



When Bad Things Happen – Consider Belief in Theofatalism

A Different View of Life Hidden in Plain Sight

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New Royal Accommodation Therapy© for Serenity and Inner Peace

PREFACE

Note: Please help to distribute this free but important book to suffering people who need a new resource for serenity and inner peace. These are times that try our souls. The present generation of Americans has not experienced the kind of challenges that the COVID-19 virus pandemic has brought. Our personal and national wills are being stretched nearly to the breaking point. Civil unrest is appearing to stress the basic assumptions about our founding principles. Change is on the horizon that we could not imagine a few months ago. Our human mortality has not up until now been of much concern, except for the mourners who are affected daily by the horror of a death in the family. Now, the news and life-changes being imposed upon everyone expose how thin the façade of civilization really is. Many people turn to their traditional faith and others seek a new source of comfort in these times of trouble. While this work was developed from other needs, the motivation for it was the same, i.e., learning to live with suffering that as individuals we did not cause and that personally we cannot fix. If this book helps a few people accommodate this need that will be fine. If it helps to start something new, that will be great. Please help to distribute this ebook to everyone you know. Perhaps you might arrange and host a virtual meetup group for mutual support after you read it. Someone will be glad that you did.

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This work is the culmination of several decades learning to survive and even grow through the most stressful experience anyone can suffer, untimely loss of a beloved spouse. That occurred on September 3, 1985 at 7:20 pm in what was then Arlington Hospital in Arlington, VA. I watched my wife die untimely at age fifty-two after living ten years with the threat of breast cancer. I had promised her to love, honor and cherish, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, forsaking all others, ‘til death shall we part’ – and then it was over after thirty-one years and twenty-one days. Some advisors told me I should get on with my life, but that was impossible because my life was totally changed. When my traditional family belief system and our church leaders provided no comfort, I entered therapy for complicated grief, death anxiety, issues in aging, and depression, which started me on a pathway I could never have imagined. My first therapist suggested that I do some journaling between sessions, which eventually grew into a formal search for information on mental health. Through three decades and publishing a dozen books, and several episodes of major depression, my search led to this conclusion. It is presented in third person because I contend that I did not write it. I am merely the messenger relaying the words from a source I do not know. My fingers often shook as I typed the words which challenged the core of my beliefs.

There are many different religious myths among the people on earth but since my tradition is based in Christianity, that was the original focus of my search. My theological bias was stressed more and more as I learned more and more until it could no longer be sustained. I am not a biblical scholar, but I can read. The word, “God” is used 3,995 times in the Bible. As I was led to a wider range of information the work broadened into a larger view of Most-High GOD above all Gods, which is mentioned only sixty-two times in scripture, eleven times in the New Testament - Creator of all that is - *including the little God of the Bible*. This distinction leads to my assumption that the little God of the Bible and the gods and myths and fables in all other holy books are creations and servants of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator,

Destroyer. From this work, I developed a belief system called “theofatalism” that helped me make sense of the ubiquitous suffering among all of creation. It did not remove the pain and suffering from the many losses and disappointments my life, in fact my suffering was increased as I had to let go of the traditional interpretations of biblical scriptures. But it provided a new form of response for living with inevitable human suffering, one that challenges conventional therapies and theories of human psychology.

This book is a discussion of my work leading to a new form of counseling I call © Royal Accommodation Therapy. I offer it to suffering souls, pastors, therapists and counselors with hope that it will be useful to others who may feel abandoned and betrayed by traditional beliefs about how the world works when it does not work as expected. I do not expect anyone who makes a living from the Bible to accept theofatalism unless Most-High GOD wills it, but perhaps some people for whom religion does not work will be interested in it. If it helps a few people that will be fine, and if it starts something new that will be great. All in GOD’s will of course. What readers may think of it is not mine to control. My assignment is so difficult I feel like a missionary in a foreign land who does not speak the native language. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote, “Don’t judge the day by the harvest you reap, rather by the seeds that you sow.” Therefore, I must sow the seeds wherever they may fall. Namaste.

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INTRODUCTION

Life is not an easy matter. You cannot live through it without falling into frustration and cynicism unless you have before you a great idea which raises you above all kinds of perfidy and baseness.

Leon Trotsky

Religion helps some people navigate life, but what if it fails to deliver? After you get passed the unending mystery of why there is anything existing at all, one is confronted with why things are as they are. Where do you go when you are suffering, and you realize there is a supreme GOD causing the suffering? A dangerous problem is the loss of resilience normally provided by faith among those who are religious when life becomes unbearable. Poet, Robert Frost observed that it is hard to get into this world and hard to get out and what lies in between makes no sense. The Buddha observed that suffering is the common state of human existence, which is a response to feeling discontent coupled with desire for things to be different. In his old age, Oedipus could say suffering and time had been “instructors in contentment.” Apostle Paul wrote of his discovery this way, “I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.” (Philippians 4:11-12) Unfortunately, he did not explain the secret. In short, we can’t always get what we want in life, and what we do get often is very painful, yet we must be satisfied with what we get. Many of life’s greatest lessons are only learned from pain. Sometimes we must learn from the messes that we make. And theofatalism says messes all must be necessary, or they would not exist.

Attachment to desire is the problem; accepting attachments to people, money, and things and letting them go is the Buddhist solution offered, even if it means letting go of the desire to be happy and content. Cravings create clinging or obsession (upadana) to sensing perceptions, leading to a vicious cycle of further craving and striving, which is ultimately unsatisfactory and stressful. “The ego confuses wants and needs and is impatient. It is constantly demanding and wanting. Surrendering craving, wanting, and desiring to God brings about great and rapid spiritual progress.” (*Hawkins, David R.. The Eye of the I (p. 275). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) When you expect nothing, you will never be disappointed. However, you cannot not desire as the desire not to desire is a desire. It gets complicated. All in GOD’s will of course.

Socrates reportedly said, “He who is not contented with what he has would not be contented with what he would like to have.” Life in most of the world is not about seeking more and more, it is about celebrating here and now. Our culture is not very helpful. Capitalism is driven by discontent and by converting luxuries into necessities fueled by advertising to increase sales and profits. It is based on the assumption that people all are competitive and want the best possible lives for themselves – the rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. Consider the changes in automobiles over the years – from hand-cranked to electric windows, from open window ventilation to standard air conditioning, from simple instrumentation to digital displays, from manual diagnostics to computerized sensors, etc. Setting higher goals and achieving them is the be all of life in the USA, to focus on the future. Marketers know they can sell more product merely by printing “NEW” on the packages. Progress through change is rewarded and stagnation is vilified, creating many losers and a few winners. Capitalism is based upon financial growth funded by debts, personally as well as local, state and federal governments. Winners can easily and quickly become losers, and losers may never get a break

while a few winners turn everything they touch into gold. There is something very wrong about a society that pays its professional athletes and actors far more than its teachers and doctors and nurses. Capitalism is the unequal distribution of wealth, but the necessary opposite of communism is the equal distribution of misery. All economic systems and government empires rise and fall through economic cycles, bringing great disruptions and much suffering. Then, desperate people do desperate things. In contrast, there are remote tribal groups living on earth in primitive lifestyles that have not changed in centuries and others living in a wide variety of cultures around the world in between these two extreme opposites. There must be some force more powerful than people to make all this happen. That force is called Most-High GOD in this work. Ergo, theofatalism.

In real life, events often do not go as hoped or as planned, people disappoint and die, and the future is indefinitely uncertain. The first century Stoic, Epictetus said (*as written by his pupil, Arrian*) that adverse events do not disturb people, but their opinions about them do. “We tend to see the world as we are, not as it is.” (*Halliwell, Ed. Mindfulness Made Easy (p. 78). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) To Epictetus, all external events are beyond our control, so we should accept them calmly and dispassionately whatever happens, even unto death. Individuals are responsible only for their own actions, which they can examine and accept through rigorous self-discipline in the use of either deductive, inductive or abductive reasoning. Change your opinions/thoughts and you change your feelings and promote healing, according to the “mind cure” and “new thought” movements of the last century. These concepts have morphed into the trend towards “positive psychology.” This is not always helpful. “Patterns of automatic thought and sensation have become ingrained over the course of a lifetime, and over the lifetimes of our parents and our ancestors – we can’t simply decide not to have them. This is why crude attempts at positive thinking may not always help: we find ourselves denying or fighting the reality of our experience.” *Halliwell, Ed. Mindfulness Made Easy (p. 75). Hay House. Kindle Edition.* Mindful acceptance of human nature with its alternating cycles of life is offered as a solution in theofatalism.

Thoughts precede words, and words converted to actions become reality. Henry Ford reportedly said, “If you think you can or think you cannot, you usually are right.” Sounding like Buddhism, President Lincoln reportedly said, undoubtedly before the Civil War, “I have observed that people are just about as happy as they choose to be.” But, if thoughts control feelings and actions, where do thoughts come from and what controls thoughts? The ultimate, as yet unsolved, mystery is a working relationship between the brain, a physical object, and the mind, an immaterial concept which leads to the “mind-body problem.” Modern neurology is finding that the mind/brain affects the body and the body affects the mind/brain. When we discover that the world does not possess the value or meaning that we want it to have or that things do not work out the way we expected, some people may find themselves in a crisis with symptoms of depression and anxiety. Kathryn Greene-McCreight, a theologian and Episcopal priest, described her darkest years of chronic depression: “I really did imagine God as a huge cat and myself as a helpless mouse being batted back and forth by God’s paws. When will God stop playing with me like this?” (*Greene-McCreight, Kathryn. Darkness Is My Only Companion (Kindle Location 2468). Baker Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.*)

People suffering such a mental health crisis may seek professional help for their disrupted lives if it is available and they can afford it, and psychiatrists may diagnose a

psychopathology and prescribe drugs when the underlying issue is a problem with understanding GOD. This is a religious or spiritual problem.

(Note: The psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) included a category entitled Religious or Spiritual Problem (ICD-9-CM, V62.89) For the first time, there is acknowledgment of distressing religious and spiritual experiences as nonpathological problems. According to its author, Dr. David Lukoff, this category can be used when the focus of clinical attention is a religious or spiritual problem. Examples include distressing experiences that involve loss or questioning of faith, problems associated with conversion to a new faith, or questioning of other spiritual values which may not necessarily be related to an organized church or religious institution. (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 685)

Dr. Lukoff explained as follows: “Spiritual distress is the state in which the individual experiences or is at risk of experiencing a disturbance in a belief or value system that is the source of strength and hope. Without hope, people can lose the strength to endure. The most important task is to give people in spiritual crisis a positive context for their experiences and sufficient information about the process that they are going through. It is essential that they move away from the concept of disease and recognize the healing nature of their crisis.” Painful spiritual enlightenment has been beneficial in healing deep psychic wounds. This work develops a new hopeful therapy for such cases. www.spiritualcompetency.com

Humans are a small step removed by their genes from other sentient species on earth who must compete among themselves for survival. Plans do not work out, people disappoint and die, and life is not fair. The earth is a very violent place where wars, diseases, crimes, and geological disasters abound. The assassinated Beatle, John Lennon said life is what happens as you are making other plans. Tribalism and competition – us vs. them - are part of human nature; winners and losers, wars and revolutions are bridled only by government, and that not very effectively. Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and many other therapies were developed to help people deal with life traumas. Such mind treatments have their place, but they are insufficient and unavailable for many sufferers since the mind/body problem still is unsolved. Why they, along with prescription drugs, work for some and not others is unknown. For some suffering people, rational preemptive suicide seems to be a way out when life becomes unbearable. Public-private attempts to understand and prevent suicide still are in the incipient stage. How can one praise the God who made the Self when that self is in so much pain as to wish life extinguished? There should be a better way, and maybe there is, for suffering souls to accommodate the world as it is when that is necessary to survive, which is the basic desire of all sentient beings.

Jungian analyst, Dr. James Hollis wrote, “Depression, loss, disease, war, poverty, betrayal, angst, murder, fraud, theft, grief, and so on are part of the human condition from which none of us is exempt. But to move beyond a posture of outrage (and impotence) at life’s suffering, we are called to ask another question: to what present task is this swampland calling me? Asking this question moves us from a posture of victim to engagement with the unfolding of our destiny. When one can let go of the great hidden agenda that drives humanity and its varied histories, then one can begin to encounter the immensity of one’s own soul.” *(Swamplands of the Soul, Inner City Books, 1996)* Dr. Hollis says we can live without happiness, but not without meaning in our lives. It is precisely our mortality that makes our

need for meaning necessary. Some religious people may say life has no meaning apart from the plan of God for their lives. The opposing view of nihilism claims there is no meaning in life, it just is whatever it is. Practitioners of Buddhism and some researchers in neurology claim that the Self that is “I” does not really exist, it merely is an imaginary construct of the mind that does not appear anywhere in the brain. They go so far to say that all human perception is illusion, and only the enlightened ones know the truth. But others disagree. Illusions may be immaterial, but people can still believe them and act upon them, like children who believe in Santa Claus or the tooth fairy. Some things are certain. Life is a struggle between joy and despair, love and fear, trust and betrayal, and then you die. Life always is fatal. We all must navigate white water on the way to our inevitable waterfall, and the closer we get the faster time seems to accelerate. Nietzsche said, “Those who have a why to live can bear with almost any how.” This work offers a reply to the “why?” of life, i.e., GOD’s will. Most-High GOD is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

There is a belief called theofatalism that offers to make sense of the apparent nonsense and suffering in the world. If suffering in life is inevitable, perhaps it can be understood, and with understanding there may come a greater measure of resilience and inner peace through accommodation of life as it is. Nothing, from atoms to galaxies happens - past, present, and future - outside the will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

DERIVATION

Theofatalism is belief in the primary triune prime force in the universe that Generates, Operates, and Destroys everything material and immaterial from atoms to galaxies according to its will, i.e., Most-High GOD. The sciences of cosmology and astrophysics argues for a supremely intelligent source in opposition to the possibility of randomness and free will. The earth and its life forms argue for a precisely organizing force or supreme intelligence. The existence of little God in the Bible can be debated, but the Prime Force in everything from atoms to galaxies is self-evident. As such, it is assumed that nothing happens among all sentient beings outside the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. This belief system may help people feel good inside whatever happens outside - or not. Theofatalism provides a solution to the ubiquitous question of “why” that has been debated since the dialogues of Plato and Aristotle; GOD’s Will. Theofatalism is the ultimate absolute explanation for what is, what was, and what will be, from atoms to galaxies – no exceptions. Theofatalism has it all covered.

Theofatalism is derived by integrating three concepts:

1) the Hindu concept of Trimurti, i.e., the triune gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva recognized as the sources of creation, maintenance, and destruction of all things. These three sources are restated as Generator, Operator, Destroyer. GOD.

2) the concept of theological fatalism, i.e., the existence of an omnipotent power that determines all events past, present, and future, and

3) causal determinism which infers that all events and thoughts are linked to previous events connected in a perfect chain of necessary and sufficient events going back to the First Cause, which leads forward to the present inevitability of all things material and immaterial.

Theofatalism consolidates these three precepts into the concept of GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer, the prime force in the universe and whatever other universes there may be. Nothing, good or bad, material or immaterial, whether thoughts or actions, happens or does not happen without the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. This concept accommodates all belief systems, past, present, and future as the will of Most-High GOD above gods. Many people cannot accept the “destroyer” aspect of GOD, although they acknowledge natural disasters like floods, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, droughts, and earthquakes as “acts of God.” In Christianity, people who do evil things are assumed to be acting outside the will and grace of God. In theofatalism, the only plausible answer to “why?” is GOD’s will - from atoms to galaxies; no exceptions. Theofatalism carries this belief into all forms of suffering, physical, emotional, and mental included. But it also provides a way of accommodating the will of GOD in your personal life.

ORIGINATION

Life is a wonderful opera, except that it hurts.

Joseph Campbell

Theofatalism was developed by Lewis Tagliaferre while he was searching for emotional comfort after the untimely death of his wife in 1985. He thought he could not live without her and the lifestyle that she provided, and he was inconsolable. He made the living and she made the living worthwhile. Losses of several following relationships only deepened his grief and increased the depression that followed as he attended many funerals and lived alone in isolation in his terminal years. When his traditional faith failed to provide any consolation, it felt like the earth was removed from under him and there was no firm place for him to stand – just as Albert Einstein felt when he discovered the new laws of physics. During the unspeakable grief after untimely death of his wife, Joy, British theologian C. S. Lewis (1899-1963) wrote, “Nobody told me that grief feels so much like fear. There is not much danger I will stop believing in God. The real danger is that I will come to believe such terrible things about Him. Go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find. A door slammed in your face and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the other side. After that, silence. You might as well turn aside. Why is He so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent in time of trouble?” (*A Grief Observed*, Bantam Book, 1961) Indeed.

C. S. Lewis died shortly after his insurmountable loss in 1963. After his wife died, Tagliaferre felt betrayed and abandoned by withdrawal of the church support network he had trusted. Jesus declared, “Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted,” but that did not work for him. The lifestyle he had adopted for more than thirty years was gone, and its replacement was only anticipated dread. Even the church pastor had no words of help because his eldest son had been killed in an auto accident while attending seminary, and he was in irreconcilable grief himself. His faith in the Lord and His people seemed to have forsaken Tagliaferre, just as the apostles ran away when Jesus was crucified. His display of grief seemed to be contagious, and people avoided him. His subsequent loss of support presented as anger, depression, resentment, emptiness, despair, sadness, and isolation. Although he was an ordained deacon and Sunday school adult teacher, Tagliaferre found no peace in scripted

theology. So, he set out to find some way to survive the worst grief and post trauma shock imaginable. His life was shattered and, like Humpty-Dumpty, it could not be put back together again. After his counseling with conventional therapies was exhausted and a dozen temporary substitute relationships all ended with even more grief, he expanded the search for inner peace through reading and journaling during his retirement years.

