn. the B.	Jesus	Christian Community	John of Patmos	Canon
Judaism particularly Apocalyptic and Priestly	proclaims the Lamb (Rev.4-11)	ministry sayings events	Jewish War 66-73 CE (much of Rev. 12-22 plus 4-11) plus 4-22)	to 7 churches in an alien world 90 CE (Rev. 1-3,22:6-21 or 27 bks	Joined with other 22 bks(2nd) (4th cent.)

The Interpreter may enter this process at various points, as much as the final form of this process, the present book of Revelation, will allow. The Interpreter lives within the force fields of his/her own world. When a resonance occurs between the context of the writer and the Interpreter (such as in our historical period), interpretation becomes more quickly meaningful.

APOCALYPSE -- A POEM ¹

[Though footnotes are provided, it is suggested that the poem ultimately be read without them so that its spirit is not constantly interrupted. To set the context for the poem and the Latin stanza with which it begins, it is suggested that the reader listen to the *Libera Me* from the Messe de Requiem of Faure', one of the most beautiful Requiems ever composed.]

Dona eiis requiem sempiternam.

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna,

In die illa tremenda:

In die irae

Quando coeli movendi sunt et terra:

Dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem. ²

Refrain: *Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna.*

John, exile on Patmos,

In The Spirit,

Visioned a new world:

City from heaven,

Like a jewel,

No tears,

No Death,

No mourning or pain. ³

Refrain

But Oh, the pain in his heart

For churches he would never see

And suffering he could not change.

It was the Tribulation and the End.

¹. "Apocalypse" means "Revelation." The book of Revelation is called "The Apocalypse," and the poem is developed from the content of this book. But the term is also given to a type of Jewish and early Christian literature prevalent from the 2nd century BC to the first century AD. It was a literature born in suffering and hope and through it the raw edges of the human soul are often disclosed. The historical setting of the final form of the book of Revelation (it originated in stages) was the suffering of Christian Churches at the hand of the Roman government at the end of the first century AD, and the author of the book regards Rome as a great Harlot whom God will destroy.

². This first stanza is taken from words that are parts of a Requiem Mass said for the dead. A usual part of such a Mass is the envisioning of the Day of Wrath, the prayer for eternal rest, and the prayer for freedom from eternal death. Notice that while the stanza begins by speaking of "them" it soon becomes "my" prayer, for prayer and the poem soon becomes ours as our pain joins its. The "Libera me" line then becomes the Refrain to be repeated responsorially after each stanza. Translated the Refrain is:

Give them eternal rest.

Free me, O Lord, from eternal death,

On the day of wrath,

Upon that horrible day:

When heavens and earth are to be moved

When you shall come to judge the world by fire..

³. Rev. 1:9, 21:1-4. Revelation was likely written in three stages. Its origin was in the tradition of the teaching of John the Baptist (chpts. 4-11), modified and added to during the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 66-73 AD (chpts. 4-22), and then this material was again modified by the Christian John who is in exile for his faith on the Isle of Patmos. John's particular contribution is the vision of chapter 1 and the letters to the seven churches in 2-3, with modifications to the rest of the book. It thus captures within its materials all of the Jewish and Christian suffering and hope of the first century. Though John was not author of all of the materials, its visions gave expression to the pain and vengeance within his soul.

"Be faithful," said the voice,
"And I will give you the crown of life." ⁴

Refrain

He saw HIM!

HE stood tall,

Hair as white wool,
In the midst of his churches,
Eyes as a flame of fire,

The MAN who had the keys of death and Hades. ⁵

Refrain

And then there swam before his eyes

A Lamb once slain,
Whose blood ransomed humans for God;
A Woman clothed with the sun;
A Dragon waiting to devour
A Child waiting to be born;
And a Harlot waiting to be destroyed,
Drunk with blood,
On a scarlet Beast. ⁶

Refrain

And heaven poured fire upon the Harlot City,

Till she writhed in pain.
And millstones stopped,
Lamps went out,
The bridegroom in silent anguish
Clutched his lifeless bride.

And She was no more. ⁷

Refrain

And John remembered a LAMB ONCE SLAIN,

And saints whose blood stained the earth,

And HIS winepress that poured blood of vengeance

High as a horses bridle.

And he saw the birds swirl the crimson skies

Over a crimson earth
For the supper of the slain. ⁸

Refrain

And the pain of the world rose,

Beginning like a wisp of wind,
Gathering the world's debris,

⁴. Rev. 2-3, 2:10. In Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic the period of the Great Tribulation was seen as a time of terrible suffering preceding the end.

⁵. This stanza is taken from the vision of the "Son of Man" in Rev. 1. The term "MAN" or its equivalent "Son of Man" was used in Apocalyptic literature of the original heavenly MAN after the pattern of which earthly man was made. This MAN was thought to be reflected in Gen. 1, and the earthly man/Adam was described in Gen. 2-3. The heavenly Man was expected to aid in the final struggle with Satan and the ascended Jesus was identified with this person.

⁶. The Dragon represented Satan; the Child, the Messiah; the Harlot, Rome. Rev. 12-17. The Lamb once slain (Rev. 5) may have been derived from Is. 53:7. In John 1:20 John the Baptist describes Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

⁷. Rev. 18.

⁸. Rev. 5, 14:17-20, 19:17-21.

Till it screamed in clouds
 That twisted and turned
 Until all seemed pulled within its vortex.
 Refrain
 And the cry of every mother
 And of every lover
 And of all dashed hopes
 Blackened the skies.
 And John pressed his hands to his eyes
 To shut out what he saw with his soul.
 Refrain
 And John screamed: "NO MORE!"
 And suddenly
 There was silence.
 And the MAN with white hair and eyes of fire
 Became a LAMB STILL SLAIN
 With no fire and bloody winepress.
 Refrain
 In pain the LAMB cried from a cross:
 "Why have you forsaken me?"⁹
 And its sound was taken by the hills and the mountains
 Till the earth reverberated,
 And his cry pierced heaven.
 Refrain
 And there was another VISION.
 [THERE MUST ALWAYS BE A VISION!]
 A river of LIFE,
 Bright as crystal, flowed from the THRONE OF GOD,
 From which trees with leaves for healing
 Drew their strength.
 AND THERE WAS NO MORE ANYTHING ACCURSED.¹⁰
 Refrain

⁹. Mark 15:34.

¹⁰. This last stanza is taken from Rev. 22:1-5 which is really the conclusion of the last of the visions (21:22-22:5), after which a number of paragraphs are added for various purposes. In a world where so much has been destroyed, this last vision preserves the "nations" and speaks of their illumination and healing rather than their destruction. The poem interprets this as John's repentance of his anger and the devastation he envisions for his world. There has been enough of suffering and too little of the God of the LAMB STILL SLAIN. The emphasis in Revelation on the LAMB ONCE SLAIN, leaves his suffering behind so that he became the vengeful RAM of Apocalyptic thought. To be the LAMB STILL SLAIN means he still takes the suffering of the world to himself and gives it expression, and the last three stanzas of the poem reflect this.

SOME SERMON IDEAS FROM REVELATION

The following are some suggestions for developing sermons from the material in Revelation (rather than providing the structure of the sermons themselves). My approach to Revelation presupposes the understanding of Revelation presented in this material and therefore does not try to turn Revelation into a prediction of the future. It also presupposes that Revelation, in the context of the Canon, is qualified by an implicit theological framework which unites its contribution with that of others' writings. Thus it is legitimate to speak of what the book comes to mean in the context of the rest of the New Testament and what the book comes to mean in the way it was used by the early church: by those in suffering, alienated from their world, needing hope. It also presupposes that the Word of God may be preached when the faithfulness of a passage to the truth is questioned and seen in contrast to other biblical passages. We may learn from faithful misunderstandings in the history of the church as well as from faithful understandings. My approach to these texts may raise too many questions to be used as I suggest in your congregation. You will need to be the judge of that. I hope, however, that you will feel that God's word can be spoken through a problematic book.

