

READING #1

RELIGIOUS AND SCIENTIFIC IMAGES OF THE HUMAN

A. THE BIBLICAL IMAGE (Genesis)

(Chapter 1)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth. And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the

seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And so it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And of every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

(Chapter 2)

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up – for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground - then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. The man said, "this at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

(Chapter 3)

Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself," he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" the man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "the serpent beguiled me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." To the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you." And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the

days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.

Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” – therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the Garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD.” And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is couching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

B. THE SCIENTIFIC IMAGE

THE SCIENTIFIC IMAGE (BY FLOYD MATSON)

The scientific world view which has been identified for three centuries with the names of Galileo and Newton -the cosmology of classical mechanics - looked upon an infinite universe of perfect symmetry and absolute precision. It was, in fact, nothing less than the image of the Great Machine. All that happened on earth and in the heavens, as J. Robert Oppenheimer has written of this cosmic vision, had its natural and knowable efficient cause. “The great machine had a determinate course. Knowledge of its present and therefore its future for all time was, in principle, man’s to obtain, and perhaps in practice as well.” And something more: “The giant machine was not only causal and determinate; it was *objective* in the sense that no human act of intervention qualified its behavior.”

This was the essential characteristic of the vast perpetual-motion apparatus conceived by Descartes and perfected by Newton: it was not only untouched and untouchable by human hands, but devoid of all purpose. It may be that the most revolutionary achievement of the Newtonian worldview, as Niels Bohr among others has suggested, was this expulsion of purpose from the universe. To be sure, the task had been begun a

century earlier by Copernicus, whose own subversive astronomy led such devout souls as John Donne to tremble for the newly displaced persons of earth:

. . . [the] new philosophy calls all in doubt,
The Element of fire is quite put out;
The sun is lost, and th'earth, and no mans wit
Can well direct him where to looke for it.
'Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone;
All just supply, and all Relation.

The Copernican revolution had dislodged man from the center of the universe; it remained for the Galilean-Newtonian revolution to remove him from the universe altogether. Through the inexorable reduction of all knowable reality to the dimensions of objective mechanism, the gap between the knower and the known, between the subjective self and the world, came to the measure of the distance between appearance and reality. Only the *primary* qualities (number, figure, magnitude, position and motion), inhering in the object "out there," were henceforth to be regarded as substantially real; the *secondary* qualities (all else which the senses perceive or the mind assembles), inhering in the human subject, were in effect unreal. "I think," said Galileo, "that these tastes, odours, colours, etc., . . . are nothing else than mere names, but hold their residence solely in the sensitive body; so that if the animal were removed, every such quality would be abolished and annihilated."

The soul has for many centuries seemed to philosophers to pose a serious problem in metaphysics. How is it possible that a world consisting entirely of material particles in fields of force can contain systems that are conscious? If you think of the soul (which is for these purposes is synonymous with consciousness or mind, the soul as an essential non-physical component of the human being (that is, it can't be explained within the same categories that are used to describe and explain the nature of physical objects and process) and as such that the soul is distinct and/or separable from the physical reality, then you may be either a **dualist** or an **idealist**. If you are a dualist, you may be a **substance dualist** or a **emergent property dualist**. Both the idealist and the substance dualist believe that the soul and body are separable and that the essence of the person is found in the non-physical soul. The emergent dualist believes that the soul and body are distinct but inseparable. If you deny dualism and idealism and deny that the soul exists as something irreducibly subjective, then you are a **materialist**.

C. THREE POSSIBLE OPTIONS;

1. The Scientific Image: **Materialism**: a person is essentially, and only, a physical body; a person does not have a soul.
2. Religious Images: A. **Idealism**: a person is essentially a soul that may or may not have a body; the body is not an essential component of the person; a person can

exist without a body. **B. Dualism:** both the soul and the body are essential to the being of the person; a person cannot be without both.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT: ARE ZOMBIES POSSIBLE?

Recently David Chalmers has raised the issue of Zombies: The Zombie Argument, is contained in the following passage from his book *The Conscious Mind*:

...consider the logical possibility of a zombie; someone or something physically identical to me (or to any other conscious being), but lacking conscious experiences altogether. At the global level, we can consider the logical possibility of a zombie world: a world physically identical to ours, but in which there are no conscious experiences at all. In such a world, everybody is a zombie.

Which of the three views of the human, materialism, idealism, or dualism would think the idea of a zombie is intelligible?