His research for relief spanned the fields of religion, psychology, sociology, cosmology, geology, anthropology, criminology, history, government, and more. He discovered life is hard and complex among the many living species on earth, and what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. Much of the time we are lost in the dismal states of disappointment, guilt, grief, betrayal, doubt, depression, anger, terror and the like. Life is a struggle between opposites conveyed by words including joy and suffering, hope and despair, calm and agitation, love and hatred, success and failure, trust and fear, growth and decay, health and illness – and then we die.

Theofatalism claims that any religion which denies this reality is false and delusional. A father of psychology, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) defined religion as: *A system of wishful illusions together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find nowhere else... a fantasy structure from which a man must be set free if he is to grow to maturity.* He viewed religious beliefs as fantasies that prevent people from coming to terms with how things really are. In contrast, Swiss psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung (1875-1961) saw religious practice as a necessary and valuable symbol of a deeper spiritual aspect of being human – in addition to the physical and mental and emotional - that takes many forms throughout human cultures. Tagliaferre concluded that a belief is needed which accommodates the value of Freud's definition plus supports the basic human need for grounding in spirituality. He published several books describing his journey and its practical applications to life, leading to this theory of a new belief called theofatalism.

THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

The following discussion presents views of the Bible not often preached in churches because they challenge the traditional interpretations of scriptures. This discussion likely will be troublesome to the faithful who have ascribed authority to their Christian leaders without challenging their dogma. They teach the Bible by book, chapter, and verse unlike theofatalism, which compiles scriptures by topic or subject. You are encouraged to read the referenced scriptures in context to see the Bible in a different way than is usually preached in churches. This section concludes with an argument for theofatalism as the only way to explain its dominance among world religions in spite of its many difficulties, i.e. the will of Most-High GOD.

Orthodox Christianity believes in a sovereign creator God. There is Father God with human traits depicted as anthropomorphic “he” who authored creation. God, as author and authority, has the right to institute the rules of behavior for what he created. Theologian Millard Erickson puts it this way: “In the ultimate sense, if there is a supreme being higher than humans

or anything else in the created order, he has the right/power to determine what we are to believe and how we are to live. God is the authority in these matters because of who he is. Conversely, this means that we as the creatures are utterly dependent upon our Creator, our author, for meaning in Scriptures. The theological position that views God as author offers additional theological reasons for interpreting or understanding Scripture's literal meaning rather than evaluating it according to human reason, experience, or desires. So, too, with human authors of biblical texts." (*Virkler, Henry A. Hermeneutics (p. 51 - 76) Baker Publishing Group, 2018 Kindle Edition.*)

Scripture says that Jesus "taught as one having authority." (Matthew 7:29, 28:18) "No one ever spoke the way this man does." (John 7:46) Authority can be derived from superior knowledge, higher rank, position of power, and confidence by faith in the leader. Experiments over the recent past have proven that once authority over a group or an individual is established, most subjects will obey to extreme lengths like children do when they are good so Santa Claus will grant their wish for Christmas presents. This human response to authority is confirmed in military basic training, as any veteran will attest. Perhaps the best example of mass authority is the way the Kim dynasty has controlled North Korea for three generations. Allegiance and obedience to a religious authority figure have been well demonstrated throughout history. One example is the restrictive lifestyle of Mennonites and Amish sects that control the lives of members under their interpretation of the Bible. Every guru in every religion must exhibit such authority or they would not have any followers. So, when a pastor tells a grieving family their deceased loved one "is in heaven with the Lord," they tend to believe it. Never mind there is no scripture that specifically says that. But the authority of Jesus was denied in his hometown of Nazareth because his neighbors saw him only as the carpenter's son with normal brothers and sisters, so he could do few miracles there. "Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his own town and in his own home." (Matthew 58:53-58) Still, there seems to be something about people that wants to follow some form of God even into heaven. "In (heaven) we shall be so taken outside of concern for our puny selves that ego, pride, and vanity will be swept aside. God himself will be our sun, moon, and sky!" (*Rogers, Michael Allen. What Happens After I Die? (p. 198). Crossway. Kindle Edition.*)

Challenging religious authority has its risks, but so does obedience. More than 900 believers died at the command of their cult leader in the infamous Jonestown mass suicide. Authority is determined more by the followers than by the leader because without willing followers the leader is impotent. The famous Milgram experiment showed that normal people will inflict pain on subjects when ordered to by assumed authority figures, which explains why average citizen soldiers can be induced to kill their "enemies" in time of war. One's religious belief, or lack thereof, depends upon the authority accepted of the source for the interpretations of scripture. This writer subscribes to no theological authority, so his discussion of the Bible is unaffected by such influence; it is driven by his own intuition. All in Most-High GOD's will of course.

(Note: The Milgram experiments on obedience to authority figures was a series of social psychology experiments conducted by Yale University psychologist Stanley Milgram in 1961-1974. They measured the willingness of study participants, men from a diverse range of occupations with varying levels of education, to obey an authority figure who instructed them to perform acts conflicting with their personal conscience. Participants were led to believe that

they were assisting an unrelated experiment, in which they had to administer electric shocks to a staged "learner" for disobedience. These fake electric shocks were gradually increased under command of the authority to levels that would have been fatal had they been real. The experiment was repeated many times around the world, with fairly consistent results; sixty-five percent of subjects inflicted the "fatal" shocks while thirty-five percent refused and terminated the experiment. (Obedience to Authority, An Experimental View 1974)

If a stranger says Abe Lincoln was over six feet tall, you might doubt it even if it were true. But, if Mrs. Lincoln said so, perhaps you would believe it, even if she were lying. What makes one person believed when they are lying and another person doubted when they are telling the truth? People grant authority to some sources and deny it to others. This decision is performed in the human brain by some process not yet fully understood, but it is the basis of all the world's religions and beliefs about many things. Many Christians believe the Bible is the "Word of God" and grant it superior authority as totally true and completely trustworthy. Muslims believe the Quran is the "Word of Allah" and deny the divinity of Christ and persecute "people of the book" in many countries. Muslims grant authority to interpret the Quran to imams, and Christians grant authority to interpret the Bible to pastors and priests. Atheists do not grant authority to either holy book. According to Pascal's wager, if they assume there is no God and that is true they may lose nothing, but if they assume there is no God and that is false they may lose eternity. If there is only a tiny probability that Most-High GOD truly exists, it makes sense to behave as if it did because the rewards could be infinite, whereas the lack of belief risks eternal misery or eternal oblivion, depending upon interpretations of scriptures by church authorities. All in GOD's will of course.

Evidence for the authority of theofatalism exists in various scriptures of both the Judeo-Christian and Muslim faiths. Christians may say, "God is in control" without really asking what that means. "...God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone He wishes." (Daniel 5:21) If true, that would include all the present-day political leaders of all the countries. The Bible says that in the beginning, God created everything from uncounted atoms to uncounted galaxies throughout the universe in addition to the earth and all sentient beings. God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind. And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:10) In the biblical creation mythf, humans and all the animals were herbivores; how some became carnivores is not explained. (Genesis 1: 29) After they ate the forbidden fruit thereby gaining knowledge of good and evil and were banished from the Garden of Eden, the first humans, Adam and Eve, had two sons. The first sacrifice offered by the son, Abel, that God preferred over the produce of the land offered by his brother, Cain, was a blood offering, the killing of an innocent animal. (Genesis 4:2-5) Cain was so jealous he killed his brother, who was replaced with another boy named Seth. No other children are mentioned for Adam and Eve. The following generations of people must have been the offspring of incest among the first family because there is no other explanation unless, of course, the story is only a myth or fable, which must be the will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

Sacrificial blood-letting is featured throughout the Bible and reached its peak in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ to absolve sinners, whom God created in his own image, from their sins. (Genesis 1:26-27) After Adam and Eve and their descendants acquired knowledge of good and evil, God banned them from the garden lest they also eat from the tree of life and “become as one of us” to live forever. (*Note the plural in Genesis 3:22.*) Their descendants became so wicked that God regretted creating them, so he destroyed all land-based living things in a great flood, saving only the righteous man, Noah, and his family plus pairs of every kind to repopulate the earth. The problem here is there were no rules for lawful behaviors, so it appears God was very capricious in this wholesale genocide of his land-locked creation because they acted like evil humans whom he created. Moreover, the descendants of Noah were no better. As it was with the first family, incest probably was involved. They all spoke the same language and presumed to build a tower all the way to heaven, which scared God, so he created many languages and spread the people wider around the earth to prevent them from doing anything they wanted to do. Since no one really knows how all the various languages developed from a common ancestor, this story is as good as any and provides a good illustration for children’s biblical coloring books. By the way, flood myths are common across a wide range of cultures, extending back into Bronze Age and Neolithic prehistory. These accounts usually depict a flood, sometimes global in scale, usually sent by a deity or deities to destroy civilization as an act of divine retribution.

From the descendants of Noah, God chose Abram/Abraham as the patriarch of his chosen Jewish people, through his son Isaac – after exiling his illegitimate son Ishmael - through his son Jacob/Israel, who stole his birthright from the elder brother, Esau, because God loved Jacob but hated Esau, through King David, a murderer and adulterer who had at least nineteen sons and one daughter, seven wives and many concubines, through centuries of continuing disobedience by the chosen people and their repeated punishment and forgiveness by God, eventually leading to the miracle birth, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of his only son, Jesus Christ/Messiah as the ultimate virtual blood sacrifice to redeem sinners who are called/chosen to accept his gift of universal forgiveness by faith – whom the Jews officially reject to this day. Time and again throughout the Old Testament God condemned their idolatrous behavior and time and again he restored their culture after they were routed by their enemies to show them that he was their God, not because they deserved it or because he loved them so much. The Jews seem to be very slow learners. (Ezekiel 36:11,23,32,38)

But wait. The Jews appear to be unable to accept Jesus as Messiah because they could not with closed eyes and ears, not because they would not. Jesus refused to explain the meaning of his parables to them as he did for his disciples lest they repent and be redeemed, as it was prophesized by Isaiah. “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Therefore, I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them...They stumble because they disobey the message, which is also what they were destined for...God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear, to this very day.’” (Matthew

13:11-16, Isaiah 6:9-10, 12:40, 29:10, Romans 11:8, 1Peter 2:8) So, now we know why the Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah and still do to this day. GOD's will. On the other hand, orthodox Jews claim the description of a coming king of Israel to avenge all their suffering as prophesized in the Old Testament was not fulfilled by the acts of Jesus, so he could not be the promised Messiah whom they still hope will come. But Christian apologetics cite up to 300 scriptures in the Old Testament they claim foretold the coming of Jesus as Messiah, the chief of which may be Isaiah 53. Necessary opposites, all in GOD's will of course. Apostle Paul wrote that eventually, every knee will bow to Jesus, and every tongue will declare he is the primal Lord/King. When that will occur is indefinitely uncertain. (Romans 10:9, 14:11, Philippians 2:10)

(Note: The word "heart" is mentioned 725 times in the Bible (NIV). It implies some decision-making attribute of mankind and of God that is obsolete because we know now that human hearts can be transplanted without changing the personality or character of the recipient. There is a debate among neurologists about the degree to which people really have free will in choices such as obeying God and accepting Christ as their savior or not. People can feel so overwhelmed by a religious authority they cannot think straight. "Our emotions have to be working well for our decisions to count as (freely) well-made. One thing is clear: good choices depend not only on the rational, deliberative part of the left brain but on the right brain emotional part as well. Our brains are pre-programmed to think and feel in certain ways, and it takes the analytical, reflexive, and emotional parts of our brains all working together to give us a fighting chance at making good decisions. Brain science is revealing that our decision-making processes are much more bewildering than we ever imagined, and that our own perceptions of free will should not necessarily be trusted. Choice is complicated.) (Greenfield, Kent. The Myth of Choice: Personal Responsibility in a World of Limits, 2020 (p. 54, 58, 69). Yale University Press. Kindle Edition.)

The Bible presents a very confusing prophecy about the afterlife and the end of time principally in the books of Isaiah and Daniel in the Old Testament and Revelation in the New Testament plus statements by Jesus and Apostle Paul (called eschatology). Thousands of books have been published that offer some version of an afterlife and how the world will end, but there is no consensus about the truth of it. Theologians who claim people will be reunited with loved ones and their families in heaven avoid the instruction of Jesus, “At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.” (Matthew 22:30) Most religions include some belief in an afterlife and the reconstruction of human beings to face judgment, but theologians cannot agree on their various interpretations of the afterlife from their reading of scriptures. Some theologians say the soul separates from the body at death and goes immediately to be with Jesus. Others say the soul “sleeps” suspended in time until the second coming of Christ when they will be united with the Savior. There are other more complicated versions. Which one they teach depends on which seminary they attend. Cosmology predicts the sun will implode in four to six billion years after the earth is wiped out in the ensuing inferno gradually over a very long time. So the biblical prophecy of a new earth and a new heaven after fire engulfs sinners in the end may not be far off the scientific forecast. (1 Corinthians 3:13, 2 Peter 3:10-13) Theofatalism presumes the writers of the Bible and the cosmologists all were doing the will of Most-High GOD, conflicts included. Given the age of the cosmos and the brief time humans have occupied the earth, we must live with indefinite uncertainty about life after death at this time in human evolution. All we can know for sure is the deceased are gone from the earth and we must live without them.

The Bible is not about Most-High GOD, it is what the writers wrote about little God from their time and place among a small and fickle nomadic family and its descendants in a small part of the world. It contains some fantastic tales, and it must be necessary to meet some basic needs of more than two billion people or it would not exist. The Bible is a marvelous book worthy of study, but its little God as depicted more than 2,000 years ago by inspired writers just is not big enough to accommodate the whole earth and the universe as it presently is known. There must be a source higher than that to explain it all. In other words, the little God of the Bible and the gods in all other holy books must be the creation of a Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - for the time and place in which they are written. This assumption is discussed fully in the referenced book titled, *The Bible You Don't Get in Church*.

Worshipping the little God in the biblical stories makes no sense to a rational thinker, but the Bible really is a helluva book compiled by several dozen writers over more than 1,000 years. Those people who believe it is the Word of God appear to be controlled by some force superior to logical reason, which the Bible calls “faith” in various forms 458 times. Theofatalism calls the source of that force, GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer, i.e., Most-High GOD above Gods - because faith, i.e. belief without proof, is a fundamental prerequisite in all religions, not just Christianity. To accept a future that is indefinitely uncertain seems to be more than most people can handle at this stage of human evolution, so faith is assumed in theofatalism to be an act of GOD to meet that need, and like the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “Faith is taking the first step when you don't see the staircase.” Perhaps faith is active imagination in the light of reason. The Catholic Catechism states: “Though faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason. The same God who reveals mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind. The things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God.” Ergo, theofatalism.

Some theologians claim that God created mankind with free will, but they let him off the hook in acting out of that free will by choosing to commit evil. “Likewise in a morally evil action, the ability to act at all comes from God as the Creator, who made the human will as well as the human body, but the vice that makes the action evil is a deformity of the will that is not God’s doing. (*God and the Problem of Evil (Spectrum Multiview Book Series. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.*) This view seems to be an oxymoron; either God created everything, or he did not. “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31) Think about that as you contemplate the carnivorous food chain on planet earth when you enjoy that juicy hamburger or those chicken nuggets or salmon steak. As ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus (341–270 BC) put it: “Either God wants to abolish evil, and cannot; or he can, but does not want to. If he wants to, but cannot, he is impotent. If he can, but does not want to, he is wicked. If an infinitely good God can abolish evil, and God really wants to do it, why is there evil in the world?” (*God and the Problem of Evil, Spectrum Multiview Book Series. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.*) There are only three options: 1) God wants to remove evil that causes suffering, but He cannot, 2) God could relieve suffering, but He chooses not to, and 3) God causes suffering. If God exists and is omnipotent and evil exists, God must cause it. Unless, of course, there is a Most-High GOD above God that controls everything from atoms to galaxies in this and all other universes, including such thoughts about God. This conclusion is developed throughout this work. So please read on.

Swiss psychiatrist, C. G. Jung wrote, “God is the name by which I designate all things which cross my path violently and recklessly, all things which upset my subjective views, plans and intentions, and change the course of my life for better or for worse....Man’s suffering is not caused by his sin but by his paradoxical God....The pendulum of the human mind oscillates between sense and nonsense, not between right and wrong...Inside all chaos there is a cosmos, inside all disorder is a secret order.” (*Memories Dreams and Reflections pp 154, Random House 1963*) Many people seem to need to feel they are loved by God like a doting father would, especially when they suffer. But Christians have been deluded with a one-sided vision of God by religious authorities who claim he is all loving and all good and perfectly just. Those who claim that, “God is love” (1 John 4:8) overlook that God also is described as a “raging fire.” (Isaiah 30:30, Hebrews 10:37) “Few accept the inescapable reality of suffering. But relief from suffering in this life is not the will of God. If it were, we would not suffer.” (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 195-197 eBookIt.com. Kindle Edition.*) So, where do you go when you suffer and discover God is causing the suffering? A wider vision is needed to accommodate the real dark side of GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer. We must begin with reconciliation of scriptures in the Bible.