A sermon on the whole book

Revelation: Prediction or Vision

This sermon could seek to help the congregation understand the book as a whole, its origin, and its purpose in the life and faith of the church. The human need for a vision, though the vision is always expressed in contemporary images (what others are available to us?), needs to be stressed. You might even deal with the idea of borrowing and rebirthing a vision, something implied in the theory of the origin of Revelation. The vision of God is birthed and reshaped in three different historical contexts. Consult here Victor Frankl on the human need for meaning. You may wish to deal with the continual attempt to make out of Revelation a prediction of the future.

Revelation 1:1-3 The Chain of Witness

Use the translation provided previously in this material:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show his servants what must happen soon, and he gave sign (of this) having sent (it) through his angel to his servant John (the Baptist), who bore witness to the word of God and the witness of Jesus Christ, which things he saw. Blessed be the one who reads aloud and those who hear the words (some MSS read "the word") of prophecy and keep what has been written in it (the prophecy); for the time is near.

God provides a revelation which God gave to Christ to show his servants, having given a sign of this in John the Baptist who bore witness to God's word and Christ's witness. These words of prophecy are now read aloud, and blessed are those who read (the texts of Christianity were communicated within Christian communities by being read aloud), hear, and keep what is written. There is a chain of witness from God to Christ and John the Baptist, to those who now read and hear. That which is witnessed to is understood as a prophecy. In other NT literature it is understood differently. In I John it is our fellowship with the Father and the Son to which there is witness (I John 1:3-4). In Gal. 1:12 the revelation is not of prophecy but a revelation of Christ (not about Christ but of Christ). Certainly in Revelation there is a revelation of Christ, but the focus is on the prophecy. It is interesting to consider whether the revelation of the Person is more important to life than the revelation of prophecy. When Revelation gives its vision of the end time in 20-21, it is essentially to be in the presence of God. not to know how the prophecy is fulfilled. How fervently we avoid the implications of relationship and would have true prophecy, theology, ethics, church instead.

Revelation 1 Christ in Our Midst

Rev. 1 presents the resurrected "Son of Man" in O.T. imagery, standing in the midst of his churches, holding their future secure. The uncertainties of most times needs a sense of the presence of the resurrected Christ among us. The imagery bears little relationship to the historical

Jesus, and so we must learn that Christ was not merely a person of the first century, but one who belongs to and is present in all times. However, there is an issue here and in Revelation. The Christ of Revelation is not wounded. The Lamb later mentioned was once slain, but now has become the conquering Ram (chpt. 5). In the Gospel of John, chapter 20, Christ appears before his disciples with his wounds. The implication is that he took his wounds with him into his resurrection life. For the author of the Gospel that meant that the meaning of Christ's suffering was no accident of the past, but the key to the understanding of the Christ of the future. The N.T. struggles over the role of the cross in the future of Christ. Revelation has lost this. What did it lose when it left the cross behind? What are the values in the presentation of the resurrected Christ in Revelation?

Revelation 2-3 Letters to the Churches

John of Patmos hears the voice of the Son of Man speaking a message to seven churches in Asia Minor. The message is anti world, society, compromise, is judgemental, and is different from the message of some other parts of the New Testament. We can understand this message when we know something of the historical circumstances of John and these early Christians. The way John heard this message was affected by this. With the understanding of Christ which we have, what might Christ say through us to these churches -- or to our churches today?

Revelation 2-3 The Promises of Christ

The resurrected Son of Man makes promises to him "who conquers." What does this mean: "conquers"? Does this fit with our understanding of the Gospel and the complexity of life? We may agree or disagree with what is asked to get the promises, but what are the promises and how might they affect the way we deal with the issues and difficulties of life?

Revelation 4 The Vision of God

Revelation 4 is a "throne vision", which is the traditional form for a mystical experience within Judaism. It appears in Ezekiel and Is. 6, and may be the form of Jesus' baptismal experience and Paul's out-of-body experience in II Cor. 12. We all have experiences when we seem to glimpse "the other side of human existence", though it may be in forms other than this. Most persons have had mystical experiences at some time in their lives. Amazingly, or perhaps understandably, it often comes in times of crisis when our understanding of or confidence in life breaks down and we catch a glimpse of what is beyond. The emphasis on the Spirit in all the Johannine literature, the treatment of the theme "come and see" in John 1 (where persons are invited to come, see, and stay with Jesus), emphasize that one needs to be sensitive to and respect these experiences when they appear. Otherwise our understanding of life is diminished.

Revelation 5 Worthy the Lamb

A "new song" is sung to the Lamb once slain, the prayers of the saints as incense fill the air, and he takes the scroll of history with the seven seals to open them and the course of the future. Gathered round him is the heavenly congregation and he will redeem people from every tribe and nation to make them a kingdom and priests. The purpose of the gathered, on heaven and earth, consists in worship and priestly service to God (see also 1:5-6). How does such worship constitute and shape life and root us in life's deepest meanings? (Here one might deal with some of the liturgical materials which appear in Revelation.)

Revelation 6:9-11 How Long?

In the vision of the seven seals there is, preceded by the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, a vision of those under the altar of God, those who had suffered and been slain for their witness, who call for revenge. The bloody images of Revelation are frightening to those gentle souls who feel that one should not think these things. And yet in Revelation the pent up feelings of the author, and the communities he serves, rush forth like a mighty stream catching all before him in their vortex. Like an Old Testament Psalm of Lament, Revelation is the piece through whose words and terrors we may feel all the pain, sorrow and wrath of our predicaments. When this

venting of feelings is placed with the other New Testament literature, it is held in balance. But there are times when one must feel what one feels without believing that one's feelings must be carried out in destructive action. It is not clear whether the author of Revelation was able to distinguish between his feelings and what God would do in the future, but we only hear him in the midst of his passion. We do not hear him a month after having written. However there are traces that the author of the final stage of the book could only stand the wrath and destruction so long and transformed his ultimate vision in the second vision of the new Jerusalem (see the poem "Apocalypse" included).

Revelation 12 and 17-18 The Two Women of Revelation

The woman image is a powerful image in Revelation, reserved for great good and great evil. As an image used within the Old Testament, it is an image of the people of God, with God as her husband. The woman of chapter 12 is the woman of heaven, of the sun and the moon, waiting to birth a child who will accomplish God's purposes. Evil waits to devour this child. The woman of chapters 17-18 is a prostitute. In our interpretation of these images in the context of the history of the Jewish War, the heavenly woman is the ideal of God's people and the whore is unfaithful Jerusalem. (Though in the last stage of Revelation the whore of Babylon came to be Rome, the image only makes sense as God's city, wife, who had been unfaithful, and who sits upon the power of Rome.) If we follow Jung's interpretation (see the material on [Answer to Job](#)), these two images are two sides of our world and of our life as God's people. There is great promise in us as there may be unfaithfulness in us. But it is not merely a question of unfaithfulness. Revelation makes one all bad (the woman of earth) and the other all good (the woman of heaven). But we are also of the earth and live within society and culture. It is our task to discover that we are not only of heaven, but of earth, and that we are not only faithful, but unfaithful. Revelation, in fear, tells us to deny our unfaithfulness and life in this world, for God will destroy those who are not pure, who have defiled themselves. The Christ who accepted our humanness tells us that we must also accept ourselves and that we are offered God's love as we are. Christ, accused of associating with sinners and being too much of this world, tells us that we do not have to make two images of ourselves and then destroy the one, saying that it has nothing to do with us. We live most faithfully when we live with the complexity that is our lot as enfleshed and historical beings.

Revelation 20-21 The Dream of a New Heaven and New Earth

We all dream of a new world, and so does the author of Revelation. He sees this as a heavenly Jerusalem, a new garden of Eden, where pain shall be no more and God will wipe away every tear. This is not something we can create with whatever powers are ours, this is God's new world. And the center of this world is God, for God will dwell in our midst and there will be no need of sun or moon or temple and the water of life will be freely given. The future is with God and out of God. It is not merely a heavenly city to be measured and described (20:15-21), but it is God -- and no more shall there be anything accursed (excluded). Seen this way our vision for the future grows out of the relationship with which God now gifts us, our calling God "Abba, Father", our receiving of the Spirit (God's self). There can be no more than we have now, and what we have now draws us on to its realization.

Revelation 21:20 Come, Lord Jesus!

Here we have the liturgy of the early church: "Surely I am coming soon," says the liturgist in the words of Jesus, to which the response is: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.!" The coming of Jesus was expected because he had come, and in some mysterious way in the Spirit was still coming. He is the coming One, the one who always comes to us as Lord of the church and our Lord. We do not expect a presence which will fill the void of an absence. We must never develop an expectation of the future which neglects his presence in the present. "Amen. Continue to come, Lord Jesus." (The imperative "come" is present tense in Greek and so in terms of Greek grammar indicates continuous action, especially a continuation of what one is already doing.)

CARL JUNG, ANSWER TO JOB

Introduction

It is intriguing to examine how psychological theorists understand the biblical materials, for they bring to it their own paradigm. Freud's approach is well summarized in W. W. Meissner's Psychoanalysis and Religious Experience.¹¹ Jung's approach is comprehensively expressed in Answer to Job.¹²

Answer to Job was originally published in German in 1952, when Jung was seventy-seven years old. Though he was well aware that his subject would be controversial, he wrote to Aniele Jaffe: "If there is anything like the spirit seizing one by the scruff of the neck, it is the way this book came into being."¹³ In it he seeks to deal with the problem of evil, and the way this is reflected not only within the human psyche, but also the cosmos. Having come through the Second World War, he saw ahead the dangers of the atomic age. In Modern Man In Search of a Soul he says:

The World War was such an irruption (of the unconscious) which showed, as nothing else could, how thin are the walls which separate a well-ordered world from lurking chaos. But it is the same with every single human being and his reasonably ordered world. His reason has done violence to natural forces which seek their revenge and only await the moment when the partition falls to overwhelm the conscious life with destruction.¹⁴

He felt that the traditional Christian treatment of evil as the *privatio boni*, the absence of good, did not take evil seriously. The future of humankind depended on taking evil seriously. To split off evil from good, as did Christian dualism, does not help for it ignores that the opposites (of good and evil) exist within us, not outside of us. Regarding God, dualism posits evil apart from God rather than recognizing that the opposites exist in God. The story of Job reminded Jung of this for in Job a righteous man calls on **God for help against God**.

What actually happens in Answer to Job is that Jung applies his model of human development, the individuation process, to God. However, the God of which Jung speaks is the God who is archetypally present in the psyche. The God outside the psyche cannot be spoken of, for that God is beyond the phenomena of the psyche. Even the God within the psyche can only be spoken of in a limited fashion. In his opening comments "*Lectori Benevolo*", "to the benevolent reader", Jung argues for the reality of **physic** as well as **physical** facts. This reality comes from the deep archetypal structures of the psyche:

The fact that religious statements frequently conflict with the observed physical phenomena proves that in contrast to physical perception the spirit is autonomous, and that psychic experience is to a certain extent independent of physical data. The psyche is an autonomous factor, and religious statements are psychic confessions which in the last resort are based on unconscious, i.e., on transcendental processes. These processes are not accessible to physical perception but demonstrate their existence through the confessions of the psyche. The resultant statements are filtered through the medium of human consciousness: that is to say, they are given visible forms which in their turn are subject to manifold influences from within and without. That is why whenever we speak of religious contents we move in a world of images that point to something ineffable. We do not know how clear or unclear these images, metaphors, and concepts are in respect of their transcendental object. If, for instance, we say "God," we give expression to an

¹¹ W. W. Meissner, SJ, MD, Psychoanalysis and Religious Experience, Yale U. Press, 1984.

¹² C. G. Jung, Answer to Job, translated by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series, Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1973

¹³ Letter to Aniele Jaffe, 19 July 1951, in C. G. Jung, Answer to Job, Editorial Note.

¹⁴ Carl G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, transl. by W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes, NY: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1933, p. 240. See also in the same book the chapter on "The Spiritual Problem of Modern Man", pp. 196ff, and Jung's concern for the "sinister" situation of the present atomic age and its potential, through psychic factors, for mass destruction, in On the Nature of the Psyche, Bollingen Series, Princeton U. Press, p. 132.

image or verbal concept which has undergone many changes in the course of time. We are, however, unable to say with any degree of certainty - unless it be by faith - whether these changes affect only the images and concepts, or the Unspeakable itself. Our reason is sure only of one thing: that it manipulates images and ideas which are dependent on human imagination and its temporal and local conditions, and which have therefore changed innumerable times in the course of their long history.¹⁵

Jung sees that "statements made in the Holy Scriptures are also utterances of the soul",¹⁶ and in Answer to Job discusses the whole sweep of biblical literature from Genesis, through the Intertestamental period, to Revelation -- and beyond, through ecclesial history, to the development of the dogma of the Assumption of Mary. Thus the reader is provided with his interpretation of the whole of the Christian tradition, not "as a biblical scholar (which I am not), but as a layman and physician who has been privileged to see deeply into the psychic life of many people."¹⁷

It is important to keep in mind what Jung means when he says "God", otherwise one will misunderstand and may for this reason reject Jung's significant insights. What is the story of God's becoming self-conscious, aware of God's dark side, is really the story of the archetypal or collective human soul. Thus his treatment of Judaeo-Christian history, literature and dogma, is really a treatment of the archetypal complexes of the Judaeo-Christian soul. The psychic life of the Judeo-Christian people would, of course, possess much the same archetypal structure as the rest of humanity, but would come to expression in relation to the issues of their particular history and images that were available in their culture. Jung is careful to indicate that this is not a mere psychological interpretation of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, but the archetypes are powerful psychic realities which can affect the course of history. From what we have recently learned about the formation of autonomous complexes within the psyche of individuals under the influence of the individual's history, Jung should also have considered the relationship of what emerged from the Judeo-Christian psyche to the difficulties and tragedies of their historic experience in the first century.¹⁸ However, his focus was on the archetypal.

The book itself is not easy reading. Its contents flow like the flow of Jung's consciousness. It is full of terminology not adequately explained. And yet it is an exciting and stimulating book because it causes us to look at the biblical material and the human predicament in new ways. A summary of Jung's psychology is included at the end. If you are not familiar with it, you may wish to read this before proceeding.

God Becomes Self-Aware - Appearance of the Anima and Movement Towards Incarnation

Answer to Job is a story of God becoming conscious of God's dark side when confronted by a righteous man. That God may come to self-awareness of God's unconscious when confronted by Job, a helper is needed. Jung notes that Wisdom literature makes its appearance in Jewish history somewhere around the time that Job was written. The appearance of Wisdom, as a personified feminine extension of God, is explained as God remembering a friend and playmate from the beginning of the world:

¹⁵ Jung, Answer to Job, pp. xii - xiii.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. xiv.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. xv.

¹⁸ What I have particularly in mind is something analagous to the formation of multiple personalities through trauma and the more normal introjection of external experience into the psyche.

The first century of the Christian era must have left an indelible psychological imprint upon those who lived in Palestine. It was an intensely religious and political time. The revolution which led to the Jewish War, starting in 66, was being fomented in Jesus day. The War itself was a tragic experience for Palestine, resulting in death, famine, destruction of religious and political institutions. The political and religious thought of the time was incited by Apocalyptic thought and its intense expectation of the inauguration of God's conquest of the world, to be wrested from Satan. For the early Christian community there was not only the War, but the deaths of leading apostles in the 60s, the conflict with Judaism, and the growing problems with the Roman government. Though it was local, the first intense persecution of Christians by Rome happened under Nero following the burning of Rome in 64 CE.