You probably won’t get this in church, but biblical scriptures say the Lord does not just allow bad things to happen; rather he causes them. Christian apologists may claim that God is just and punished his chosen people, the Jews, only when they deserved it, which they often did. “God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:10-11) Many scriptures appear to say that God creates suffering to punish sinners and to prove that He is the Lord of all. Apostle Paul wrote about an unidentified crisis in his life: “We were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who

raises the dead.” (2 Corinthians 1:8–9) Perhaps he also shakes up our lives when we get off the labyrinth of life we are destined for if that were possible. By his discipline those whom he called are being reminded of his power although it causes pain and suffering. “But in the infallible Word of God in the Old Testament we find infanticide, genocide, incest, slavery, cruelty, human sacrifice, stoning sinners to death and murder of entire villages of people. The meme that morality comes from the biblical God is a canard and the creation of apologists.” (*Probulos, I. M. 101 Reasons for Non-Belief: For Atheists, Agnostics, and Secular Humanists. Kindle Edition.*) A few examples in scripture suffice:

“For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.” (Isaiah 2:12) “Long ago I ordained it. In days of old I planned it; now I have brought it to pass, that you have turned fortified cities into piles of stone. (Isaiah 37:26) “I make peace and create evil. I, the Lord, do all these things.” (Isaiah 45:7) “The Lord kills and makes alive; The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings some low and lifts some up.” (1 Samuel 2:6-7) “Build your nest high as the eagle, and I will bring you down,” says the Lord. (Obadiah 1:4, Jeremiah 49:16) “When a disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?” (Amos 3:6) “Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it? Is it not from the mouth of Most-High GOD that both calamities and good things come? (Lamentations 3:37-38) “If a prophet is deceived and speaks a word (falsely), I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him and destroy him from among my people Israel.” (Ezekiel 14:9) “It is God who directs the lives of his creatures; everyone’s life is in his power.” (Job 12:10) “God sends [those who are perishing] a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false, so [they] will be condemned.” (2 Thessalonians 2:11–12). “I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” (Luke 12:49) It seems like this applied to Jesus also. “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26:39 If Jesus could not avoid his destiny, how can we hope to? We are the clay and God is the potter, making some for common use and some for royal use. (Jeremiah 18:2-6, Isaiah 64:8, Romans 9:19-21) The Quran says the same thing to Muslims; “No calamity comes, no affliction occurs, except by the decision and preordainment of Allah.” (S:64.11) We may not see little God or Most-High GOD but we can see the creation and, while most of it is very impressive, much of it stinks very badly.

These scriptures do not seem to apply to all the suffering nations outside of the chosen people of Israel. For an explanation of that we must look elsewhere. Theofatalism says the writers about little God of the Bible and writers of all other holy books must do the will of Most-High GOD, the Generator, Operator, Destroyer of everything from atoms to galaxies. So does everyone else in the world. No exceptions.

The crucifixion of Jesus is not the end of the story for Christians, but this unlawful evil act serves to support the assumption that nothing happens outside the will and grace of GOD. John Calvin wrote of evils as follows: It is a quite frivolous refuge to say that God otiosely “permits” them, when scripture shows him not only “willing” but the “author” of them. (*Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God pg 176*) “Author” in the Old French of Calvin's day is Auctor - meaning Originator, Creator, Instigator. According to the classic Augustinian/Calvin tradition, God causes, via immutable decrees, every specific evil and every specific suffering as part of his meticulous control of divine providence to bring about: 1) The

redemption of those whom he designated as vessels of honor, 2) The damnation of those whom he designated as vessels of wrath, 3) The many whom he specifically designated for eternal torment in the lake of fire. As John Calvin would without hesitation declare, “For his good pleasure/purpose.” (*Book review by DW, God and the Problem of Evil, 2020 by Chad Meister on www.amazon.com*).

Indeed, the little God of the Bible has a lot of explaining to do. After all, it was God who created the serpent, gave Eve and Adam free will to fall for its temptation to eat the forbidden fruit giving them knowledge of good and evil, and then punished mankind by His own will for being human as He created them in his own image and likeness and knowing what would happen. (Genesis 1:26-27) So, who really is to blame here? “There can be only one conclusion: The failure of man and God’s expression of suffering was by God’s Own Design. Innocent man was designed to fail.” (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 1065-1068). eBookIt.com. Kindle Edition.*) It seems that God created sinful man so He could provide redemption, otherwise life in the Garden of Eden would be utopian because people would not know the distinction between good and evil. Presumably, little God of the Bible chose to plant the tree of knowledge of good and evil for his own purpose. We are not to question why it was done as it was stated in the creation accounts of Genesis because Most-High GOD’s purpose cannot be refuted by its creations, including actions by the little God in the Bible.

Consider the Jewish captivity in Egypt. Just as God had ordained, the descendants of Abraham suffered greatly for four centuries of slavery in Egypt before God heard their cries and decided to intervene, long after Joseph had arranged for their settlement there to avoid starvation during a famine and later was forgotten in his role as executive manager. (Genesis 15:12-15, Exodus 3:7-8) “Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.’” (Genesis 50:24) Pity they had to wait four centuries. This little God seems to have flunked the attribute ascribed to him in Psalm 9:12: “For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not ignore the cries of the afflicted.” The Bible gives no explanation for God’s absence during the Jewish captivity by Egypt. After he killed an Egyptian overseer in defense of his fellow Jews, Moses fled into exile.

Finally, little God called Moses out of exile to free the Jews from captivity, but God says he closed the heart of Pharaoh so that Egypt would suffer many plagues imposed by the power he gave to Moses and know that he is God, capping with death of all the first born sons, (except those of the Jews who were saved in the “Passover”) before Pharaoh let the Jews leave Egypt. Even when Pharaoh released the Jews, God intervened again just to prove he was God. “And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and (destruction of) all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” (Exodus 4:21,14:4) So, it appears the Jews remained captive for four centuries and the Egyptians suffered greatly so they will know that the God of Abraham is the Lord. Interestingly, Apostle Paul and his fellow apostles never are described as entering Egypt to proclaim the “day of the Lord.” Christianity comprises about fifteen percent of modern Egypt with tradition claiming it was originated by Saint Mark.

This little God seems to have an inferiority complex. Consider this dialogue from Apostle Paul in the New Testament: “For Scripture says to Pharaoh: ‘I raised you up for this very

purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.' (Exodus 7:1-5, 9:16) Therefore, God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me: 'Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?' But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?" (Romans 9:17-21) Saint Augustine wrote, "God has made us for himself and our hearts are restless until we find rest in him." But where is the rest in a God who left his chosen people suffer in captive slavery for four centuries? Where is the free will? Ergo, theofatalism.

(Note: The Pope wants to edit the Lord's Prayer because he claims it implies that God causes temptation by pleading, "Lead us not into temptation." (Matthew 6:13) But wait, scripture also says God does not cause temptation: "When tempted, no one should say, God is tempting me. For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone." (James 1:13) So, which are you going to believe? It depends upon what you are given in church. All in GOD's will of course.)

Here is more biblical evidence for the dark side of the little God in the Bible according to the will of Most-High GOD. In order for the Jews to occupy their promised land after roaming forty years in the Sinai desert when they escaped four centuries of captivity in Egypt, God ordered them to destroy all living remnants of the ten tribes who were living there at the time, people whom he had created. (Genesis 15:17-20, Exodus 23:23-33) Also, God destroyed Saul, first king of Israel, and his son Jonathan in battle (two different versions are given) because they did not obey his commands for genocide, while he crowned David, (a murderer and adulterer who had nineteen sons and one daughter with seven wives and many concubines,) to be king and the ancestor of Jesus, the Messiah. "Whenever David attacked an area, he did not leave a man or woman alive, but took sheep and cattle, donkeys and camels, and clothes...Saul has slain his thousands, but David has slain his ten thousands." (1 Samuel 18:7, 27:9) This was in the time when battles were fought with sword and spear and bow and arrow; imagine that. Man's inhumanity to man at the will of God is not new in the evolution of human history. Scripture says "an evil/harmful spirit from God" caused King Saul to hate David and attempt to slay him, but he escaped and received the kingship after Saul and his son, Jonathan were killed in battle. (1 Samuel 19:9) After his son, Solomon replaced him, there followed the reign of numerous kings, most of whom were displeasing to God, but all of whom were doing the will of Most-High GOD. Much later, the Bible says it was God's will for the Jews to reject Jesus as Messiah and were defeated by Rome in revolts of 69-71CE and 135CE, then exiled from Jerusalem and scattered among the nations. Their eyes and ears were closed so they would not repent and be saved, and that was their destiny. (Isaiah 6:9-10, Matthew 10:13-15, Mark 4:10-12, 1Peter 2:8) All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

God's will also is invoked in daily living. "Go to now, you that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and make money: Whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, which appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. Therefore, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." (James 4:13-15). "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." (Proverbs 19:21) Man can move mountains and build and destroy cities, transplant human organs, and make smart phones, lie, cheat, and

murder. But people suffer only by the will of Most-High GOD. Nowhere is this truth more evident than in the international pandemic of coronavirus now sweeping across the world, the latest of several pandemics that have killed millions of people throughout history. GOD created gay men, and then it created the HIV virus that has killed an estimated thirty-two million gay men world-wide. Viruses cannot create themselves. Two young sisters died in Cleveland, OH when a brick wall their hammock was anchored to fell on them. The odds of that happening in probability theory are so small it can only be explained as the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer – with a probability of one. Now the challenge for the family is to adapt to their loss. Such unexplainable “accidental” losses are not uncommon. Mortal fear is an appropriate reaction to the power and willingness of Most-High GOD to destroy its own creations. But fear does not stop death, it stops life

Some Christian apologists may claim that God is perfectly just, so he only causes his people to suffer when they drift away to other gods, or they disobey and fail to live up to his holiness, and mortal man can only find safety through belief in his son, Jesus, and acceptance of his sacrifice on the cross in vicarious punishment for their sins. They may claim that suffering occurs deservedly by unjust human behavior inherited from the disobedience of the first man, Adam – rules are rules. Therefore, God’s punishment is wholly justified and is never unjust, even when it includes members of your own family. This idea is supported in some scriptures and nullified in others, even in the same verses. “Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.” (Exodus 33:19, Malachi 1:1-5, Romans 9:13-16) The Bible supplies no justification whatever for God’s hatred of Esau except possibly to demonstrate and prove the supreme power over its creation, which is a theme running throughout the Old Testament. All in Most-High GOD’s will of course.

Atheist, Richard Dawkins in *The God Delusion* (2011) described the little God of the Old Testament as follows: “The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.” It is hard to refute this description, if you actually read the Bible. First century heretic, Marcion of Sinope (85-160CE) concluded the capricious, jealous and vindictive little God of the Old Testament could not be reconciled with the loving God of the New Testament, but he was excommunicated for his belief and his idea was banished from the Church. How could this be the basis of a world-wide religion unless there is some force behind it that is superior to human reason? Perhaps that force is Most-High GOD above all other gods – Generator, Operator, Destroyer – the prime force in the universe.

Experience throughout history shows that Christians suffer regardless of their lifestyles, saints being some of the most afflicted up to and including their traumatic death. Throughout the Bible, God is depicted as causing suffering to punish his people for their sins or merely to show them the power of his might. (Ezekiel 14, John 9:1-3) The natural human reaction to the power of this little God is fear. “For I am a great king,” says the LORD Almighty, “and my name is to be feared among the nations.” (Malachi 1:14) “I know that everything God does will

endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.” (Ecclesiastes 3:14) In either case, the innocent people suffer with the guilty ones. “He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:45) Fear of God is a theme running throughout the Old and New Testaments. “Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 9:10) “It is a fearful/dreadful/terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Hebrews 10:30) “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12) Jesus depicted God as not one only to love, but also one to fear. “Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw/destroy you (body and soul) into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.” (Matthew 10:28, Luke 12:5) For their deceit in withholding some of their personal assets from the incipient church in Jerusalem, Ananias and his wife Sapphira both were struck dead so, “Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.” (Acts 5:11) Faith is fearing God enough to make impossible sacrifices.

In contrast, the first commandment is “Love the Lord...” Throughout the Bible, fear views God as punitive to those he chooses, whereas love views God as nurturing to those he chooses. God as love which overcomes fear also flows through the New Testament. Apostle Paul wrote, “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us (*who are predestined, called, chosen, justified, glorified*) from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:28-30, 38-39, John 6:65) “The resolution of fear is therefore the willingness to surrender one’s existence in all its expressions to God.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 276). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) These conflicts require accommodation of these apparently necessary opposites of fear and love of God in scriptures. “But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.” (Psalm 33:18) The most enlightened people may live in the gray area between opposites, but they are rare. F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) wrote that “it is a mark of maturity to hold the opposites and still function normally.” Like holding grief and joy, love and fear.

Note: Jesus used the parable of the Good Samaritan in teaching his disciples to love their neighbors as themselves. But when a Canaanite woman begged for his healing of her daughter he refused saying, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” Although Jesus relented and healed her daughter because of her faith, these events seem to be an example of necessary opposites in comparative scriptures. Love your neighbor with unconditional charity, and withhold/refuse your neighbor any charity. (Matthew 15: 21-28, Luke 10: 25-37)

As with Job in the Old Testament, we might say, “The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away...this is the day the Lord has made.” (Job 1:20) You may not like your day, but the conclusion seems to be inescapable. Two theological assumptions about evil follow: “God deliberately chose this particular world-history, with each and every instance of sin and evil it contains, and he took the needed steps to ensure its exact realization. God did specifically intend the Holocaust, Hurricane Katrina, and whatever other instances of egregious evil might come to your mind. (The COVID-19 Virus) To deny this is to trifle with words.” (*God and the Problem of Evil (Spectrum Multiview Book Series). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.*) “So when I say

that God's sovereignty means that he can do, and in fact does do, all that he decisively wills to do, I mean there is no force outside himself that can thwart or frustrate his will (certainly not any force in creation which he created, including Satan). When he decides for a thing to happen, it happens. Or to put it another way, everything happens because God wills it to happen." (page 39). "The coronavirus was sent, therefore, by God. This is not a season for sentimental views of God. It is a bitter season. And God ordained it. God governs it. He will end it. No part of it is outside his sway. Life and death are in his hand." (page 42). (You were born by his will,) You will die if it's his will, or live if it's his will. (*Piper, John, Coronavirus and Christ, Crossway, 2020*) Whether you believe this or not, either way it must be the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. Say it again, "GOD did not make any one-sided coins."

This view states that nothing happens outside the will and grace of GOD – including human suffering. As finite, temporal creatures, we may not understand how "the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18). Like Job, we should humbly acknowledge the limits of human wisdom and not presume to fully understand why God causes or permits suffering and evil among its creation. This kind of dichotomy seems to be necessary opposing functions of Most-High GOD above all other Gods. It can present a logical dilemma to the faithful, i.e., to continue living the illusion that God is only love and humans suffer because all are born sinners inherited from the disobedience of Adam and Eve, or bad things happen randomly that God cannot control, or to abandon it for indefinite uncertainty or even atheism. The created may not understand the Creator, but we seem to be made by Most-High GOD to keep trying.

Saint Clement of Alexandria (150-215CE) reportedly saw God as ruling with two hands, wielding the power of Satan in one and Christ in the other. (*Evangelicals, take note.*) In every person there is both a Jesus and a Devil, and the one that wins is chosen by Most-High GOD. If Satan rules the evil in the world, that must be the act of GOD, willfully or permissively, or Satan would be more powerful than GOD - which is impossible. The created has no power to control the Creator, and Satan could not create himself. You may not understand the full implications of this conclusion until you are impacted by it – just ask Job. Recall from the story in the Old Testament how Job learned that no one may question or challenge the will of God. In his utter desolation after losing everything including his health, Job cried out to God, "I am unworthy, how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer, twice, but I will say no more." (Job 40:4-6) God lectured him and his friends on who was in charge, on who created everything and who did not. Effectively he said, "Do you have a problem with that?" Some scholars say the happy ending was added by scribes who described the restitution later to make it all come out okay. As for us, it may or it may not. Job's family and servants were not resurrected. Nevertheless, Job could declare, "Though he slays me yet will I hope in him." (Job 13:15) Thus, not only suffering, but reaction to suffering must be GOD's will. This idea may be threatening to some churches, but the conclusion is inescapable when you really think about it. So, most people refuse to think about it, and many churches try to avoid it. But that does not change the apparent truth of it; nothing happens outside the will of Most-High GOD – from atoms to galaxies. This would include the writing of the Bible and all other holy books with their many flaws, myths, and fables. So there seems to be no limits on worldwide varieties of religious beliefs.

To avoid the conflicts and contradictions in the Bible, many church leaders “proof text” biblical scriptures, “cherry picking” only the ones for Sunday school lessons and sermons that keep people attending and donating. Some preachers continually affirm the dogma that the Bible is the infallible Word of God and is truthful in all respects while ignoring the scriptures that expose its many conflicts. For example, the genealogy of Jesus is traced to David through his son, Nathan in Luke 3:31, and is traced to David through his son, Solomon in Matthew 1:6. Obviously, both accounts cannot be correct, so you won’t get that in church. Additionally, there are four differing descriptions of the empty tomb as seen by the women visitors after the resurrection of Jesus. (Matthew 28:1-4, Mark 16:4-6, Luke 24:4, John 20:11-12) Also, there are four different versions in the three gospels and the Book of Acts of the ascension of Jesus to end his time on earth. It does not appear at all in the Gospel of John. Apologetics skip over such discrepancies, claiming the gist of the biblical story is truthful and complete.

Here is a scripture that might scare away some church members: “For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat. We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good. Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed.” (Thessalonians 3:10-14) Does this “command” by Apostle Paul include abandoning those who are sick, disabled, the retired, and the aged?

In contrast, Jesus taught his disciples in parables to love your neighbor as yourself and to serve the poor with unconditional charity. The punishment of those who don't seems to nullify their salvation: “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. They also will answer, Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you? He will reply, Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me. (Matthew 3:36-44) Since Apostle Paul wrote his letters before the Gospels were written and he never traveled with Jesus, he did not know about it. However, other scriptures attributed to Paul instruct believers to “carry each other’s burdens” and “there abides faith, hope, and charity but the greatest of these is charity.” (Galatians 6:2, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 KJV)

Note: Bible scholars say about half of the letters in the New Testament attributed to Apostle Paul were written by other unknown authors using his name, which was a common practice among writers of that day- called pseudepigrapha. This situation could explain some of the discrepancies and apparent contradictions among them.

The authors of holy scriptures appeared to write from their own separate inspirations independently and at different locations over many centuries without coordinating their messages in the same context. This often makes it impossible to reconcile the differences between them, those who claim its inerrancy notwithstanding. Many people seemingly need to hear they are sinners doomed to suffer hell fire for eternity unless they accept Christ as Lord and Savior, so

they readily accept the authority of theologians who are happy to oblige them. Preachers must deliver sermons their flocks want to hear unless they are willing to jeopardize their careers and family security to the ambiguous truth of conflicting scriptures. One may only wonder how the preachers and priests feel about all those who are doomed because they don't get the message. But the story does not hold up to reason, as was argued by revolutionary pamphleteer, Thomas Paine in *The Age of Reason*, (1794 – 1807).

For example, the very basic dogma of Christianity appears to be a fallacy. Here is why: Scripture says, "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned...By the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners." (Romans 5:12-19) The standard Christian claim that all men shared in the disobedience of Adam follows: "We have no natural claim to the righteousness of Jesus (through his crucifixion and resurrection) if we disclaim an inheritance from the disobedience of Adam." (Rogers, Michael Allen. *What Happens After I Die?* (p. 37). Crossway. Kindle Edition.) Let's explore that contention.

First, Adam and Eve were prevented by God from eating of the tree of life in the Garden, so they apparently were not created immortal, like the gods, and therefore they were destined to die before they sinned by eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God warned them they would surely die if they ate the forbidden fruit, but they did not die immediately. "Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.'" (Genesis 3:21-22, 6:3) However, the same scripture says that Adam lived for 930 years. (Genesis 5:5)

Second, it was Eve, the woman, who first ate the forbidden fruit, and we know now that human conception requires both a female egg and a male sperm cell. Therefore, sin could not be transferred by the sperm of Adam, the man, alone to his ancestors without the role of Eve. Of course, the ancient writer could not have known that, and he lived in a patriarchal society. (Genesis 3:6) The serpent who talked Eve into eating the forbidden fruit "was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made." (Genesis 3:1) So who really is to blame here for the sins of Eve and Adam?

Moreover, the Book of Genesis does not say the sin of Adam was projected onto all mankind for ever more. In fact, God's punishment of Adam and Eve was expulsion from the Garden, working for a living, pain in childbirth, and enmity with the serpent that was made to crawl on the ground. (Genesis 3:14-24) "Nothing is outside the control of the Lord God Almighty. (Most-High GOD) Even the universe is held together by His very Word." (John 1:1, Hebrews 1:3) (Lolli, William. *Why God Wills You to Suffer* (Kindle Locations 658-659). eBookIt.com. Kindle Edition.) If that is true, theologians cannot pick and choose what God controls and what he does not. If human behavior is all controlled by God, including the sins of Eve and Adam, assumption of free will must be an illusion, given by Most-High GOD of course, and no one is responsible for whatever they do because it all is the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Ergo, theofatalism.

Preachers also often assume general applications of specific scriptures to all current believers in modern times that were meant specifically for the place and time by the writer. For

example, to comfort mourners funeral leaders often read the conversation of Jesus with the twelve apostles during the Last Supper, “My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14: 2-3) Note that he said he would come back to get them. Some preachers erroneously use that scripture to claim all the dead in Christ’s church have gone to “be with the Lord.” They only tell half of the story. “Just as surely as Christ-believing souls leave this physical body to immediately enter joyful bliss with God their Savior, the lost person enters a terrifying estate of woe, beyond anything imaginable, which could have been avoided.” (*Rogers, Michael Allen. What Happens After I Die? (p. 85). Crossway. Kindle Edition.*) There may be some imagined comfort here for grieving survivors of a believer, but if Jesus meant to speak about believers in general it must read, “I go to prepare a place after they die for all those who believe in me.” But it doesn’t say that because he was speaking to the apostles at the table. To imply that biblical scriptures such as this one meant for their time and place apply to us now requires pure speculation, difficult as that may be to absorb. Christians who do not know this difference sing, “It’s so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take him at his word.” In fact, theologians have many different opinions about what happens after death. The wise scholar may say, “I don’t know, and that is OK because it is indefinitely uncertain.” Various biblical accounts about the end of time are even more controversial. Such generalizing of scriptures may provide little solace for survivors who must go on with life without their loved one, when they need comforting through grief more than proselytizing. But here is the thing: These tactics of proof texting and generalizing must be necessary in the will of Most-High GOD. Otherwise, the Bible merely is a collection of confusing stories and conflicting scriptures.

Unlike reading the Bible in linear fashion page by page which is subject to many different interpretations, when you study the Bible by topic or subject a different picture emerges exposing its many different facets. For example, reference to “destiny” occurs twenty-one times in scripture (NIV) so the original meaning in context depends upon which verse you emphasize. This type of research was not possible before publication of the Thompson Chain Reference Bible in 1908. It has been accelerated with the word-search feature in sixty different translations at the web site, www.biblegateway.com. A thorough study of New Testament scriptures by subject discloses apparent contradictions if you take them literally, and if they cannot be taken literally why take them at all? That would include its descriptions of eternal heaven and eternal hell. Some preachers prefer to focus on the former and ignore the latter. But scripture says of people in hell, “And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image.” (Revelation 14:11) You might call this description of hell merely active imagination or perhaps hallucination by Apostle John, the writer who was in exile on the Isle of Patmos. But it is hard to make that verse mean anything other than its literal statement as written and translated. Perhaps it really was the voice of Jesus.

If the Bible is the Word of God, it should not be necessary to twist logic like a pretzel to get the message, translations from the Koine Greek notwithstanding. We must follow the Bible wherever it goes or throw it away. “Until people know the God of the Bible, they will not believe in hell. Intolerance of the God revealed in scripture is the real problem. The doctrine of hell confronts us with a God who is overwhelming in his anger against sin, irresistible in his power, terrifying in his justice. A mighty Sovereign, who holds the earth between his fingers like a pinch

of dust.” (Rogers, Michael Allen. *What Happens After I Die?* (p. 100). Crossway. Kindle Edition.) Interestingly, including the detailed records by the Roman Empire that occupied the area, there is no secular evidence for the life of Christ outside of the Bible, (except for a short doubtful reference by first century Jewish historian, Josephus) and Most-High GOD must want it that way or it would be different. Ergo, theofatalism.

Scripture says the Word of God is flawless, (2 Samuel 12:31, Psalm 12:6, 18:30, Proverbs 30:5) But consider these two opposing scriptures: Luke 14:25; “Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.” 1 John 4:20; “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.” (No reference is given for this “command.”)

Plus these: John 3:16: “For God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son so that whoever who believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 6:44,65, “No one can come to me unless the Father calls/enables them.” Is this either-or or both?

Compare these: Mark 2:17 “Jesus said to them, It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Luke 15:4-7: “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.” It appears that Jesus thought some people did not need a savior to get into heaven, but Apostle Paul seems to contradict that by quoting Psalms: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” – except for the righteous. (Romans 3:21-24, Psalm 5:9)

Another one: Matthew 10:22: “You will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.” Romans 10:9: “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” John 5:24: “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. John 3:5, 1Peter 3:21: “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.” The meaning of this verse varies among various theologians but most of them claim it refers to water baptism, the form of which varies among various denominations. It also could mean human birth and death. Some confusion arose concerning the baptism conferred by John the Baptist, who apparently was never baptized himself, and the sacrament of baptism given by Jesus’ disciples. In Matthew 3:11, John describes his baptism as being “with water” while Jesus’ baptism will be “with the Holy Spirit and fire.” Jesus never baptized anyone in water himself. Although scripture says Paul was baptized, he did not baptize many others because he said he was called to preach and not to baptize. (Acts 9:18, Corinthians 1:16-18)

One more: Mark 10:13-15: “He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” They could not be born sinners to make this work. However, Jesus seems to be in conflict with the Word of God after the infamous flood of Noah, “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. (Genesis 8:21) We know now that the human heart merely is an intelligent mechanical pump and transplanting it from one to another person does not change the personality or character of the recipient, but there presently is no accepted substitute for the word in literature. Besides, it was God who created the human heart.

And another: Matthew 27:5: “So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.” Acts 1:18: “With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out.” Hmmmmm.

And again: John 10:17-19: “The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” Matthew 26:42: “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.” This does not sound like Jesus had any choice.

Finally, Luke 21:32-33: “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” Matthew 16:28: “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” Matthew 24:14: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.” These scriptures seem to be mutually exclusive. Recall that a kingdom is an absolute monarchy where the king makes all the rules and pronounces all the judgments. As such, there is no need for wars and crime would be abolished. Nationalist conservative Christians who oppose one-world government take note because that is exactly what the Bible says will come under rule by Most-High GOD with the royal Son as CEO and the twelve apostles serving as territorial justices. (Matthew 19:27-28,)

Such apparently contradictory biblical scriptures are open to many different interpretations, called “hermeneutics” by scholars, which considers the historical, cultural, linguistic and many other aspects of the writings in determining their meaning and application that was intended by the writer. “A single verse of scripture can be accurately interpreted in different ways with different meanings when contextually overlaid with the templates of directed audience, time period, literary type, grammatical structure, historical context, personal spiritual relevancies, etc.” (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 146-149). eBookIt.com. Kindle Edition.*) Qualified theologians can make the scriptures mean almost anything. The definition of words requires other words which are not perfectly translatable, and they can change. Note how computer “program” changed into computer “application” which changed into “app.” Words can be used in literal, figurative, or symbolic senses, and one biblical interpretation is as good as another because they all are created by the same mind of Most-High GOD. In the deepest zone of spiritual awareness, words really are insufficient to describe the feeling of universal oneness. The sound of one hand clapping is silence, which may be the model for awareness of GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer – the prime force in the universe.

One of the most controversial interpretations among Christians dating from the third century is a distinction between natures of Christ, whether he was God or Man or both. Some denominations focus on Jesus' humanity and ignore his divinity. They repeatedly quote verses dealing with Jesus as a man and try to set them against scriptures showing that Jesus is also divine. Other denominations do the reverse. They focus on the scriptures showing Jesus' divinity to the extent of denying his true humanity. Compatibilists combine the scriptures and conclude that Jesus was both God and Man in some mysterious way. Muslims and Jews both reject the divinity of Jesus and the concept of trinity, so the issue does not apply to them. This diversity of opinions among theologians is all in Most-High GOD's will of course. Ergo, theofatalism.

Issues of this nature in scriptures make the Bible very difficult to read by a suffering critical thinker and possibly misunderstood by the layman, and problematic among theologians. Apparently, it also was so at the time of writing by Saint Paul. “We declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.” (1 Corinthians 2:7) Indeed, Most-High GOD works in mysterious ways, controlling everything from atoms to galaxies. Therefore, IT also creates opposites as dichotomies among various biblical scriptures, which must be necessary or they would not exist. But from our experiences in life we cannot make sense of this conflict with our rational minds. “The inability of human

reason to understand divine knowledge does not stem from its unwillingness but from its incompetence for the task by its own Creator. The most brilliant intellect may be imbecilic when confronted by the mysteries of God. For a man to understand revealed truth requires an act of God equal to the original act which inspired the text.” (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer Kindle Locations 230-231 eBookIt.com. Kindle Edition.*)

The Bible, like all holy books, can be accepted only by faith because their historicity cannot be proven. Is faith a gift or a choice or both? It seems to be only active imagination at work. Faith is “confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Hebrews 11:1- 6) However, faith also is described as a gift of God, and He decides the measure of faith each one receives, which comes from hearing the story of Jesus. (Ephesians 2:8, Romans 12:3) “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?” (Romans 10:14) One might ask the same about this writer and this work. How can it be explained unless it is driven by the prime force in the universe, Most-High GOD, Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

Recall books were rare scrolls on parchment (the processed skins of animals dating from the second century BC) and most of the people were illiterate at that time, so the tradition was passed on orally over the many following centuries with all the errors and omissions that implies. Copies were made manually by scribes who probably made edits along the way. Roman Emperor Constantine ordered fifty copies of the Bible to be compiled by Eusebius in 331CE, but none survive. Politics could have influenced the choice of books that were selected and rejected from among many that were available. The earliest known complete New Testament, Codex Sinaiticus, was discovered in 1841 in Saint Catherine’s Monastery library at Mt. Sinai by a German bible scholar and explorer, Constantin von Tischendorf, funded by the Tsar of Russia. This manuscript dates to the fourth century CE, up to 400 years after the events that it describes actually occurred. The Tsar needed money, so he sold off pieces of it to four libraries, but most of it is displayed in the British Museum in London. Scholars think it was composed by four different scribes. The Codex Vaticanus also dating to the fourth century CE is stored in the Vatican library. There are some 130 small pieces of New Testament parchments dating from the third century in various libraries. Jesus apparently spoke Aramaic, but the earliest manuscripts are in Koine Greek. How and by whom the original translations from ancient Hebrew were made are unknown. Many writers argued for adoption of their beliefs during the first two centuries after Christ, and politics of the Roman Empire probably influenced which books were included and omitted. The final adoption of the Vulgate in Latin, which was first compiled by Jerome in 405CE, as the official canon by the Roman Catholic Church did not occur until the Council of Trent concluded in 1563, and it includes seven books (called the Apocrypha) not in the Protestant version. The current Bible in several different editions is a fairly recent compilation, and no one knows how many scribes copied it throughout the centuries, inserting, deleting and editing the original text. There are sixty different translations posted at www.biblegateway.com.

(Note: Jesus probably spoke Aramaic and the original Old Testament was in Hebrew, which was translated into the Peshitta Bible in the second century by the Church of the East. Koine Greek is

the language of the Christian New Testament in the Septuagint, (the 3rd-century BC Greek translation of the earlier Hebrew Bible, called the Tanakh,) and of most early Christian theological writing by the church founders. It is very difficult to translate Koine Greek into modern western English. There are sixty different translations posted on www.biblegateway.com. In this context, Koine Greek also is known as “Biblical,” “New Testament,” “ecclesiastical,” or “patristic” Greek. Koine Greek continues to be used as the liturgical language of services in the Greek Orthodox Church.)

Most Christians do not really study the Bible; although 100 million copies are printed annually world-wide, it is “the most popular book never read.” Maybe there is good reason for that. The Bible also may be the greatest fraud ever sold. The evidence is there in plain sight for anyone who is given the eyes to see. Beginning with Apostle Paul, orators have been called during each generation for two thousand years to take its infinite and seriously flawed message to the masses who are called/chosen by Most-High GOD to accept it. Jesus declared, “Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall never pass away.” (Matthew 24-35) So, it appears that after two thousand years, faith still comes from people hearing preachers and teachers who are sent to them, among which there are very wide-ranging interpretations of scriptures leading to many different beliefs depending upon which seminaries they attend. Great social movements always have been driven by great orators. This fact is illustrated by the oratory of both Adolph Hitler and The Rev. Billy Graham, one promoting war and genocide and the other one promoting personal salvation – necessary opposites. Hitler declared in *Mein Kampf* (1925) that “fops of the pen for leadership are neither born nor chosen. The broad masses of people can be moved only by the power of speech.” It seems ironic that Hitler launched his political career by writing a book while he was in prison for inciting revolution. Both of these great orators and their followers were created by the same Most-High GOD as are all the leaders and followers in today’s world. Still, anyone reading any holy books today will get a personal message based on their literal content and the perception of the reader in their time and place, all in Most-High GOD’s will of course. But every reader must answer the question, “What has that got to do with me? Who will be the grand orator who carries this work forward?”

(Note: In the Old Testament, God is described as plural and seems to have more than one son, which conflicts with New Testament theology about the singular birth of Christ. “And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever.” (Genesis 3:22-23) “The Nephilim/giants were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God married the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.” (Genesis 6:1-4) There are many different interpretations of these scriptures. There are dozens of descriptions of giants throughout the stories in mythology. When does mythology become history?)

Here is the summary of this section: The Bible seems to assign the cause of suffering to the Lord God in confusing ways that are both causative and permissive, but scripture says: “God is not the author of confusion.” (1 Corinthians 2:6–7) If he is not, who is? There is apparent confusion in the Bible about its history, mythology, theology, and in other holy books and among various religions but that does not deter the faithful followers, who are given to believe it, from embracing their various dogma, traditions, and rituals. The Bible has no comment on religions of all the many cultures of its time, except for enemies of the Jews, that presumably also are

creations of GOD. They are so fantastic that belief in them must come from a Higher Power so mighty that it controls human cultures and beliefs around the world – past, present, and future. Tagliaferre therefore concludes that all religions and the suffering of their believers must come from a Higher Power than any of them individually, i.e., the supreme force in the universe, Most-High GOD above Gods – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Ergo, theofatalism.