...things simply could not go on as before, the "just" God could not go on committing injustices, and the "Omniscient" could not behave any longer like a clueless and thoughtless human being. Self-reflection becomes an imperative necessity, and for this Wisdom is needed. Yahweh has to remember his absolute knowledge; for, if Job gains knowledge of God, then God must also learn to know himself. It just could not be that Yahweh's dual nature should become public property and remain hidden from himself alone. Whoever knows God has an effect on him. The failure of the attempt to corrupt Job has changed Yahweh's nature.¹⁹

The appearance of Wisdom, Sophia, the *anima* archetype, reinforces God's much needed self-reflection and enables God's decision to become human, the Incarnation. Yahweh must become human both because he wishes to transform himself and because he has wronged humanity. God is responsible for his son Satan and for the suffering of a righteous man. God in the Incarnation will drink the dregs of Job's experience.

The book of Ezekiel also represents a climactic moment in O.T. literature and the intertestamental Apocalypse of Enoch is a "grand anticipation" of what was to come. Ezekiel

witnesses the humanization and differentiation of Yahweh. By being addressed as "Son of Man," it is intimated to him that Yahweh's incarnation and quaternity are, so to speak, the pleromatic model for what is going to happen, through the transformation and humanization of God, not only to God's son as foreseen from all eternity, but to man as such. This is fulfilled as an intuitive anticipation in Enoch. In his ecstasy he becomes the Son of Man in the pleroma, and his wafting away in a chariot (like Elijah) prefigures the resurrection of the dead. To fulfill his role as minister of justice he must get into immediate proximity to God, and as the preexisting Son of Man he is no longer subject to death. But in so far as he was an ordinary human being and therefore mortal, other mortals as well can attain to the vision of God; they too can become conscious of their saviour, and consequently immortal.²⁰

The fulfillment of the movement of God towards incarnation came in Christ. Jung approaches Christ in the light of biblical studies contemporary to him. With Bultmann he sees it difficult to reconstruct a biographical picture of Christ. "Not a single text is extant which would fulfill even the minimum modern requirements for writing a history."²¹ He mentions the discovery of the role of eschatology in the materials on Christ, following Schweitzer and others, but by eschatology he particularly means mythology, and criticizes the attempt of Bultmann and others to demythologize. He says:

A rationalist attempt of that sort would soak all the mystery out of his personality, and what remained would no longer be the birth and tragic fate of a God in time, but, historically speaking, a badly authenticated religious teacher, a Jewish reformer who was hellenistically interpreted and misunderstood ...

But myth is not fiction: it consists of facts that are continually repeated and can be observed over and over again. It is something that happens to man, and men have mythical fates just as much as the Greek heroes do. The fact that the life of Christ is largely myth does absolutely nothing to disprove its factual truth - quite the contrary. It is perfectly possible, psychologically, for the unconscious or an archetype to take complete possession of a man and to determine his fate down to the smallest detail. At the same time objective, non-psychic parallel phenomena can occur

¹⁹. Jung, Answer to Job, p. 29.

²⁰. Ibid., pp. 66-67. For Jung the term "pleroma", Greek for "fullness", meant the total physical domain which in Answer to Job came to include the Archetypes. Jung also saw Quaternity ("fourness") as foundational within the pleroma and therefore an indication of completeness. He finds this illustrated in Alchemy and in religious literature (such as the four faces of God in Enoch 40 and the four Seraphim in Ezekiel). In God the Shadow side of God is the fourth element to be added to the Trinity which by itself is incomplete. The Incarnation is also a move of God towards completeness, the union of divinity and humanity which makes God a Quaternity.

²¹. Ibid., p. 44.

which also represent the archetype. It not only seems so, it simply is so, that the archetype fulfils itself not only psychically in the individual, but objectively outside the individual. My own conjecture is that Christ was such a personality. The life of Christ is just what it had to be if it is the life of a god and a man at the same time.²²

Though Jesus portrays God as a loving Father, God is appeased only by the sacrifice of his son and Jesus as mediator needs to help humanity against God. But in what he does, as human and divine, he unites the opposites -- though as one virginally born and not partaking of sin the fulness of the Incarnation is lacking. The incarnation is completed in the promise of the Spirit who will abide in creaturely humanity, ordinary and sinful humans.²³

Jung was extremely interested in the Pope's proclamation of the Assumption of Mary and the popular movements which gave this birth. He felt that this was a sign of the continuing incarnation of God which began in Christ. Protestantism's rationalistic and historical criticism of this for him indicated a loss of contact with archetypal happenings in the psyche and "the Holy Ghost who works in the hidden places of the soul." Thus Protestantism cannot acknowledge further revelation of the divine drama.²⁴

The proclamation of the Assumption of Mary also indicated the need of the feminine for representation, something already noted regarding Wisdom. Protestantism, as a man's religion, allows no metaphysical representation of woman.²⁵

The dogmatization of the *Assumptio Mariae* points to the *hieros gamos* ["sacred marriage"] in the pleroma, and this in turn implies, as we have said, the future birth of the divine child, who, in accordance with the divine trend towards incarnation will choose as his birthplace the empirical man.²⁶

The Incarnation had tried to keep darkness and evil outside, to disassociate it. "God, with his good intentions, begot a good and helpful son and thus created an image of himself as the good father - unfortunately, we must admit, again without considering that there existed in him a knowledge that spoke a very different truth." God's darkness then emerges in belief in the coming of the Antichrist.²⁷

The Spirit of Truth, which has now taken up its abode in humanity, has

created a disturbance in man's unconscious and produced, at the beginning of the Christian era, another great revelation which, because of its obscurity, gave rise to numerous interpretations and misinterpretations in the centuries that followed. This is the Revelation of St. John.²⁸

The Revelation of John

Jung assumes a unity of the Johannine materials, seeing the author of Revelation as being the same as the author of the Johannine Epistles, something that modern scholarship would have great difficulty with. However, he is right in seeing some of the same perspectives behind Revelation and the Epistles, though the Epistles represent spiritualized apocalyptic, as does the Gospel. His argument is that the psychology behind both is the same:

²². Ibid., pp. 46-47. For psychic material fulfilling itself outside the individual, see the discussion of Synchronicity in the section on Jung's psychology.

²³. Ibid., pp. 67-70. The understanding of the atonement which Jung reflects, that Jesus is sacrificed by God to satisfy God, represents a traditional understanding of the atonement but is not adequate to describe the N.T. material. In the N.T. God initiates the redemptive process and God's self is in the redemptive process, so Jesus does not help humanity against God as later theological reflection interpreted this. Contrary to what Jung says, one can indicate the recognition of the humanity of Jesus in the early Gospels and in the early traditions of later Gospels (e.g. John). It is true that the later Gospels tend to dehumanize both Jesus and the apostles.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 102-3.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 105.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 70-71.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 72.

The "revelation" was experienced by an early Christian who, as a leading light of the community, presumably had to live an exemplary life and demonstrate to his flock the Christian virtues of true faith, humility, patience, devotion, selfless love, and denial of all worldly desires. In the long run this can become too much, even for the most righteous. Irritability, bad moods, and outbursts of affect are the classic symptoms of chronic virtuousness.²⁹

The author of the Epistles says that God is all light; there is no darkness in God. God is love. The person who is begotten of God commits no sin. Though the author is "orthodox" in the sense of disassociating from evil, he has evil forebodings, and so announces the coming of the Antichrist.³⁰

Jung's interpretation of Revelation occupies 26 pages. He begins by indicating the fear-inspiring Son of Man in chapter 1. He comments, "This apocalyptic 'Christ' behaves rather like a bad-tempered, power-conscious 'boss' who very much resembles the 'shadow' of a love-preaching bishop."³¹ The Lamb once slain of chapter 5, Jung observes, does not behave as an innocent victim as it breaks open the seals which unleash destruction. This is the outburst of pent-up negative feelings in one who strove for perfection.