SECULAR COROLLARY

What is important in knowledge is not quantity, but quality. It is important to know what knowledge is significant, what is less so, and what is trivial.

Leo Tolstoy

Theofatalism has a corollary in non-religious observations of human behavior. In Zen Buddhism, secular investigation leads to the likelihood that all happenings in the universe are inevitable with a probability of 100 percent, including the laws of probability. Whether it is called creationism or natural selection, things happen driven by human actions through what are called “thoughts,” ideas that occur in the mind spontaneously. There is no doubt that the mind affects the body and the body affects the mind, whatever the mind may be. After centuries of discussion, the mind/body interaction still is poorly defined and is difficult to research in a living brain. Study of the living brain/mind in neurology is very primitive, hardly better than exploring the moon with a telescope. Actions, thoughts, and emotions appear to be interrelated in ways not completely understood, but changing one seems to affect the others. “Our genes and chromosomes, our cells and tissues, specialized regions of our brain and the neural networks that link those regions, as well as our thoughts and emotions and our social networks - all these dynamical elements of our lives, and many more as well, are interconnected.” (*Kabat-Zinn, Jon. Full Catastrophe Living (Revised Edition). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.*)

Emotions, which unconsciously precede feelings, are physical and instinctual reactions. Because they are physical, emotions can be objectively measured by blood flow, brain activity, facial micro-expressions, and body language. Feelings occur after having an emotion; they involve thoughts, usually subconscious, and cannot be measured precisely. Dreams reveal contents of the mind that are not accessible when we are awake. Recent discoveries in quantum mechanics and neurology imply that all actions begin unconsciously in the brain some time before those events are executed consciously in thought or action. A baseball batter has 0.6 seconds to swing at a fast ball coming at 90mph. During that brief time, he must take in information, make assumptions, and take physical actions - all subconsciously. A football quarterback must throw a pass to the spot where he anticipates the receiver will be when the ball arrives there. What appears to be conscious decisions are driven by unconscious resources – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Research in neurology is disclosing that the brain appears to act before human consciousness is aware of it, up to several seconds in some experiments. One report concluded, “(Some) people persist in believing that they have conscious access to their own cognitive processes when in fact we do a great deal of automatic unconscious processing before conscious perception occurs.” The brain seems to have a mind of its own, which operates without asking permission of its host. This assumption helps explain actions that seem to be out of conscious control.

Brain cells do not die instantly after the heart stops beating, so thoughts may continue for seconds or minutes after cardiac arrest. Resuscitation of patients who are clinically dead is uncommon, but it does happen. People with terminal illness who report a near-death experience describe loss of fear and a feeling of love, which *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM) declares is our normal condition that is submerged in subconscious mind, buried under the dross of daily living with its many challenges. If thoughts control actions, one may ask, what controls thoughts? Consider the trillions of microscopic processes at the cellular level that are keeping your body alive and all the organs functioning. They do their work while you are both awake/conscious and during the unconscious timeless oblivion of sleep. They are not under your conscious control. Since no one consciously controls the organs in their bodies, and the brain is an organ, it is reasonable to assume that the adoption of belief systems and all other thoughts and decisions are driven by forces beyond conscious awareness.

The human brain, which controls behavior, is not a static construct. The brain's ability to change and adapt in response to experience is called neuroplasticity. It can change from internal or external causes such as mental illness and military training, both voluntarily and involuntarily. Programming of the mind/brain is a well-known but poorly understood process in the field of education. Cognitive behavioral therapy says to change your feelings/actions, change your thinking, but who or what changes thinking is unknown. The brain is estimated to contain a hundred billion neuron cells interconnected through five million kilometers of wiring. It changes in response to accumulated experience and influence, but apparently by some volition superior to human consciousness. This process is evident in the performance of a great musician, athlete, artist, author, or poet – or a mental patient, criminal or despotic dictator – leaders and followers, employers and employees. The brain-body system in all sentient beings acts as if it has a mind of its own. “All that we experience are our own unconscious thoughts, feelings, and beliefs projected onto the world and reflected back, actually causing what we see to appear.” (*Hawkins, David R. Letting Go, 2012 (p. 211). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) In this mode of living, we are only seeing a reflection of our own minds and think it is real and true. To overcome this mistake, the ancient Greeks from Aristotle developed the system of formal logical reasoning that very few modern people know how to use in testing the validity of their thinking.

The power of irrational thinking is clearly shown in the well-known placebo effect that enables plain water and sugar pills to stimulate physical healing when a doctor tells the patient they are medicine, and the patient believes it. The placebo effect may be rediscovery of faith healing, belief without proof, as it is displayed by Jesus in the Bible and in some religious venues. When the mind creates beliefs that are false, never mind the facts, this can lead to unnecessary suffering, anxiety, and depression as well as healing. “The idea that we cannot control our beliefs is so fundamental to science that a placebo or control group (a group that is monitored and observed as part of an experiment, but upon which no experimental procedures are taken) is actually part of the definition of what constitutes an experiment. Keep in mind that the left brain creates stories it believes completely, often without regard to the truth. One could compare this to following an inaccurate map or confusing a portrait (or photograph or digital image) with the real person. People die and kill for beliefs all the time, but not just any beliefs—only the ones they believe in without recognizing that they are only beliefs.” (*Niebauer Ph.D., Chris. No Self, No Problem (p. 34). Hierophant Publishing. Kindle Edition.*)

The brain is composed of two hemispheres connected by a bridge called the corpus callosum. The left hemisphere is far more inventive in interpreting facts than the right hemisphere's more truthful, literal approach to information management. Both are needed for a balanced personality, but they easily can be deluded, as in common magic tricks. This dichotomy may help to explain why people say, 'I feel that ...' when they should say "I think that ..." and vice versa. A simple right-brain/left-brain model of the mind is a gross oversimplification because the brain is organized into hundreds and maybe even thousands of modular-processing systems. The brain of Tagliaferre concluded that nothing happens outside the will of Most-High GOD – in churches, schools, bedrooms, in hospitals, restaurants, on battlefields, in banks, theaters, prisons, parks, hurricanes, atoms and galaxies – or anywhere. Consequently, there is no benefit in either being jealous or critical of anyone. Thus, he concluded that belief in free will may be an illusion, necessary though the illusion may be at this stage of human evolution. "Your brain is controlling you; free will is an illusion. We are contingent, deterministic beings, no better than the sum total of all that exists in our brains." (*Probulos, I. M. 101 Reasons for Non-Belief: For Atheists, Agnostics, and Secular Humanists. Kindle Edition.*) Please read the referenced books *No Self, No Problem* and *The Eye of the I* for details, which are beyond the scope of this book.

Beliefs hold power over us in some real ways, whether they are true or not. Belief in theofatalism itself - including your reaction to it - illustrates the conclusion. You must first imagine it to see it, and sentient beings do nothing that is not imagined first. A problem occurs when the left brain mistakes the map for the territory, mistaking the symbol – word, sound, picture or diagram - for the thing itself. Although it appears to be a function of the left brain in humans, theofatalism says irrational thinking, like all thinking and believing, is an act of Most-High GOD.

All actions, large and small, gestate in the subconscious mind before they become conscious. C. G. Jung wrote, "Until you make the unconscious contents conscious, the unconscious contents will direct your life, and you will call it fate." The discoveries in mind-body medicine suggest that our mind and the thoughts we produce have an incredible impact on our physiology, either positive or negative. If the subconscious contents are exposed, mighty changes often occur. The brain obeys the mind; therefore, the body tends to manifest what the mind believes or imagines. The brain is, therefore, activated by the mind's intention and not vice versa. Like the top of an iceberg, the conscious mind must go where the subconscious mind takes it, unless some intervention redirects it. In this view, current thoughts are the extensions of previous thoughts possibly forgotten followed by actions which are inevitable. Some secular examples of unconscious content that changed the world follow:

Howard Schultz got the idea for Starbucks coffee houses after viewing similar shops which he visited in Italy. Would Starbucks exist if he had not made that trip? Jeff Bezos got the idea for online retailer, Amazon.com, while driving cross country. Danny Thomas got the idea for Saint Jude Childrens' Hospital while starring in television. Mark Zuckerberg got the idea that became Facebook while he was a sophomore in college. Bill Gates got the idea for a disc operating system that became Microsoft also while a student in college. Bill Wilson got the idea for organizing Alcoholics Anonymous and wrote *The Big Book* after a delirium experience with The Oxford Group (now Moral Rearmament) during experimentation with The Belladonna Cure. Travis Kalanick got the idea for Uber while he was carpooling to work. Elon Musk got the idea for SpaceX rockets to Mars while building Tesla electric cars after he

emigrated from South Africa by way of Canada. Jimmy Dean got the idea for a sausage business from his brother while he was a country music singer. Joel Osteen got the idea for his prosperity ministry, with no seminary training, after untimely death of his pastor father. Adolf Hitler got the idea for Nazism after failing as a student of architecture following combat service in WWI and caused WWII. Mark David Chapman got the idea to murder Beatle co-founder, John Lennon in New York City while he was living in Hawaii. Theodore John Kaczynski got the idea to drop out of society and live as a hermit in opposition to technical modernization, producing home-made bombs that killed three people and wounded eighteen, after earning a Ph.D. degree in mathematics and teaching at the University of Michigan. Bernie Madoff got the idea for a massive illegal Ponzi fraud while he was a stockbroker. Caitlyn (ne: William Bruce) Jenner got the idea to switch gender from male to female at the age of sixty-five after winning the Olympic Decathlon gold medal, marrying three times, and fathering six children. Taylor Swift got the idea to be a music star while she was in middle school. Sherwood Schwartz got the idea for the television sitcom, *Gilligan's Island*, from an assignment in creative writing while he was a student in New York. Greta Thunberg got the idea to advocate for climate change while she was in the eighth grade. Kris Kristofferson got the idea to write country music while he was a captain in the army flying helicopters after being a Rhodes scholar at Oxford. Joseph Smith, Jr. claimed that he got the idea for *The Book of Mormon* from eight golden plates he found under a tree as a youth. Mike Lindell got the idea for his "My Pillow" business when he was a divorced drug addict and alcoholic. Andrew Carnegie (steel) J. P. Morgan (banking), Cornelius Vanderbilt (railroads) and John D. Rockefeller (oil) all got ideas for building wealth while young men. So did Warren Buffet. Donald J. Trump got the idea of being President while he was a real estate developer, and Tagliaferre got the idea of theofatalism during several trips to Sedona, AZ. One cannot presently imagine where the leading edge of future trends including artificial intelligence, social media, factory automation, and space travel will develop.

These are examples of what renowned Swiss psychiatrist, C. G. Jung called active imagination, i.e., thoughts arising from the subconscious mind that we do not initiate. He wrote, "All the works of people (good or bad, important or trivial) originate in their active imagination." Napoleon said imagination rules the world. Albert Einstein equated imagination with intuition. "The only real valuable thing is intuition. There is no logical way to the discovery of these elemental laws." Jung described intuition as "the ability to see around corners." Dr. Jonas Salk, developer of polio vaccine, said intuition tells thinking minds where to search next. Some personalities are more gifted with intuition than others. Wherever this stimulus goes, actions must follow, whether moral or immoral, legal or not. It is difficult to separate the imagination that creates digital technology, art, music, space travel, and literature from that which creates street gangs and religious faith. Imagination evolves with time, as shown by the collapse of the "flat earth" society and its replacement by space travel. The Stone Age did not end for a lack of stones. Active imagination also supports the belief in theofatalism – the GOD above gods as Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

But how can people have faith in any unprovable belief unless it is given to them from a Higher Power? Churches are populated by people who are given to believe they are born destined for eternal torment in hell, but that God came to earth through the womb of a virgin in the body of a man, taught some fantastic things about a Kingdom of Heaven, volunteered to be crucified to absorb punishment for the sins of all human beings, whom He created, to save them

from eternal punishment which He ordained, resurrected himself from death, and returned to heaven to prepare a place for his chosen people after the earth is demolished and replaced by a new heaven and new earth. (John 3:16, 10:17-18, 14:2-3) All the unbelievers will spend eternity in hell where there is “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Jesus is the ultimate imaginary friend. The whole corpus of Christianity rests upon the resurrection of Christ. If that was faked, the whole thing fails. (1 Corinthians 15:17) The Kingdom of God/Heaven is described variously as a place you can enter, a place you can see, a something among you, and as being within you. Imagine that. But imagination cannot take us into the realm of spirit entirely. “No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor. 2:9).

Willis Carrier, inventor of air conditioning, said to be happy imagine the worst that can happen and plan to accept it. (*Quoted by Dale Carnegie in How to Win Friends and Influence People*, 1936) This is, of course, a modern statement of ancient Stoic philosophy taught by Greek philosophers, Seneca and Epictetus (50-135 CE). “Wish for things which happen to be as they are, and you will have a tranquil life.” Imagine what life was like at that time and place in history. This rule seems to be unimaginable if you are in acute distress or facing imminent danger. According to this view disease, calamity, and war should be submissively accepted, and it might even be blasphemous to wish them away.

Moral laws have certain common elements in all cultures and religions as expressed in the Ten Commandments, but imagination has no moral compass. It can create bombs to kill more people faster and medicines that heal more people faster. Imagination can envision the best or the worst of the future. Imagination has no free will, and we do not consciously control it. It must be modulated by some superior force for behavioral control, i.e., Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

For those who recognize spirit but cringe at religion, consider the concept of causal determinism, which possibly dates back to Plato (428-327 BC). In secular terms, for anything to occur the opportunity must precede its recognition which must be followed by action, which must produce results regardless of outcome. “*Zorba, The Greek* described his life as ‘the full catastrophe.’ The phrase reminds us that life always is in flux, that everything we think is permanent actually is only temporary and is constantly changing. This includes our ideas, our opinions, our relationships, our jobs, our possessions, our creations, our bodies, everything.” (*Kabat-Zinn, Jon. Full Catastrophe Living, 2013 (Revised Edition. Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.)*) “No matter what’s going on right now, pleasant or unpleasant, we can be sure it’s on its way to becoming something else (that we do not control).” (*Halliwell, Ed. Mindfulness Made Easy (p. 139). Hay House. Kindle Edition.)*) A primary example of impermanence and uncertainty is the many roadway deaths caused each year by drunk drivers and plain old careless driving. A very small difference in timing of a fraction of a second would produce a different event in all tragedies. Some accidents seem to be miracles. In such an accident, a wheel came off a truck on a highway and crashed into the helmet of a motorcyclist, killing him. You can assume either that this was a totally random accident with almost zero probability of occurring or you can assume it was the terminus event in a long line of preceding events that made it inevitable with one-hundred percent probability. Necessary opposites. Which assumption you choose is the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Life can be seen as an infinite series of “now” linked one upon another. All events in every life have a cause that is linked in a chain of events back to the First Cause, which appears to make everything a necessary extension of all the preceding events unique to each and every life. Thoughts also are assumed to be linked to previous thoughts so that if any link in the chain were different, the outcome would be different. To illustrate, here are some secular examples:

The world-wide chain of Starbucks coffee shops can be linked to his vacation trip to Italy by founder, Howard Schwartz, to a single coffee bean shop in Seattle, WA he bought from three students from the University of San Francisco in 1971, to discovery of coffee as a beverage, to the creation of coffee plants, to the formation of planet Earth. The world’s largest online reference, Wikipedia, can be linked back to his reading the *World Book* encyclopedia by its founder, Jimmy Wales, (1966) and his subsequent education in finance and back to a one-room school house run by his mother in Alabama. Modern smart cell phones can be linked back to the personal computer created by Steve Jobs (1955-2011) to manufacture of micro-chips by Andrew S. Grove (1936-2016) to invention of the transistor by William B. Shockley, Jr. (1910-1989) to information science developed by Claude Shannon (1916-2001) to fractal geometry explained by Benoit B. Mandelbrot (1924-2010) to the binary arithmetic developed by self-taught mathematician, George Boole (1815-1864) and back to discovery of the precious metals that make them possible. The mapping of human genomes and DNA in 1954 by Francis Crick and James Watson can be linked back to experiments in propagation of peas by Gregor Mendel in 1866. Digital video can be linked back to invention of “moving pictures” by Thomas Edison (1847-1931), back to the discovery of primary colors and the rare earth phosphors that make the visual displays possible, and all the events preceding and following. A flat tire can be linked back to the rubber manufacturing technology and discovery and harvesting of rubber trees that came together with the nail that is linked back to metallurgy and the creation of iron deposits on earth. (By the way, tires are black from use of carbon black for strength and durability that replaced naturally white zinc oxide that was needed for making brass shells during WWI.) Growth in electric vehicle sales is linked to government mandates for higher mileage which is linked with perception of climate change from carbon emissions, invention of electric motors, and the materials that go into them, plus discovery and generation of electricity to charge the batteries. Drug addicts can be linked back to creation of the natural plants and discovery of harvesting them and refining and distributing them by illegal cartels. Modern patented drugs can be linked back to the medicinal herbs from which they are derived and which some people still prefer. The massive financial Ponzi fraud by Bernie Madoff can be linked back to his work as a stockbroker and the investment decisions of his many victims, plus the many errors of financial auditors and law enforcement agencies for several decades. Trips to the moon and space exploration can be linked back to discoveries of Kepler, Brahe, Newton, Galileo and Copernicus, possibly even back to discovery of gunpowder made from sulfur, saltpeter (potassium nitrate) and charcoal in China during the Tang dynasty in the ninth century. The Protestant Reformation and plethora of churches can be linked back to the thoughts of Martin Luther which can be linked to policies of the Catholic Church throughout previous centuries. Cognitive behavioral therapy can be linked back to Stoic philosophy in the first century CE. Discovery of theofatalism can be linked back to the search by Lewis Tagliaferre for release from the pain of grief from untimely death of his wife and loss of his traditional belief system.