From this there grew up a terrifying picture that blatantly contradicts all ideas of Christian humility, tolerance, love of your neighbor and your enemies, and makes nonsense of a loving father in heaven and rescuer of mankind. A veritable orgy of hatred, wrath, vindictiveness, and blind destructive fury that revels in fantastic images of terror breaks out and with blood and fire overwhelms a world which Christ has just endeavoured to restore to the original state of innocence and loving communion with God.³²

In chapter 12 the "sun-woman" appears, in the pangs of birth, while the dragon waits to devour her child. She is an ordinary woman, not a virgin immaculately conceived. She is the feminine Anthropos, counterpart of the masculine principle, but may also be considered the cosmic Sophia, Wisdom. The son who is born is a "complex of opposites", a uniting symbol expressing the totality of life. This child, however, is assimilated to the prevailing feelings of vengeance and will "rule the nations with a rod of iron," thus losing his natural ability to compensate for the pent-up passions, his role as mediator between the loving and vengeful sides of John's nature. But this must also be understood archetypally, for God had also split off the darkness which he disowned when he became man. "...it is the spirit of God itself, which blows through the weak mortal frame and again demands man's fear of the unfathomable Godhead."³³

The torrent of negative feelings continue and monsters with horns of power appear (Rev. 13). To be able to face this darkness and destruction, John here weaves in a vision of the Lamb on Zion with the hundred and forty-four thousand elect who are virgins (Rev. 14), "following in the footsteps of their young dying God," never becoming complete human beings. The Son of Man then appears with a sickle to gather the vintage into the winepress of God and seven angels pour out seven bowls of wrath. "The *piece de resistance* is the destruction of the Great Whore of Babylon, the counterpart of the heavenly Jerusalem."³⁴ The Whore is the earthly equivalent of the sun-woman Sophia. Her destruction means not only the end of fornication, but the eradication of all beauty and life's joys (as portrayed in chapter 18), for which vindictive John feels no regret.³⁵

Then in chapter 19 Christ comes, leading the hosts of angels, his robe dipped in blood, a sword issuing from his mouth, to treat "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." In chapter 20 Satan is bound for the Messianic reign, then freed for the reign of the Antichrist, and ultimately destroyed.

The final vision describes the sacred marriage which is a restoration to wholeness, the union of the Lamb with his bride, the heavenly city. But it is a city in which all is pure and light. Jung says:

²⁹ Ibid., p. 87.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 73.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 74-75.

³² Ibid., p. 76.

³³ Ibid., pp. 76-82.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 82-83.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 84.

No doubt this is meant as a final solution of the terrible conflict of existence. The solution, however, as here presented, does not consist in the reconciliation of the opposites, but in their final severance, by which means those whose destiny it is to be saved can save themselves by identifying with the bright pneumatic side of God. An indispensable condition for this seems to be the denial of propagation and of sexual life altogether.³⁶

Jung comments that though he knew of many compensating dreams of Christians who deceived themselves about their real humanity, he has never seen anything as brutal as in Revelation except in psychopaths. However, John does not provide reasons for such a diagnosis. What happened to John is that he was a passionately religious person which laid him open to an invasion of the transcendent.

The purpose of the apocalyptic visions is not to tell John, as an ordinary human being, how much shadow he hides beneath his luminous nature, but to open the seer's eye to the immensity of God, for he who loves God will know God. We can say that just because John loved God and did his best to love his fellows also, this "gnosis," this knowledge of God, struck him. Like Job, he saw the fierce and terrible side of Yahweh. For this reason he felt his gospel of love to be one-sided, and he supplemented it with the gospel of fear: *God can be loved but must be feared.*³⁷

The book of Revelation, rightly placed at the end of the New Testament, reaches beyond it into a future that is all too palpably close with its apocalyptic terrors. The decision of an ill-considered moment, made in some Herostratic head, can suffice to unleash the world cataclysm. The thread by which our fate hangs is wearing thin. Not nature, but the "genius of mankind," has knotted the hangman's noose with which it can execute itself at any moment. This is simply another *façon de parler* for what John called the "wrath of God."³⁸

What then is the impact of this on human beings? God's paradoxical nature has a like effect on humanity, tearing it asunder into opposites. The difficulty for modern persons is that they no longer have the benefit of projecting the opposites upon the world and so the issue has become psychologically acute, and "the psychotherapist has more to say on these matters than the theologian, who has remained caught in his archaic figures of speech."³⁹

Humankind groans under the burden that "*God wanted to become man, and still wants to.*" Thus John experienced in his vision a second birth of a son from the mother Sophia who would join the opposites. The union of the opposites was already symbolized in Christ's fate, crucified between two thieves, one of whom goes to heaven and the other to hell. However, Christians saw the opposition as one between God and humanity, perhaps a Yahwistic legacy from of old, which resulted in seeing all good from God and all evil from humanity. When this is done humanity is burdened with the dark side of God, for which Job rightly confronts God.

In God's desire to become Incarnate in Christ, the "conflict in God's nature is such that the Incarnation can only be bought by an expiatory self-sacrifice offered up to the wrath of God's dark side." But from the promise of the Paraclete it becomes apparent that God wants to become *wholly* human, namely in humankind not redeemed from original sin. Since the Reformation and the development of the modern sciences the darkness in humans has become greater. We therefore need more light, goodness and moral strength if we are to assimilate without perishing the dark God who wants to become human. For the birth in us of the "eternal child" (in whom the opposites lie close together) we need Wisdom. This child is the "boy who is born from the maturity of the adult man, and not the unconscious child we would like to

³⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 88.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 89. Herostratus, in order to make his name immortal, burned down the temple of Artemis in Ephesus in 365 BC.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 93.

remain."⁴⁰ This child is the one who was caught up into heaven in chapter Revelation 12 and who brings healing and wholeness.⁴¹

In considering the Christification of many, the ongoing incarnation of God in persons, Jung says that it is well to remember St. Paul and his "split consciousness":

...on one side he felt he was the apostle directly called and enlightened by God, and, on the other side, a sinful man who could not pluck out the "thorn in the flesh" and rid himself of the Satanic angel who plagues him. That is to say, even the enlightened person remains what he is, and is never more than his own limited ego before the One who dwells with him, whose form has no knowable boundaries, who encompasses him on all sides, fathomless as the abysses of the earth and vast as the sky.⁴²

Comments

Modern history has justified Jung's concern. One has only to look at the probable causes behind the Mid-East conflicts and the war in Iraq. We must know what is in us and that this may operate autonomously, without consciousness. To unite the opposites, which Jung calls for, is quite different than repression or denial of the opposite. To unite the opposites is to allow them to become conscious and to live with them. The shadow side of humanity cannot be dualistically projected on others or an evil Other. What one is to live with is not merely a part of the personal unconscious or one's instinctual nature (Freud's *id*). It is part of the deep, archetypal "God" level of the psyche which seems to transcend us. There is no fully human existence apart from the embodiment of the opposites, there is no perfection, there is no spiritualization of our humanity. Whenever all is understood to be love and light, darkness emerges unawares.

The book of Revelation is an expression of the Judaeo-Christian soul caused by theological and historical circumstances. The pain and wrath of the first century CE fills its pages and images express its terror and hope. I say Judaeo-Christian because, contrary to Jung's view which sees Revelation as authored by a single person, the Christian author of the Johannine Epistles, I see Revelation differently. As J.M. Ford indicates in her Anchor Bible commentary on Revelation,⁴³ the book is the result of a process of creation which begins with the preservation of the teachings of John the Baptist (chpts. 4-11), to which essentially chapters 12-22 were added and this composite spoke to the Jewish Christian community during the War of the Jews against the Romans (most of the historical allusions being to this time), and finally John of Patmos used 4-22, adding the vision of the Son of Man in chapter 1, the letters to the seven churches (2-3), and modifications in 22. This latter revision of the work is to be dated about 90 CE, when Revelation is usually dated. Thus one has preserved within this work the psyche of both first century Judaism and Christianity.

It is important to remember that when the book of Revelation became part of the biblical canon it must then be understood as part of the varied stream of literature and thought embodied in the New Testament. The psyche of early Christianity gave birth to varied expressions, in various persons and religious communities, in different historical circumstances, and in varying images and thought. The truth is to be found in all, not in a limited selection of books or passages. Each piece contributes to the whole and receives new meaning as part of the whole. IT is our tradition. Revelation helps us to know what is within the human soul, imaging its pain, wrath and hope. Rather than trying to build a theology out of it, or an apocalyptic schedule for the future, it may be used as an occasion for entering one's own pain, wrath and hope through the experience of those who have gone before us. It serves the function of a New Testament Psalm of lament.

Carl G. Jung

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 95.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 95-97.

⁴² Ibid., p. 108.

⁴³ J. Massyngberde Ford, Revelation, The Anchor Bible, Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1975.

Perhaps no psychological theorist has contributed so much to our time as Carl G. Jung who not only explored the human psyche but the vast residue of the psyche deposited in myth, fairy tale, and alchemy as evidence for his understanding of the psyche before the beginnings of modern scientific study. His collected works number 18 volumes.

Jung was born in Switzerland in 1875 and died in 1961. He was the son of a clergyman in the Swiss Reformed Church. While studying medicine, he found in psychiatry the science which would open to him the mystery of the phenomena of his own experience and that of others.

Jung's own personal journey and experience with his patients led him to understand that what emerged from the psyche was more than a personal story, but was a part of the *collective unconscious* of humanity, was *archetypal*. He comments that the discovery of the role of the unconscious "is of absolutely revolutionary significance in that it could radically alter our view of the world."⁴⁴ His view of the unconscious thus went beyond Freud who saw the unconscious primarily in terms of repressed materials from the sexual struggles of childhood. Jung often discusses this collective unconscious in terms of his number 2 personality:

Although we human beings have our own personal life, we are yet in large measure the representatives, the victims and promoters of a collective spirit whose years are counted in centuries. We can well think all our lives long that we are following our own noses, and may never discover that we are, for the most part, supernumeraries on the stage of the world theater. There are factors which, although we do not know them, nevertheless influence our lives, the more so if they are unconscious. Thus at least a part of our being lives in the centuries -- the part which, for my private use, I have designated "No. 2."⁴⁵

Jung thus concludes that "The psyche is the world's pivot: not only is it the one great condition for the existence of a world at all, it is also an intervention in the existing natural order, and no one can say with certainty where this intervention will finally end."⁴⁶

Yet, not all will grasp and pursue the meaning of their existence:

To the extent that a man is untrue to the law of his being and does not rise to personality, he has failed to realize his life's meaning. Fortunately in her kindness and patience, Nature never puts the fatal question as to the meaning of their lives into the mouths of most people. And where no one asks, no one need answer.⁴⁷

Though originally a disciple of Freud, Jung broke with Freud largely over their differing interpretations of the psyche. In his autobiography Jung recalls how Freud said "My dear Jung, promise me never to abandon the sexual theory. That is the most essential thing of all. You see, we must make a dogma of it, an unshakable bulwark." Jung replied, "A bulwark -- against what?" To which Freud answered, "Against the black tide of mud -- of occultism." Jung comments that by "occultism" Freud seemed to mean "virtually everything that philosophy and religion, including the rising contemporary science of parapsychology, had learned about the psyche." He continues, "To me the sexual theory was just as occult, that is to say, just as unproved an hypothesis, as many other speculative views. Although I did not properly understand it then, I had observed in Freud the eruption of unconscious religious factors. Evidently he wanted my aid in erecting a barrier against these threatening unconscious contents."⁴⁸

⁴⁴. C.G. Jung, On The Nature of the Psyche, transl. by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series, Princeton U. Press, p. 88.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 91.

⁴⁶ Jung, On The Nature of the Psyche, p. 127.

⁴⁷ Jung as quoted in John Welch, Spiritual Pilgrims: Carl Jung and Teresa of Avila, NY: Paulist Press, 1982, p. 131.

⁴⁸ Jung, Memories, Dreams and Reflections, pp. 150-151. See also Jung's, On the Nature of the Psyche, pp. 55ff, where he criticizes Freud for making spirituality a by-product of the instincts, particularly the sexual. Rather, the "spiritual appears in the psyche also as an instinct, indeed as a real passion, a 'consuming fire'." (p. 58).

Following Jung's break with Freud and the international psychoanalytic movement, Jung turned to the exploration of his own inner life in what is often called a mid-life crisis. About the time of the outbreak of the first World War, "An incessant stream of fantasies had been released, and I did my best not to lose my head but to find some way to understand these strange things. I stood helpless before an alien world." It was then that the inner figures of Elijah, Salome and Philemon emerged, representing complexes of the unconscious. In 1918-19 Jung began the use of mandalas, small circular drawings to give expression to his inner transformations, living portrayals of Jung's self -- and gradually peace returned.⁴⁹

His autobiography is a must not only to understand Jung and the scope of his interests, but to grasp the depth of his spiritual journey. I would recommend this along with the classics of spirituality. Though his understanding of religion and God has been much debated, it is my understanding that he approaches religious experience on two levels. One is that of intuition, a direct knowledge.

Jung's description of his own struggle with the knowledge of God is telling.⁵⁰ As a young boy he spends sleepless nights feeling that God is forcing him to think some unthinkable thought. Finally he surrenders and grace breaks upon him. He comments:

I felt an enormous, and indescribable relief, Instead of the expected damnation, grace had come upon me, and with it an unutterable bliss such as I had never known. I wept for happiness and gratitude. The wisdom and goodness of God has been revealed to me now that I had yielded to His inexorable command. It was as though I had experienced an illumination. A great many things I had not previously understood became clear to me. That was what my father (a Reformed Pastor) had not understood, I thought; he had failed to experience the will of God, had opposed it for the best reasons and out of the deepest faith. And that was why he had never experienced the miracle of grace which heals all and makes all comprehensible. He had taken the Bible's commandments as his guide; he believed in God as the Bible prescribed and as his forefathers had taught him. But he did not know the immediate living God who stands, omnipotent and free, above His Bible and His Church, who calls upon man to partake of His freedom, and can force him to renounce his own views and convictions in order to fulfill without reserve the command of God. In His trial of human courage God refuses to abide by traditions, no matter how sacred.....

From the beginning I had a sense of destiny, as though my life was assigned to me by fate and had to be fulfilled. This gave me an inner security, and, though I could never prove it to myself, it proved itself to me. I did not have this certainty, it had me. Nobody could rob me of the conviction that it was enjoined upon me to do what God wanted and not what I wanted. That gave me the strength to go my own way. Often I had the feeling that in all decisive matters I was no longer among men, but was alone with God. And when I was "there," where I was no longer alone, I was outside time; I belonged to the centuries; and He who then gave answer was He who had always been, who had been before my birth. He who always is was there. These talks with the "Other" were my profoundest experiences: on the one hand a bloody struggle, on the other supreme ecstasy....⁵¹

Jung then searched the theological books in his father's library and seeking philosophical works finally came upon Krug's General Dictionary of the Philosophical Sciences, second edition, 1832 (for his father actually had no philosophers in his library). Krug defined "God" as derived from "good". The existence of God could not be proved. Krug ventures that the idea of God exists innately in humanity and that if our intellectual powers are adequately developed, they may be "capable of engendering so sublime an idea".

Jung continues:

This explanation astounded me beyond measure. What is wrong with these "philosophers"? I wondered. Evidently they know of God only by hearsay. The theologians are different in this respect, at any rate; at least they are sure that God exists, even though they make contradictory

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 196f.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 36ff.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 40,48.

statements about Him. This lexicographer Krug expressed himself in so involved a manner that it is easy to see he would like to assert that he is already sufficiently convinced of God's existence. Then why doesn't he say so outright? Why does he pretend -- as if he really thought that we "engender" the idea of God, and to do so must first have reached a certain level of development? So far as I knew, even the savages wandering naked in their jungles had such ideas. And they were certainly not "philosophers" who sat down to "engender an idea of God." I never engendered any idea of God, either. Of course God cannot be proved, for how could, say, a clothes moth that eats Australian wool prove to other moths that Australia exists. God's existence does not depend on our proofs. How had I arrived at my certainty about God? I was told all sorts of things about Him, yet I could believe nothing. None of it convinced me. That was not where my idea came from. In fact it was not an idea at all -- that is, not something thought out.... Why do these philosophers pretend that God is an idea, a kind of arbitrary assumption which they can engender or not, when it is perfectly plain that He exists, as plain as a brick that falls on your head.⁵²

The second level on which he approaches religious experience is within the limits of the scientific methodology of psychology, where one can only speak of the phenomena of the psyche. Thus often one has the impression that he speaks of spiritual events primarily within the psyche. However, he indicates they may have a *psychoid* base.