If any link in the chain of causality in the personal history of each person were different the outcome would be different, hence everything is inevitable and necessary, including getting a flat tire and breaking a fingernail and the discovery and development of the fatalism. The same analysis of culminating causality can be applied to all inventions and wars, diseases, disasters, charity, politics, cosmology, marriages, divorces, and everything that occurs each instant of each life on earth, according to laws of science from atoms to galaxies and logical or illogical decisions and beliefs, right down to tying your shoes and brushing your teeth. “A speck of dust cannot be where it is positioned without air currents, which require a room, which requires a building, a lot, a continent, a planet, a solar system, a galaxy, a universe, and so on.” (Hawkins, David R. *The Eye of the I* (p. 180). Hay House. Kindle Edition.) Events today among all species on earth - including belief or rejection of the fatalism – apparently are creating causal links moment by moment in the invisible chain of development reaching far into the inevitable, but indefinitely uncertain, future in the lives of all sentient beings on earth.

Causal determinism is evidenced in many ways. Shakespeare wrote in *As You Like It*, “All the world’s a stage and men and women merely are the players. They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts.” Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius wrote in the second century CE, “For this is your duty, to act well the part that is given to you; but to select the part belongs to the author.” (*Enchiridion*, p7) We may have no choice. Perhaps, without knowing the full script, we all merely are acting a part in a play that is written by Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Albert Einstein said, “Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, we all dance to a mysterious tune intoned in the distance by an invisible player.” Dr. James Hollis wrote, “The great rhythms of nature, of time and tide, of fate and destiny, and of our own psyche move their powerful ways quite outside of our will.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, Bantam Book 1996, p.124)

The Bible says, “You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day of my life was written in your book...“If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Psalm 139:16, Revelation 20:15) “Before I formed you in the womb I knew/chose you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” (Jeremiah 1:5NIV) “Long ago I ordained it. In days of old I planned it; now I have brought it to pass, that you have turned fortified cities into piles of stone. (Isaiah 37:26) These and similar scriptures seem to imply that Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - is and has been controlling human lives, including writers of the Bible, since the beginning, which casts serious doubt on the belief in free will, at least for the prophets of that time. If this sounds like predestination, let it stand. Whether that applies to everyone for all time is indefinitely uncertain because mankind is mortal and cannot know, except by inductive inference, the plan of Most-High GOD.

Given current knowledge of the DNA molecule in each living cell, it seems that our lives are scripted at conception in concert with all those other people we encounter and, whether we realize it or not, we must play the role/s we were given – parents, schools, and social cultures notwithstanding – walking the labyrinth pathway ahead. And some scriptures indicate the meeting of a specific sperm and egg cell was ordained at the time of creation. Thus, all decisions we make and actions taken appear to be part of the plan of Most-High GOD for our lives as was given to our ancestors going back to the original sin of Adam and Eve in the garden when they decided to accept the serpent’s temptation and ate the forbidden fruit – which

was necessary for Most-High GOD to initiate the plan of life on earth that currently exists according to its will. If God created everything in heaven and earth, perhaps the illusion of free will was given as a necessary opposite to offset the unbelievably inevitable walk of life each person must take, regardless of the suffering involved. Whether you believe this or not must be the will of Most-High GOD. (*Trivia: Under current technology, it takes about eighty gigabytes to store one human genome that is compressed into every living cell. Genetic testing is the leading edge of modern medicine - aigwoc.*)

Many people seem to need to know their purpose in life, and some would separate their work and family from their church life unless they are called to ministry, although the spirit works in all aspects of life. The popular book series titled, “*The Purpose Driven Life*” by Dr. Rick Warren attempts to provide the answer in God’s will for his churches. In school, many people study what they like and end up working for whoever will give them a job, smothered in student debt. American capitalism is driven by debt which seems to be preferable to financial independence, and debt drives many to do any work they can get. Jobs are insecure and sometimes disappear when they are sorely needed to meet family expenses, as happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some people cannot work because they are physically or mentally disabled, so defining yourself by what you do is not helpful. Many people identify themselves with their jobs. Human worth is not defined only by a job or lack of one. You are not what you do but who you are regardless of your net worth. Perhaps you need not seek your purpose in life because you cannot avoid it in all the walks of life: family, work, country, and faith throughout the years. Since you are as Most-High GOD made you and everyone else is also, life, itself is the purpose of life. If you have a pulse, you have a purpose, and you are exactly where GOD wants you to be or you would be some other place, past, present, and future. Scripture says whatever you need to do, do it from your heart as unto the Lord, even if you are a slave. (Ephesians 6:5-6) The Creator is the potter and you are the clay, end of story. (Romans 9:19-21)

Consider the Himalayan snow leopard whose purpose seems to be eating mountain goats, and the mountain goat whose purpose is providing food for the snow leopard. The Alaskan tree frog apparently freezes to death during the winter and is resurrected to reproduce each spring. A male lion who takes over a pride after vanquishing the aging leader kills all the cubs to assure the propagation of his own genes. Bears catch and consume many salmon on their way back upstream to spawn at their place of birth, then leave the carcasses in forests, which provides nutrients for the trees. The osprey bird is programmed to catch fish to feed its young even though it is not an aquatic resident, not like a duck which is. To reproduce its species, a female rhinoceros must bear the weight of the male for forty-five minutes during copulation and then gestate the offspring for fifteen months until birth. The African elephant has such an inefficient digestion it must eat several hundred pounds of vegetation each day, so its refuse provides a convenient source of food for several other species. In Botswana, termite colonies build mounds up to thirty feet high which serve as air conditioners for their underground habitats. Since the animals all must live as GOD programmed them to do, perhaps humans must live as Most-High GOD programmed them also.

Perhaps we all have been unwittingly programmed without our conscious assent. When he was asked why he writes only horror books, Stephen King replied, “What makes you think I have a choice. I cannot imagine doing anything else.” He is fortunate that so many people need to be horrified by his books. He must write them, and they must buy them. Countless examples

illustrate that your purpose apparently is to be who you are where you are when you are doing what you do and feeling what you feel and thinking what you think. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course. Even those in terminal life conditions are providing needs for caregiving services, which sustains a purpose for the providers of those services. Thank GOD for nursing staffs, and for hospice and palliative care doctors and nurses and the volunteers who help them care for the dying. These services are respectful alternatives to the American medical model, but you likely will have to ask your doctor for them because they indicate that you are giving up. It follows that you and your family need to know all your options at end of life to make good decisions, not just the ones that prolong life at any cost or create a traumatic burden for your survivors. But, still, the final decisions you make are the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer- as there can be no other.

It seems that all creatures on earth do what they are destined to do, each playing out the role they are given by Most-High GOD, the prime force in the universe – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - thinking and doing what they must even when it leads to their death or to the death of others. Randomness is overcome with essential causality, i.e., there are no accidents or mistakes, there are only predestined choices with inevitable consequences. All decisions are learning experiences, including negative ones. After a thousand experiments failed to disclose a material for his light bulb filament, Thomas Edison declared, “I have not failed. Now I know a thousand things that don’t work.” Our moments of greatest suffering can be the moments of greatest learning. All in GOD’s will of course.

You cannot change the past, you cannot fix the present, and you cannot control the future. Most-High GOD caused it and GOD continues to cause it. You may not even be able to control your own thoughts, feelings, and actions – whatever a “you” is. “In your brain right now, there are billions of cells communicating with one another while oxygen is being passed through your body, helping every part of your physical form made up of billions and billions more cells keep you alive and functioning. All of this is happening without your conscious choice.” (*Halliwell, Ed. Mindfulness Made Easy (p. 140). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) The medical model divides the body into several systems working together as follows: the skeletal system, the reproductive system, the digestive system, the endocrine system, the cardio-vascular system, the pulmonary system, etc. As you can imagine, the human body is immensely complex. Moreover, all the cells in our bodies are replaced every few years so the body “you” occupy now is not the same as before. The body changes but the spirit stays the same. When philosophers, theologians, and neurologists try to identify the “I” in “I am,” they come up empty. They can make an infinite list of disclaimers like, “I am not my hand, my heart, my thoughts, my brain, my emotions, my soul, my spirit, my etc” but the kernel of “I am” always escapes. If there is a command and control center in the brain it has not been identified yet. “The real you cannot be put into words, categories, labels, beliefs, emotions, or anything that can be labeled as “known.” (*Niebauer Ph.D., Chris. No Self, No Problem (p. 148). Hierophant Publishing. Kindle Edition.*) The “Self” apparently cannot know itself. This leads into the mystery of consciousness which also cannot be explained with words. That mystery is beyond the scope of this book and apparently beyond human understanding at this stage of our evolution.

You may easily recall many past decisions and actions you wish you had done differently. Everyone with a normal conscience has an inner critic that constantly judges and ridicules oneself. It can be a motivator for self-improvement, but it also can deplete your energy and keep you in a state of regret. You can beat yourself up with guilt and remorse, or you can

assume that you did the only thing you could do under the circumstances and just let the inner critic have its day and then move on. Humans all are fallible and, even in areas of expertise, “to err is to be human.” It is as certain as death and taxes. Many people spend their lives regretting the past and fearing the future; therefore, they are unable to experience joy in the present – *this depressed and distressed author included*. Belief in theofatalism offers to cancel the need for remorse and regret for actions in the past because if they could have been different they would have been different; the little things as well as the big things, legal and illegal - because GOD does whatever it wants with whoever it wants whenever it wants. Everyone is better than the worst thing they ever did. Although praise and blame are necessary opposites, neither one is appropriate, but they must co-exist, or it would be different. We may be held accountable in life under civil laws and family traditions or “rules of the game,” but we are not responsible under GOD for any behavior or thoughts because IT is in control of everything from atoms to galaxies – including the civil laws and their enforcement or lack thereof. “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’” (Daniel 4:35). But guilt and remorse, like all emotions, must be necessary at this stage of human evolution or they would not exist. The evolution of human societies in all the cultures of the world is the will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

You cannot be held responsible for what you do not control, including your human nature which was created by Most-High GOD, whether saint or sinner. Christians believe Jesus paid the price for all the sins of mankind as created by God, past present and future, and your forgiveness is his gift through the crucifixion, if you are called/chosen to accept it. “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28) “In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.” (Ephesians 1:11) As quoted elsewhere, Saint Paul wrote, “One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will? But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?” (Romans 9:19-21) The created cannot control the Creator. This is a non-negotiable fact throughout the universe from atoms to galaxies, knowledge of which begets depression, fear, and anger naturally in the process of spiritual growth, like breaking through the sound barrier in aircraft flight to emerge into guiltless freedom.

Truth is truth whether you believe it or not, and it has no opposite. “Truth does not need to be defended. Knowledge based on faith and true experience is calm. It invites rather than tries to convince. It attracts by virtue of its intrinsic merit and the innate power of the truth itself.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 236). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) But the opposite view in theofatalism says the ultimate truth cannot be known because all we have are beliefs, the only exception possibly being mathematics or merely logical certainty. If we have two apples and add two more, we may be “mathematically” certain that we now have four apples. That is mathematical certainty. If all men are mortal and if Plato was a man, then we may be “logically” certain that Plato was mortal. That is logical certainty - all in GOD's will of course.

You can accept this idea called theofatalism or reject it, but you cannot change it any more than you can change the laws of physics. The genie is out of the box. Mother/Saint Teresa

said, “God does whatever He wants with whomever he wants whenever he wants, and we must take what he gives and give what he takes.” Despite this irrefutable conclusion, many people are given the illusion of free will at this stage of human evolution, and so they prefer to judge self and others in spite of the instruction from Jesus not to judge, as he came not to judge, except when he did by attacking hypocrites and money changers in the temple. “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?” (Matthew 7:1-2, 21:11-13, 23:33, John 2:15, 8:15-16, 12: 48) Belief in free will and resulting personal responsibility must be the necessary opposite to surrendering to the will of GOD because IT never made any one-sided coins.

By extension, everything from atoms to galaxies is fulfilling its purpose moment by moment, including all the various religious beliefs. No exceptions – difficult as that may be to accept if you are suffering uncontrollably or standing by impotently watching loved ones suffer and are unable to help. The earth is a very big violent place with lots of stuff going on and, like grains of sand on all the beaches or drops of water in all the oceans, each individual in all the species is both insignificant and indispensable while doing what it must from birthing to dying. Theofatalism is that simple and that complicated because it explains the behavior of all sentient beings and everything else in the universe, from atoms to galaxies. This concept boggles the mind when you think about all the suffering of humanity, plus all other sentient beings on earth, including all those dying in the food chain so that others may live. Check out what it is like to work in some animal slaughter houses where your meat comes from. So be not dismayed if this is too much to swallow in one gulp. You may require several readings and repeatedly applying this new idea to your life before it is fully absorbed, if not accepted. All in GOD’s will of course (AIGWOC).

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

From his research and analysis, Tagliaferre sees the emergence of a common thread leading to five principles of theofatalism. Principles can never be invented, only discovered. The principles of theofatalism are summarized here to stimulate readers to complete their full development by reading the books referenced, to learn them and to make them a part of living every day. For an allegory narrating the derivation of these principles, please read the book titled, *Voices of Sedona* by this author.

1. Absolute Predeterminism: Everything from atoms to galaxies is happening as it must, or it would be different. The divine will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - cannot be disobeyed. It is the utmost arrogance and ignorance to assume that the creature can control the Creator, or the clay can control the potter, or the puppet can pull its own strings. Disobeying GOD’s will is meaningful only to the insane; in truth it is impossible.

2. Necessary Opposites: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction; as in physics so in human thoughts and actions. All energy of the universe is distributed about a neutral center like the air in a balloon, with equal power invested in opposing forces manifested in life events. Like a battery with two poles, energy is impotent until the two opposing poles are deployed. Since living Homo sapiens manifest energy in thoughts and behaviors, they, and all material and spiritual forms, must conform to this principle of necessary opposites.

3. Unconscious Decisions: All thoughts begin unconsciously before they become conscious. All behavior is driven from unconscious forces of imagination among and within people who

select options presumed to offer more valuable benefits than burdens. All options among choices are selected because the presumed benefits are worth more than the burdens, even though they may be unconscious and seem to be unreasonable or even insane to a rational observer. There are no mistakes, only unconscious choices and inevitable consequences.

4. Indefinite Uncertainty: Life does not grant us certainty, only options and probabilities. Nothing about the future in human affairs can be forecast with accuracy, especially those things that we think we know for sure. The famous American philosopher and baseball star, Yogi Berra once said, "Making predictions is hard, especially when it is about the future." Your grandparents probably could not imagine modern cell phones, so how can we imagine the future? That awareness makes humankind feel anxious necessarily. To be anxious is to be human, because it is a normal reaction to the awareness of indefinite uncertainty.

5. Immaculate Immanence: Most-High GOD works a very specific plan for each material element and sentient being that forms a unique and necessary interconnected part of the whole universe. Most of human life is like assembling a jigsaw puzzle without the picture on the box. Each individual sentient being may be only one small insignificant piece, but a necessary indispensable piece or we would not be here. The whole picture composing each life becomes more apparent near completion as we take our place in it. "Immaculate" means without flaw or error and "immanence" means operating within, inherent, present throughout the universe, from atoms to galaxies. No, this is not the same god as the one in any holy books. It is the Generator, Operator, Destroyer. GOD

Theofatalism accommodates both acceptance and rejection of this reasoning and adoption of all other belief systems as being necessary or they would not exist. Everything in the universe is represented by its equal and opposite, depicted by words called antonyms, i.e., up and down, in and out, sweet and sour, good and evil, male and female, anima and animus, cold and hot, pessimism and optimism, content and discontent, predator and prey, criminal and victim, love and hate, joy and suffering, sickness and health, rich and poor, pain and pleasure, positive and negative, light and dark, truth and falsity, first and last, win and lose, war and peace, birth and death, first and last, maze and labyrinth, order and chaos, optimism and pessimism, cooperation and competition, introvert and extravert, random and destined, predestination and free will, heaven and hell, trust and betrayal, indispensable and insignificant, beginning and ending, Christ and Satan - as in the ancient symbol of Yin and Yang. And the biggest dichotomy of all: creation and destruction, birth and death. All in GOD's will of course.

Apart from their opposites, everything is meaningless, like one hand clapping. C. G. Jung wrote, "Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word "happy" would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness." One could add the dichotomy of good and evil which must coexist at this time in human evolution. The Bible speaks of Christ and Anti-Christ as necessary opposites. (1 John 2:18, 22, 4:3) "God is both immanent and transcendent, both form and formless, both duality and nonduality, both manifest and unmanifest, both linear and nonlinear. All is God." (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 255). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) Many churches seem to avoid this necessary dichotomy and present their dogma in a one-sided package of eternal happiness with the Lord or forever suffering in hell, in the life to come if not in this one. Indeed, all theology must by definition offer a reward of health, wealth, and happiness as the payoff for submission to be accepted and

supported by the believers in the afterlife if not in this life. But we all must live simultaneously in a world of both benefits and burdens, heaven and hell, good and evil, all balanced in the universal One. Most-High GOD did not make any one-sided coins. “Unhappiness itself is not the problem—it is an inherent and unavoidable part of being alive. Rather, it’s the harshly negative views of ourselves that can be switched on by unhappy moods that entangle us. Not only do they affect our mind, they also have profound effects on our body—and then the body in turn has profound effects on the mind and emotions.” (Williams, Mark. *The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness* (p. 22). Guilford Publications. Kindle Edition) For a modern approach to happiness, please visit www.actionforhappiness.org.

F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote, “It is a mark of maturity to hold the opposites and still function normally” – including acceptance and rejection of theofatalism - all in GOD’s will of course. This may be one of the hardest lessons to learn in life, especially for those who feel compelled to fix things that are beyond their control. However, resisting the inevitable slings and arrows of outrageous fortune fuels depression, and anyone so afflicted will not be relieved until Most-High GOD wills the acceptance of what is as it is in your life. The religion of Islam is said to mean “submission,” and there is a meaning in that for all the afflicted people on earth.

THE SYMBOL

C. G. Jung said there is the thing and the symbol of the thing. Whereas the Catholic symbol is the crucifix and the Protestant symbol is the empty



cross, the symbol of theofatalism given to Tagliaferre is the Chartres Labyrinth (ca.1200 CE) in which there is only one pathway for each sentient being to follow. Dr. Jung wrote, “*The way is within us, but not in Gods nor in teachings, nor in laws. Within us is the way, the truth, and the life.*” (Redbook, p.231) He had five children and observed, “Your pathway is not my pathway; therefore, I cannot teach you. The pathway is within you.” Parents who can only watch their children and descendants walk the pathways they are given may understand and agree. As a parent, you cannot determine their destiny because there are many

causes and conditions determining their labyrinth walk of life that you cannot control, including all they inherited from their ancestry plus the social environment in which they live.

The late mythologist, Joseph Campbell may have described this pathway in his instruction to “follow your bliss.” He wrote, “If you follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. Wherever you are—if you are following your bliss, you are enjoying that refreshment, that life within you, all the time.” The Rev. Lauren Artress wrote, “Walking the Labyrinth has reemerged today as a metaphor for the spiritual journey and a powerful tool for transformation. This walking meditation is an archetype, a mystical ritual found in many religious traditions. It quiets the mind and opens the soul. Each step unites faith and action as

walkers take one step at a time, living in trust and willingness to follow the life course set before them.” (*Walking a Labyrinth – 2011*) You can buy a labyrinth in several forms at www.bwatsonstudios.com.

Unlike the dead-ends and random pathways of a maze, which are designed intentionally to confuse and frustrate, the labyrinth has no barriers, there are no shortcuts, and it definitely is not a random walk, because everyone one must take the steps before them. We may stumble along the way and encounter dangers and stress, sun and shadow, storms and calms, but the pathway ahead always beckons; begin and continue.

The labyrinth symbolizes how we emerge from the source when spirits incarnate in the body and traverse through four stages of infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood and then after midlife we return to the source through four stages of maturity, seniority, contemplation and mortality. Four seems to be a significant number because it occurs 278 times in the Old Testament and sixty-one times in the New Testament. The four bodily humors were part of Shakespearean cosmology, inherited from the ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Galen. Organized around the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire; the four qualities of cold, hot, moist, and dry; four temperaments, and the four humors, these physical qualities assumed the behavior of all created things including the human body. There are four dimensions in the laws of physics, four points to the compass, four seasons, four legs on animals, four limbs on humans, etc. German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer saw men in four classes: the working masses who must strive for basic existence leaving no time for anything more, family men who work for wives and children, creating an estate for their descendants, learners and teachers who see their role in history and the larger world view, and wise old sages, philosophers, observing the world but no longer participating.

The four quadrants of a labyrinth also symbolize the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual (four) aspects of mankind. They also represent the four functions of personality – sensing, thinking, feeling and intuition - described by the personality model of C. G. Jung and implemented in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). (*I am INTJ*) The walk of life traverses these four quadrants from infancy to mortality, each person on their own inevitable predestined pathway. The first half of life consists of four phases: infancy, childhood, youth, and adulthood. The second half of life consists of four phases too: maturity, seniority, contemplation/review and mortality. Each person traverses these phases of life within the parameters of their native personalities. Dr. Jung observed from his patients the difference between extraverts and introverts. He concluded that introverts must think before they speak, and extraverts must speak to know what they are thinking. Thus, if you don't know what an introvert is thinking you have not asked, and if you don't know what an extravert is thinking you have not listened. Connections with others involves physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual exchanges, but the most intimacy comes from emotional sharing, which is likely to be discouraged by our culture. We may allow sharing of joy and pleasure, but we forego sharing of suffering, pain, anxiety, and fear. Perhaps is it useful here to invoke a paraphrase of JFK, “Ask not what your relationship can do for you, but ask what you can do for your relationship.” For applications of the Jungian personality model in human relations that are beyond the scope of this book, please visit www.16personalities.com, www.personalitypage.com, www.mbtionline.com and www.capt.org.

During the second half of life, we walk the labyrinth back to our Source. The final step through death may be a transition of eternal energy from the physical to the spiritual form—since energy can neither be created nor destroyed, the spirit is eternal. Scripture says, “Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day...For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens....oh death, where is thy victory, oh death, where is thy sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:55, 2 Corinthians 4:16, 5:1) Dying is relatively easy; trying not to is hard, painful, and expensive. Stanford University professor emeritus, Irvin Yalom described contemplating our own death in his book, *Staring at the Sun* (2009), as peeking in small squints through a dense filter and maybe not discussing it at all. We hide death in hospitals and funeral “homes,” possibly thinking if we cannot see it then it cannot see us like children playing “hide and seek.” But we are wrong. The Covid-19 pandemic may be forcing people to face the possibility of dying who would not do so otherwise. This is a new awareness of what it really means to live with indefinite uncertainty. Prof. Yalom wrote, “Life is a spark between two identical voids, the darkness before birth and the one after death.” However, people who return to consciousness after a “near-death experience” usually describe it as a very pleasant transition. “Our view of immortality derives partly from what we want to believe must be true. “I” must continue existing, because “I” earnestly wish to, and “I” can hardly conceive otherwise.” (Rogers, Michael Allen. *What Happens After I Die?* (p. 123). Crossway. Kindle Edition.) All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Denial of death is a poorly understood defense mechanism, but it is real and serves as a subset of overall terror management in human psychology. So, many people cannot make a will or appoint someone with power of attorney to manage their affairs after they no longer can. The late founder of Apple, Inc., Steve Jobs observed that even those who think they are going to heaven don’t want to die to get there. His family said his last words were, “Oh wow, oh wow.” The late anthropologist, Margaret Mead said, “We celebrate at weddings, we rejoice at births, but when someone dies, we pretend nothing happened.” But something great happens, from death of ants or a whale or an elephant or a human being, and the world scarcely takes notice because most people cannot tolerate the anticipation of their own non-existence without effective preparation as may be provided by religious beliefs. All in Most-High GOD’s will of course.

James Baldwin (1924-1987) wrote in *The Fire Next Time*, (1963) “Life is tragic simply because the earth turns and the sun inexorably rises and sets, and one day, for each of us, the sun will go down for the last time.” Inner peace comes after total surrender to what is inevitable. The late psychiatrist, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross saw terminal patients walking through stages of shock, denial, anger, bargaining, and depression to reach acceptance of their final condition. (*On Death and Dying*, 1969) All beginnings come with endings, so the only way to avoid endings is to avoid beginnings which, of course, is impossible. Each of us is marked for tragedy eventually. Everyone is a dead person walking. We are born to die, one way or another. How we resolve this decidedly human complex of carrying out our daily lives while burdened by our inescapable mortality determines our character. Someone said a coward dies a thousand times, but a brave person dies only once.

In the end there is only surrender as nothing else matters in reaching the fulfillment of our destiny. We must follow the late actor, Charlton Heston who said when he received his terminal diagnosis, “I must reconcile equal measures of courage and surrender.” Surrender to

the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - with courage to accept things as they are. “Real courage is a willingness to be touched by life – to connect and co-operate with things as they are. A wise teacher was once asked: ‘What is the secret to your happiness?’ The reply came back: ‘A wholehearted co-operation with the unavoidable’ In letting our defenses drop, we release ourselves from struggling with the parts of life that we don’t like and cannot avoid.” (*Halliwell, Ed. Mindfulness Made Easy (p. 34, 111). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*)

A Course in Miracles states, “In my defenselessness, my safety (and inner peace) lies...the presence of fear is a sure sign you are trusting in your own (ego) strength.” What we resist, persists. Fear cannot stop death, but it can stop life. Go with the flow of life, let go and let GOD. “It is important to realize that that which is of God brings peace, and that which is not of God brings fear.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 219). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) Stress comes from trying to resist the irresistible.

Approaching pending death in this spiritual setting indicates a total surrender of ego, giving up our own desires to submit fully to the will of GOD in our lives, including whatever suffering, humiliation and pain that might include. This, too, must be necessary or it would be different. Dr. David DeRose wrote, “Indeed, it’s only during the storms of life that many of us finally realize our need to fully surrender to (the GOD of the universe.)” *DeRose MD MPH, David. Thirty Days to Natural Blood Pressure Control: The “No Pressure” Solution (p. 365). CompassHealth Consulting Press. Kindle Edition.* We may need to transcend strong emotions of fear and anger to fully achieve such surrender to the inevitable life that possibly is programmed for us at the instant of conception by the will of Most-High GOD. (Psalm 139:16, Jeremiah 1:5)

When we try to prevent what is inevitably happening or to hold on to what is changing, we volunteer for a losing battle. The cause of most suffering is resisting the inevitable walk of life our labyrinth requires. We may be made to fight for immortality, but mortality always wins, and what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. Very few people live to match the longevity proclaimed by God. “Then the Lord said, I will not allow people to live forever; they are mortal. From now on they will live no longer than 120 years.” (Genesis 6:3 GNT) That limit is practically impossible to achieve. As quoted elsewhere, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63)

When fight or flight no longer are options, it is easy to slip into depression; in fact, it may be normal to do so before reaching the final phase in life of accepting one’s death after walking through denial, anger, bargaining, and depression. “To let go of the known for the unknown requires great commitment, willingness, and devotion to surrendering one’s faith to God.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 114). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*)

Normally, the pain of living eventually exceeds the pain of dying. Half of all Americans die by age eighty, and most of the rest die by age ninety, many after great physical and mental suffering while leaving behind post trauma shock and financial disasters for their survivors. There are about 2.8 million deaths per year in America or about 320 per hour. The most common causes are heart disease, cancer, stroke, kidney failure, and diabetes plus many other adversaries lurking at the door. The COVID-19 virus may be adding additional numbers to

these statistics. You might ask yourself what it would be OK to die from. Dying is a natural process and, sometimes, medicine just gets in the way of it. Dying is easy, trying not to is hard and very expensive. For example, kidney dialysis costs about \$1,000 per week. The majority of funding for medical research goes into keeping people alive longer, not keeping people healthier or happier as long as they live. Trying to keep people alive at all costs makes no sense. Some things are worse than death, like Alzheimer's disease.

It is difficult for doctors, patients, and families to decide how much suffering is enough because we do not have a tradition to mark the beginning of dying. Medical treatment options increasingly are determined by financial considerations, insurance coverage, and government assistance unless families are united in their preferences. End of life suffering and post trauma shock can ruin families financially and emotionally for the rest of their lives. Sometimes, medical decisions become so contentious they end up in court. After their loss, survivors must traverse the pathway of grief including: acknowledging the loss, feeling its impact, finding substitutes for what the deceased provided, detaching from their investment in the past relationship, and reconstructing a new life without the loved one. It takes as long as it takes. The length and intensity of mourning is proportional to the value survivors have invested in the lost relationship. When someone enters your heart, they may never actually leave. Some things that are broken cannot be fixed. C. S. Lewis wrote figuratively of this reaction after the untimely death of his wife, "To say the patient is getting over it after an operation for appendicitis is one thing; after he's had his leg off it is quite another. At present I am learning to get about on crutches. Perhaps I shall presently be given a wooden leg." (*Rogers, Michael Allen. What Happens After I Die? (p. 229). Crossway. Kindle Edition.*) Unless they are properly grieved, the losses can pile up, chipping away at your heart until there is nothing left, then you die, as did C. S. Lewis less than three years after his insurmountable loss at his age of sixty-three. (*Tagliaferre, Harbaugh, Recovery From Loss, CAPT 2001*)

We need a ritual for death as a rite of passage, not as an ending, but as a passage from here to what nobody knows because no one who has died has revived to tell us what they saw, except possibly Jesus, and he did not say much about it. It is the ultimate unknown and the final exit from a pathway that each of us must walk through alone in our own time and in our own way. More people are choosing their own time and means of departure, commanding doctors Do Not Resuscitate, and medical ethics and legislation are changing to accommodate them. Declining treatment, entering hospice, and refusing food and drink are reasonable choices to limit suffering for some. California, Oregon, Montana, Colorado, Vermont, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey and District of Columbia have legalized physician prescribed suicide by the terminally ill. For more information visit, www.finalexit.org. In dying, as in living, people will walk the pathway of the labyrinth they have been given, and survivors will live with the results. Fighting GOD is exhausting and traumatic, but if you must, you must. All in Most-High GOD's will of course

CRITICISM

Religion is the opiate of the masses.

Karl Marx

If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things.

Rene Descartes

Hope is the worst of all evils for it prolongs the torments of man.
Friedrich Nietzsche

Every new idea must survive opposition and rejection before it is accepted. Those readers who cannot accept the conclusion of theofatalism may need to find flaws in the logic or interpretations of holy scriptures to support their skepticism.

Criticism of theofatalism may lie primarily in its apparent negation of conscious free will, which could present a formidable hurdle to its acceptance. The Bible does not specifically declare creation of free will so it must be inferred through interpretation of scriptures. Assumption of free will is the international basis for jurisprudence because without it there would be no justification for laws or their enforcement. A society without any rules would be chaos. Without free will, this argument claims all actions would be robotic, and people could not be held responsible for the results of their instinctive impulses. All human governance would be impotent without assuming free will, and people would be driven by instincts alone – just like they were before the ten commandments were given to Moses. Apostle Paul wrote: “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.” (Romans 13:1-7) “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.” (1 Peter 2: 13-17) As with most scriptures, this instruction must be weighed carefully in the context of its time and place for application to modern times.

These scriptures might suggest the American Revolution was a huge mistake, leaving Canada as a role model to consider in their obedience to the British Crown. But theofatalism says both countries were obeying the will of Most-High GOD as there can be no other. Laws are not consistent among different countries and local jurisdictions, so what is legal in one area may not be in another. And where there is no law, there is no lawlessness. If sin was violation of the Mosaic laws, how could the Gentiles be judged who were not under the law? Critics of theofatalism may claim that without assuming free will, the rule of law is made a mockery, and theofatalism is a one-sided argument for determinism. However, “law enforcement” is an oxymoron because criminals are not prosecuted until they break the law. The first Christians refused to deny Christ and worship Caesar, so they were persecuted and martyred for their disobedience until the fourth century when Emperor Constantine legalized all religions in the Edict of Milan in 313CE. Emperor Theodosius proclaimed Nicene Christianity as the state religion of Rome in 382CE, and all other religions were banned thereafter. In 300 CE you could

be killed for being a Christian. In 400 CE you could be killed for not being a Christian. All in Most-High GOD's will of course.

Proponents of free will may argue that the negation of free will by theofatalism, or its falsification, would mean that God is a liar and not worthy of belief. Some scriptures claim free will is a gift from God, for it lets people love and obey Him because they choose to do so, under penalty of hell if they refuse. (Matthew 22:37, Luke 12: 5, John 3:16,14:15). However, free will is negated in other scriptures, as Jesus declared to his twelve apostles, "You did not choose me, I chose you." "No one can come to me (Jesus) unless the Father calls/enables/grants them...and no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." (John 6:44,65, 15:16, 1 Corinthians 12:3) The New Testament describes Christians as "the chosen" thirty-eight times. (Matthew 22:14, Mark 13:20, Luke 18:7, John 6:37,44,65, 15:16, 19, Acts 22:14, Romans 11:5, Ephesians 1:11) Thus, early Christian church membership apparently was not voluntary.

To the question, does the Bible teach free will or determinism, the answer is "yes." The Bible contains scriptures evoking both ideas, sometimes in the adjacent verses: "They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (free will.) For this reason, God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits/from the beginning to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you (predestination) to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 2: 10-14) Theofatalism acknowledges the opposing views of free will and determinism as necessary opposites because Most-High GOD never made any one-sided coins.

Another possible criticism of theofatalism involves potentially confusing correlation with causation, a common error in research. Just because two events are related does not mean they are causative. For example, telomeres on the ends of chromosomes are depleted with aging. This could be a cause of aging, but aging also seems to be related to genes and environmental factors, diet, etc. So maybe loss of telomeres is a consequence of aging and not the cause. Certain chemical changes in the brain are observed in people with depression, but whether they are the cause or the results of depression is unknown. In addition, experiments in quantum mechanics demonstrate that there is an instantaneous connection between subatomic particles regardless how far away they are from one another – what Einstein called "spooky things at a distance." Thus, correlations may well be causations while causations may not require apparent connections. The universe may be seen as ONE, with energy and matter being interchangeable in the famous equation by Albert Einstein, ($E=MC^2$), making all human events inevitably interconnected.