In my effort to depict the limitations of the psyche I do not mean to imply that *only* the psyche exists. It is merely that, so far as perception and cognition are concerned, we cannot see beyond the psyche. Science is tacitly convinced that a non-psychic, transcendental object exists. But science also knows how difficult it is to grasp the real nature of the object, especially when the organ of perception fails or is lacking, and when the appropriate modes of thought do not exist or have still to be created. In cases where neither our sense organs nor their artificial aids can attest the presence of a real object, the difficulties mount enormously, so that one feels tempted to assert that there is simply no real object present. I have never drawn this overhasty conclusion, for I have never been inclined to think that our senses were capable of perceiving all forms of being. I have, therefore, even hazarded the postulate that the phenomenon of archetypal configurations -- which are psychic events *par excellence* -- may be founded upon a psychoid base, that is, upon an only partially psychic and possible altogether different form of being. For lack of empirical data I have neither knowledge nor understanding of such forms of being, which are commonly called spiritual.

⁵³

Individuation

Individuation is the term Jung gives to the human developmental process. It is divided into two stages. The first is the adaptation of the person to the external world and the development of a "persona", a social mask or identity. Here also develop one's basic attitude to life (introversion or extroversion), the ego (the center of consciousness), and how one will function in perceiving the world (sensation or intuition) and making decisions (thinking or feeling). This first stage is a very limited and incomplete development involving largely one's consciousness, necessarily neglecting the large reservoirs for personality in the unconscious.

Frequently, though not necessarily, around mid-life stage two begins, and to this Jung gives his primary attention. One becomes aware that the identity (persona) which has been established as a result of one's and others' expectations is no longer adequate. It cannot contain what is within one and one is aware that much of one's identity has been determined by the expectations of others. There is also more to life than the *ego*. Thus the stage is set for a venture into the unknown, into the unconscious, which consists not only of personal material but also archetypal material. This is an inner journey where parts of the unconscious are brought to consciousness, and lines of communication are created between the conscious

⁵² Ibid., pp. 61-62.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 351.

and unconscious which enable an integration of the two and thus a new wholeness. Over against the "polymorphism of the primitive's instinctual nature" individuation is shaped by "an integrative unity whose power is as great as that of the instincts."⁵⁴ These unconscious elements are the "shadow" of attitudes, functions and orientations of the conscious life of a person: this means that they are the reverse side of these elements, but only having the potential to function in a destructive way when they are left in the unconscious to function autonomously, without integration into the whole personality. When brought to consciousness and integrated they provide their dynamics for the good of the whole personality. The archetypes are also part of this shadow. Since these elements of one's shadow are unconscious, they cannot be handled conceptually. They can only be related to through the use of the imagination: dreams, images, symbols. This second stage is particularly a spiritual journey, well-described in Jung's Modern Man In Search of a Soul. It is called "individuation" because in it a person moves beyond what Jung calls "mass man", beyond conventional adaptation to society, and beyond the blind and unconscious functioning of the archetypes.

We can say that individuals are equal only in so far as they are in large measure unconscious - unconscious, that is, of their actual differences. The more unconscious a man is, the more he will conform to the general canon of psychic behavior. But the more conscious he becomes of his individuality, the more pronounced will be his difference from other subjects and the less he will come up to common expectations. Further, his reactions are much less predictable. This is due to the fact that an individual consciousness is always more highly differentiated and more extensive. But the more extensive it becomes the more differences it will perceive and the more it will emancipate itself from the collective rules, for the empirical freedom of the will grows in proportion to the extension of consciousness.

Jung lamented the lack of attention given to adult development in his time.

Our collective education makes practically no provision for this transitional period. Concerned solely with the education of the young, we disregard the education of the adult, of whom it is always assumed - on what grounds who can say? - that he needs no more education. There is almost total lack of guidance for this extraordinarily important transition from the biological to the cultural attitude, for the transformation of energy from the biological into the cultural form. This transformation process is an individual one and cannot be enforced by general rules and maxims. It is achieved by means of the symbol.⁵⁵

Archetypes

Jung's emphasis on the significance of the unconscious for human life is central to his understanding. This means that not only does much of the life of the psyche reside outside of consciousness, without awareness of its contents, but that it is also beyond the control of the conscious and the ego. With this in mind one of the central tasks of adult development is to meet and interrelate with parts of ourselves, complexes within the psyche, which we don't know or recognize. These unknown parts are not only the repressed memories and conflicts of childhood, but archetypal --- representing the collective unconscious of humankind.

Jung understands that archetypes, these inherited structures of the deep psyche, are not to be equated with the images through which they come to us in dreams and imagination. "The archetype as such is a psychoid (transcendent) factor that belongs, as it were, to the invisible, ultra-violet end of the psychic spectrum. It does not appear, in itself, to be capable of reaching consciousness."⁵⁶

⁵⁴. Jung, On The Nature of the Psyche, transl. by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series, Princeton U. Press, 1960, p. 51.

⁵⁵. Ibid., p. 61. He speaks here of the first half of life in terms of a biological, instinctual orientation, while the second half of life subordinates instincts to cultural goals (which he sees as also related to the archetypes).

⁵⁶. Ibid., p. 123.

Archetypes, so far as we can observe and experience them at all, manifest themselves only through their ability to *organize* images and ideas, and this is always an unconscious process which cannot be detected until afterwards. By assimilating ideational material whose provenance in the phenomenal world is not to be contested, they become visible and *psychic*.⁵⁷

Thus the particular representations that the archetypes assume are dependent on the experience and culture of the person. Differing in idea and image from person to person and culture to culture, they still have the same underlying structure and purpose and produce similar actions.

They are the archetypes, which direct all fantasy activity into its appointed paths and in this way produce, in the fantasy-images of children's dreams as well as in the delusions of schizophrenia, astonishing mythological parallels such as can also be found, though in lesser degree, in the dreams of normal persons and neurotics. It is not, therefore, a question of inherited *ideas* but of inherited *possibilities* of ideas.⁵⁸

The archetypes are expressed in dreams, fantasy, what Jung calls "active imagination",⁵⁹ mandala and other artistic expressions, and action. Those most frequently discussed are the *self*, *animus*, *anima*, and *shadow*. Others are "birth, rebirth, death, the journey of the hero, God, the wise old man, the earth mother, and objects of nature such as the sun and moon."⁶⁰ The self is the goal of psychic development and the archetype of wholeness, orientation and meaning. Thus it often appears in religious symbols. For Christians Christ is the symbol of the self, though it lacks completeness in the absence of a shadow side.⁶¹

A major Jungian archetype is the shadow which represents the unintegrated and autonomous nature of the subconscious, frequently the cause of feelings, thoughts and actions against the value system of the conscious. Jung felt that the *anima* in man and the *animus* in woman was a personification of the unconscious, a bridge to the unconscious, and thus embodied much of the shadow. It is natural to expect that a contrasexual image would draw out much of what we have not consciously come to terms with. Jung's first contact with the *anima* came when in the process of writing down his experiences with his imagination he suddenly found himself being addressed by a woman from within whose approach to him often was experienced as negative, shadowlike.⁶²

Jung and his early disciples identified what in their society was stereotypically masculine and feminine with the *animus* and *anima*. This meant that whatever aspects of the psyche society had not allowed to the man or woman became symbolized by the contrasexual figure within the psyche. Some modern Jungians contest this and see the psyche of both man and woman as containing both the *anima* and *animus* and that both men and women need to discover the feminine and masculine elements within themselves. This is

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 141.

⁵⁸ C. G. Jung, Psychological Reflections: A New Anthology of His Writings 1905-1961, ed. by Jolande Jacobe and R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series, Princeton U. Press, 1973, p. 38.

⁵⁹ Active imagination is the intentional use of imagery to explore the contents of the psyche.

⁶⁰ John Welch, Spiritual Pilgrims: Carl Jung and Teresa of Avila, NY: Paulist Press, 1982, p. 73.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 191ff.

⁶² C.J. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, pp. 185ff.

This personification of the archetypes is partially intuitive, but Jung also advocates this as a conscious process:

The essential thing is to differentiate oneself from these unconscious contents by personifying them, and at the same time to bring them into relationship with consciousness. That is the technique for stripping them of their power. It is not too difficult to personify them, as they always possess a certain degree of autonomy, a separate identity of their own. Their autonomy is a most uncomfortable thing to reconcile oneself to, and yet the very fact that the unconscious presents itself in that way gives us the best means of handling it.

C.G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 187.

particularly important when the roles of the sexes are no longer so clearly defined and women may need to discover their *anima* and men their *animus*.⁶³

Though the archetypes are not conscious in the sense of the self-aware and controlling ego, Jung suggests that there are many degrees of consciousness and that the unconscious may be viewed as a "multiple consciousness".⁶⁴

It strikes me as significant, particularly in regard to our hypothesis of a multiple consciousness and its phenomena, that the characteristic alchemical vision of sparks scintillating in the blackness of the arcane substance should, for Paracelsus, change into the spectacle of the "interior firmament" and its stars. He beholds the darksome psyche as a star-strewn night sky, whose planets and fixed constellations represent the archetypes in all their luminosity and numinosity. The starry vault of heaven is in truth the open book of cosmic projection, in which are reflected the mythologems, i.e., the archetypes. In this vision astrology and alchemy, the two classical functionaries of the psychology of the collective unconscious, join hands.⁶⁵

The Transcendent Function

The *transcendent function* enables the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious. This relationship does not easily develop for modern humanity since consciousness and its ego possess a "threshold intensity" so that all elements that are too weak remain in the unconscious. Its "definiteness" and "directedness" inhibit and repress incompatible material. This is different from the primitive human where the barrier between conscious and unconscious is much more permeable. The acquisition of the sophisticated conscious mind has its advantages, but the disadvantage is the loss of awareness and openness to the unconscious, and the natural self-regulation of interplay between conscious and unconscious.⁶⁶

Jung indicates that the therapist cannot save the client from the unconscious or cure it. Rather must the therapist help to formulate a moral and mental attitude to the unconscious and an approach which will later equip the client to live with and use creatively the dynamics of the psyche. This function which enables this is called *transcendent* "because it makes the transition from one attitude (conscious) to another (unconscious) organically possible, without loss of the unconscious."⁶⁷ In terms of the unconscious' own devices, the transcendent function is manifested in dreams and spontaneous fantasies. However, the active use by the client of the transcendent function is also important:

Visual types should concentrate on the expectation that an inner image will be produced. Audio-verbal types usually hear inner words, perhaps mere fragments of apparently meaningless sentences to begin with ... Others at such times simply hear their "other" voice. There are, indeed, not a few people who are well aware that they possess a sort of inner critic or judge who immediately comments on everything they say or do. There are others, again, who neither see nor hear anything inside themselves, but whose hands have the knack of giving expression to the contents of the unconscious. Such people can profitably work with plastic materials. Those who are able to express the unconscious by means of bodily movements are rather rare. Still rarer, but equally valuable, is automatic writing, direct or with the planchette.⁶⁸

⁶³. John A. Sanford, The Invisible Partners: How The Male and Female in each of Us Affects our Relationships, Paulist Press, 1980, pp. 105ff.

⁶⁴ C.G. Jung, On The Nature of the Psyche, pp. 100ff.

⁶⁵. Ibid., p. 105. This view of the unconscious would help to explain how complexes of the unconscious are frequently met as persons within oneself.

⁶⁶. For the discussion of this see "The Transcendent Function", in The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, Collected Works, Vol. 8. "The Transcendent Function" is also contained in The Portable Jung, ed. by Joseph Campbell, The Viking Portable Library, The Viking Press, 1971, pp. 273ff.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 279.

⁶⁸. Ibid., pp. 290-291.

Jung cautions that the position of the ego must be maintained as a counter-force to the unconscious, lest it be overwhelmed by a liberated unconscious and lose "its head so to speak."⁶⁹ This is one of the reasons that the first developmental stage, which includes the formation and strengthening of the ego, is so important. He also cautions against the attempt to evaluate the contents of the psyche as "true" or "correct" and the prejudice against mythological assumptions. ... "mythologems *exist*, even though their statements do not coincide with our incommensurable idea of 'truth'."⁷⁰

Synchronicity

Though at first glance this seems an esoteric subject, it is really crucial in understanding Jung's view of the psyche and its world. Thus I want to give it attention. This is a theory which was under development from Jung's earlier days and led to his doctoral dissertation "On the Psychology and Pathology of So-called Occult Phenomena." It was greatly influenced by the parapsychological studies of J. B. Rhine at Duke and Jung's study of the I Ching and astrology. However, his autobiography also makes clear that this theory was constellated by many of the elements of his own life experience, though the word "synchronicity" was not used until 1930.⁷¹ His most complete treatment is to be found in a work entitled Synchronicity written in the later years of his life. The Preface to this work traces the origin of this idea to conversations with Albert Einstein and the text clearly indicates indebtedness to conversations with the physicist W. Pauli.

Jung begins this work by indicating that modern physics has "shattered the absolute validity of natural law and made it relative", along with its underlying principle of causality.⁷² If we are open to its perception, there is another world of experience besides the world of causality, namely the world of chance or acausal events which fall outside the realm of probability but are "meaningful coincidences", outside the normal relationships of time and space (the usual framework of events where one causes another). Physics discovery of discontinuity (e.g. the orderedness of energy quanta and radium decay) indicates a general order of acausal events of which synchronicity is one type of such phenomena, so called because of their coincidence in time.⁷³

Jung, in his treatment of the psyche, uses synchronicity to explain two phenomena: one is the relationship of interior psychic events to exterior events where there is no observable and probable relationship of cause and effect, and the second is the relationship of the psyche to the physiological organism. Regarding the first, such a coincidence of internal event (e.g. a dream, mental telepathy, clairvoyance) and external event seem to rest on "an archetypal foundation," in Jung's experience.⁷⁴ Regarding the second, it means that Jung argues for giving up the idea that the psyche is somehow connected with the brain, and raises the question as to "whether the co-ordination of psychic and physical processes in a living organism can be understood as a synchronistic phenomenon rather than as a causal relation."⁷⁵ He then goes on to discuss the observations of persons during deep synopes resulting from acute brain injuries and in deep comas where some form of consciousness continued to exist and observations were made without apparent use of the sense organs.⁷⁶ With the help of the physicist W. Pauli the classical physics space/time/causality model of reality was replaced by one which Pauli and Jung felt was valid for both physics and psychology:

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 295.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 299.

⁷¹ C. G. Jung, Synchronicity, transl. by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series, Princeton U. Press, 1960, p. vii.

⁷² Ibid., p. 5.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 25.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 89.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 90ff. As recorded in the chapter on "Visions" in his autobiography Memories, Dreams and Reflections, Jung had similar experiences during a heart attack.

Indestructible Energy

Constant Connection
through Effect

Inconstant Connection
through Contingence,

(Causality)



Equivalence, or "Meaning"
(Synchronicity)

Space-Time Continuum ⁷⁷

The value of Jung's synchronicity theory, for our purposes, is that, though it is developed within the limits of his scientific perspective, it offers intriguing support to the spiritual dimensions of the psyche and its interrelationship to its world and its biological organism, -- and yet its independence.

⁷⁷. Ibid., p. 98.