Life stories of everyone attest to the necessary links in the chains of their personal history that end inevitably in the here and now. There are countless examples like this in every life on earth. If any link in the chain had been different the outcome would be different – from atoms to galaxies. Whatever is must be necessary, no matter how joyous, difficult or troublesome, or it would be different. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Consider this life story: Eckhart Tolle was born in Germany in 1948. His parents separated at his age of twelve, and his father self-schooled him in Spain. At age eighteen, he migrated to UK where he studied philosophy at the University of London. He suffered extended depression until at age twenty-nine he had a spiritual epiphany after which he migrated to Vancouver, Canada and eventually married an Asian woman. In 1997 he published his Buddhist-based book, *The Power of Now*, which sold less than 3,000 copies. In 2000, the book was endorsed by Oprah Winfrey and became an international best seller, translated into many languages. Now, Tolle is rich and famous. Considering all the sequential events in his life, this outcome is inevitable. (*Wikipedia*)

Here is another life story: Popular actor, Kelsey Grammer, whose father was murdered in a household invasion, whose only sister was kidnapped, raped, and murdered, whose two step-brothers drowned in a scuba diving accident, won a full scholarship to the Julliard School in New York but was expelled for truancy. He worked temporary jobs in theater until he landed a leading role in the TV sitcom *Cheers*, followed by its most successful spinoff, *Frasier*, winning many awards. Grammer was married four times and had other affairs, sired seven children and was a drug abuser and alcoholic, possibly related to his family tragedies. But he became a most successful movie, theater, and television star, plus a director and producer, thanks to many enablers and fans. Grammer said, “What does not kill you makes you stronger.” (*Wikipedia*)

One more story: Dr. Helen Schucman and Dr. William Thetford channeled *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM) from Jesus while they were professors of medical psychology at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in New York. After noting all the strife in their world, they concluded “there should be another way,” and they collaborated on it, beginning in June, 1965. But the *Course* is so heretical, Helen disclaimed it and stored the manuscript in her apartment closet. She later claimed atheism. Through their mutual friend, Father Groeshel, psychologist Dr. Kenneth Wapnick was invited to read the manuscript. He changed his plans about moving to Israel, and the *Course* became his life career, organizing The Foundation for A Course in Miracles with Judith Skutch Whitson, which edited and published it in 1975. Helen died in 1981 (age 71), Thetford died in 1988, (age 65) and Kenneth died in 2013, (age 71), and none of them were enriched by their seminal work. Now the *Course* is translated into two dozen languages, books are written about it, and teachers are presenting it to people who are ready to receive it worldwide. All in GOD’s will of course. (*Wikipedia*)

One more: Thomas Paine (1736-1809) was a British revolutionary and anti-monarchist whose first wife died in childbirth. He left his second wife and came to America by invitation of Benjamin Franklin to help promote the revolution in 1776. His pamphlets titled *Common Sense* and *The Rights of Man* were best sellers, stimulated public support and contributed to the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, for which he was respected and honored. He returned to Britain and then moved to Paris in support of the French Revolution where he was imprisoned and barely escaped the guillotine. From 1797 to 1807 he wrote *The Age of Reason*, a critique of the Bible, which debunked Christianity and promoted deism. Paine was vehemently ridiculed by the Church and returned to America where he was abandoned by his previous supporters for political reasons. Publishers and sellers of his three-part work on deism were prosecuted and imprisoned. Paine was possibly the most respected and reviled man of his

century. Only six people attended his funeral. After his death at age seventy-three, the body of Thomas Paine was exhumed from his grave, dismembered, and distributed in pieces around Europe. (Wikipedia)

A final story: Paul Laurence Dunbar (June 27, 1872 – February 9, 1906) was an African-American poet, novelist, and playwright. Born in Dayton, Ohio to parents who were enslaved in Kentucky before the American Civil War, Dunbar began to write stories and verse as a child and published his first poems at the age of sixteen in a Dayton newspaper. He was also president of his high school's literary society. Much of Dunbar's more popular work in his lifetime was written in the “Negro dialect” associated with the antebellum South. Dunbar was one of the first black writers to establish an international reputation. He published thirteen works of poetry and seven short stories and novels. He wrote the lyrics for the musical comedy *In Dahomey* (1903), the first all-African-American musical produced on Broadway in New York. Dunbar also wrote other poetry and novels in conventional English. Suffering from tuberculosis, which then had no cure, Dunbar died in Dayton, Ohio at the age of 33. His home in Dayton, Ohio, has been preserved as Paul Laurence Dunbar House, a state historical site that is included in the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, administered by the National Park Service. (Wikipedia)

Consider how Australian zoologist/naturalist, Steve Irwin was killed by a stingray's thrust to his heart while scuba diving to study its habitat. Terri, his widow, never remarried because she said, “I have had my happy ever after.” C. G. Jung defined events seemingly unconnected but causative as “synchronicity.” There may be no coincidences, only “godincidences,” what one writer called “God Jobs.” Although he did not believe in any afterlife, Albert Einstein believed that a physical reality exists independent of our ability to observe it. The existence of undetectable “dark matter” and “dark energy” now is accepted science. There appears to be more to the universe than can be discerned by human senses and scientific instruments. Research in neurology has uncovered “mirror neurons” in the brain which activate contagious emotions in a person who is merely observing the said emotions in another person. Contagious yawning has been observed in several sentient species, including humans. Emotional contagion and “group think” are subjects of high interest in psychology of social media because actions as well as thoughts seem to be contagious.

UK biologist, Dr. Rupert Sheldrake proposed the existence of non-material morphic energy fields to explain this phenomenon. (*A New Science of Life*, 1995) If you are sensitive enough, you may feel this energy with loved ones or a pet. Animals appear to be more sensitive to it than are humans. His theory might help to explain how people seem to be attracted to others and repulsed by others through what he calls morphic resonance. At any moment we are transmitting and receiving energy as thoughts and emotions unconsciously, whether good or bad. This also may help to explain the crowd-pleasing charismatic power of popular celebrities and certain preachers plus the crowd mentality that occurs at sporting events and political rallies. The spontaneous “wave” of cheers that flows across stadiums during a game also illustrates this phenomenon. Conversely, practicing calm relaxation during mindfulness meditation seems to reduce friction and conflicts among social partners at work and among families at home.

The morphic energy field has traditionally been called an “aura” as detectable in Kirlian photography. It can be seen by people who have been born with psychic gifts or learned the ability to see vibrations of that radiation. The practice of Chinese medicine called Qigong assumes a vitalistic energy called *qi* (or chi) that permeates all living things and provides the basis for acupuncture treatment. Morphic energy may help to explain the lifestyle similarities seen in studies of twins who were separated at birth and in the illegal behavior of criminal gangs. Contagious ideas, called memes, may be driven by morphic energy. This is the best explanation for the popular appeal of entertainment celebrities, religious gurus, and political leaders who can fill theaters and stadiums with their charismatic personalities. Competitive sports fans expend memetic energy that otherwise might be expended in gangs and wars to meet opposing human needs for competition and cooperation. Morphic energy also could help to understand what Jesus meant when he stated the “law of reciprocity”: “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Luke 6:38) This seems to say what you transmit you receive like in a mirror. This scripture seems to give some credibility to the “Law of Attraction” and the “Law of Cause and Effect” from the New Thought movement, which is disputed merely as marketing hype to sell books and seminars and to raise money from needy gullible people. However, note the scripture is a call to action and not merely wishful thinking. You cannot just think yourself into health, wealth, and happiness, although thoughts must precede actions. Actions speak louder than words. Expectations can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. You reap what you sow in human relations as well as in gardening. All in GOD’s will of course.

ACIM says to transmit only love, to ask Holy Spirit to convert our “special relationships” to “holy relationships” through acceptance and forgiveness where each one looks inward and sees no lack in themselves so they don’t need anything from others. Love is inevitably attracted to love, fear to fear. Jesus said one must return to the innocence of a child to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 18:3, 19:14) Infants are born with only unconditional love, but it soon becomes contaminated by interventions from the world. Thus, humans develop a dark side that leads to suffering and grief which is influenced by the polarity of energy in our environments. This polarity can be seen by comparing the human ghettos with their opposites behind gated communities of the wealthy, i.e., “birds of a feather flock together.” What is called spirit also may be called energy, which helps to explain belief in everlasting life and the faith-based aspect of all religions which attracts and holds their members. According to various interpretations, some scriptures appear to say the soul/spirit separates from the body at death and returns to its source to await a “new heaven and a new earth.” The creations of GOD – positive and negative - are energetic or spiritual as well as material. “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.” (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.)

Since, by the law of universal conservation, energy can neither be created nor destroyed, perhaps death of the body does not extinguish this energetic existence of spirit which continues in its nonmaterial form while the elements of the body return to earth – from dust to dust.

The renowned scientist Albert Einstein said, “Man can will what he wants, but he cannot will what he wills.” We have no free will, so we must believe in free will. Nothing happens outside the will and grace of GOD, including the rejection of theofatalism and adoption of many other beliefs. GOD makes atheists and all other beliefs, too. “One’s existence from moment to moment is solely by the grace of God (as given by Most-High GOD). One’s life is sustained as a function of the presence of GOD, and the materiality that we thought sustained it is in itself an expression of GOD’s will for us. One’s own efforts to sustain life is a ‘given’ and not a personal invention. The ego thinks we survive in spite of GOD’s will rather than because of it.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 162). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) Theofatalism postulates that whatever people believe or eventually discover – in science, economics, psychology, politics, religion, etc. - it is the consequence of the will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

A NEW THERAPY – FIVE STEPS TO INNER PEACE

The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.

Rabindranath Tagore

To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all.

Oscar Wilde

A new idea is only as valuable as it can be useful. We have demonstrated that Most-High GOD generates and operates and destroys all the functions of the Universe, from atoms to galaxies. So what, now what? How can one deal with the destruction and suffering that GOD also causes among individual human lives? What can a person do with this knowledge? How can it help suffering souls in mortal pain, those who are desperate for things to be different? Please read on.

Belief in theofatalism leads to a new therapy for suffering souls who need help walking through their labyrinth of life. We are taught a formula for life that says, “do this, get that.” Sometimes it works and sometimes not. It certainly is not equally distributed among all God’s children. A tattoo text says, “What beautiful lies you’ve been told. What terrible truths drown your soul.” There is possibly no worse shock than to trust in a personal faith that is impotent when needed the most during the painful trials of life. Psychic pain seems to be essential for survival. Like physical pain, psychic pain is the tangible material that creeps into our mind and screams at us to recognize that something is terribly wrong. When things do not go as planned, what then? Living in harmony with the reality we do not create, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual, that is the key. It follows from this discussion that to feel a measure of inner peace and serenity while living in the world as it is, one might employ ©Royal Accommodation Therapy in five ADTDA steps. There are only two rules to follow in their application to life: begin and continue. (*Disclaimer: This is not a substitute for qualified mental health care by a professional.*)

1) *Accept* everything as it is moment by moment here and now, including your personal reaction, because it must be the will of Most-High GOD or it would be different,

2) *Detach* from what you cannot change and wish were different, and forgive your adversary because it hurts too much not to...you did not cause it and you cannot fix it.

3) *Transcend* the need for control because you don't have any, as the brain has a mind of its own, and the body must go where the mind takes it.

4) *Don't fight* with GOD because you cannot win – but if you fight that also is inevitable because you must walk the labyrinth you are given, and

5) *Assume* there are no mistakes, only predestined choices and inevitable consequences. Every decision is a necessary learning experience.

(Note: Acceptance does not mean liking or approving of what is happening. It means looking at it and acknowledging it without judging. Detachment does not mean disconnecting. It means loving concern and compassion without contagious psychic investment. Transcending control does not mean descending into apathy or futility. It means reconciling surrender and courage to change to change. Don't fight with GOD does not mean giving up. It means letting go and letting GOD. Assuming predestination does not mean avoiding decisions. It means making decisions and accepting the consequences as in Step 1. This practice completes the circle of ©Royal Accommodation Therapy.)

This new therapy comes with a single, but very powerful affirmation for inner peace no matter what happens outside: ***GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - grants me willingness to accept what I cannot change, the knowledge, courage and ability to do what I must, and the assurance that I am indispensable to the universe.*** Please copy this affirmation and carry it with you to refer to whenever you need to accommodate suffering in your life.

Of course, this affirmation is easier to practice under mild stress than during a life-threatening situation or when you desperately wish things were different. If everything – including you - is as it must be, then there is nothing to do differently than you are doing – apparently a paradox. Jesus declared, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) That may be little consolation if you are sick, homeless and hungry and alone and you are devastated by pandemic, criminality, grief, terror and war. Jesus may have thought he overcame the world, but we still must live in it through the evolution of plant, animal, and human until our departure is required in transition to whatever comes after life. That is when this affirmation is needed most.

Implementing the steps is encouraged by praise, empathy, attention, and approval (PEAA), four human needs that go a long way toward soothing the suffering soul. Everyone needs PEAA. This need should be a high priority among church members as Saint Paul instructed them to “carry each other's burdens.” (Galatians 6:2) PEAA is strong medicine, and a little goes a long way in making and supporting loving relationships. But if you do the opposite you can make a lot of enemies. Just remember that great people like to talk about ideas, average people like to talk about things, and little people like to talk about other people. The transformation from infantile faith to mature reality takes a lot of patience and persistence and practice through all things in life – mild and severe. But the endurance can pay off in transforming the ego from selfish to selfless. The ego, i.e., the self or soul/psyche, apparently must be crucified in order to see Most-High GOD in all things, and it does not go willingly unless some painful intervention makes it surrender to overcome its willfulness with willingness – “nevertheless, not my will but thine.”

The Old Testament says God wants a broken and contrite heart into which he can pour love and compassion for all sentient beings. (Psalm 51:16-18) Divine love apparently cannot be

known until the ego/self is crucified and sometimes it seems to require a war within. This does not come about without psychic sacrifice, and sometimes we may have to turn our values upside down and our souls inside out to accept reality as it is. With absolute humility and surrender, the ego disappears to be replaced by unconditional love. But the Bible contains conflicting scriptures that present confusion about love. Jesus said there is no greater love than to give your life for your friends. (John 15:13) Apparently, Jesus preferred friends to family. Except possibly for his brother, James, apparently none of his siblings nor his father Joseph and his mother, Mary, helped in his ministry. (Matthew 13:53-58,) He told a grieving disciple who wanted to go home to bury his deceased father to “Let the dead bury their dead.” He also preferred his disciples to his own mother and brothers. (Matthew 8:21-22, 12:47-48) Jesus also commanded the disciples to love their enemies and their neighbors as themselves. But Apostle Paul wrote that in providing food and drink for your enemies you will heap burning coals on their heads, in quoting the Old Testament. (Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:20, Proverbs 25:22) But then, Jesus ordered his disciples to hate their families and even themselves and give up everything to follow him. (Luke 14:26) In response, the traditional hymn says, “I surrender all...” After all, that is the main goal, isn’t it – to detach from all desire, including the desire to detach, turning “my will” into “thy will,” as did Jesus facing the cross. (Luke 22:42) That was the time when “darkness reigned over the earth.” The Bible says he returned after his suffering in a new form, and so possibly can we who also walk the labyrinth we are given as we experience life and return to our Source after we die. There is nothing more awesome than arriving back home again to one’s Source, Most-High GOD.

You may become progressively more of a witness to life rather than the actor during the drama in old age by relinquishing the illusion of control and accepting the many different beliefs among Homo sapiens on earth. You cannot be responsible for what you cannot control, which is just about everything. “It becomes obvious that one is the witness of phenomena and not the cause or doer of them. The self, then, becomes that which is being witnessed rather than identifying with it as the witness or experiencer.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 91). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) This still begs the question, who is the witness to the witness? Some things are unknowable. To be patient under all circumstances and to accept all conditions as necessary factors in your training, that is wisdom – even when you feel brutalized by acts of GOD. Resisting the inevitable is the root cause of suffering when we believe that we are our bodies. Bodies come and go, but the Bible and other religious books claim the spirit is eternal and never dies. Jesus said, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63) Apostle Paul wrote, “I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day...Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” (2 Timothy 1:12, 2 Corinthians 4: 16-17) So, death of the body may not be death of the real you – no big deal. If you select self-identity with investment and attachment to the temporary ego/body and its life on earth, distress will come with its deterioration and demise. In this life there will be trouble and suffering. If we identify only with the body, all our animal instincts take over, and the world becomes a jungle – all in Most-High GOD’s will of course.

The response of Jesus to adversity was radical acceptance. If someone slaps your cheek turn the other, if someone takes your coat give them your cloak also, if a soldier demands you carry his pack a mile carry it two miles, if someone borrows something do not demand it back, love your enemies, do good to those who harm you, forgive repeatedly those who ask, pay what

you owe to God and man, and give up your life for your friends, take up your cross and follow him. “Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of (Most-High GOD,) because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked” (Matthew 5, Luke 6) “Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21) “The first Christ-suffering which every man must experience is the call to abandon the attachments of this world. When Christ calls a man, he bids him to come and die.” (Rogers, Michael Allen. *What Happens After I Die?* (p. 260). Crossway. Kindle Edition.) Jesus did not promise anyone health, wealth, and happiness in this world.

This instruction may sound foolish or impossible and is avoided by many modern churches and New Thought preachers, but that may change because “with GOD all things are possible.” So, as it is practiced in 12-step programs, “let go and let GOD,” for whom and through whom all things exist. (Hebrews 2:10) Everyone must die to their past and to the old ego before they can reenter the spiritual realm from which they were born. This is a mortal struggle because the old ego must die, and one must be “born again” into a different spiritual paradigm shift. “...no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are (re)born of water and the Spirit.” (John 3:5)

Theologians have never developed a satisfactory theodicy/theory that explains all the evil and suffering in the world that is supposedly created by some omnipotent, loving, caring God. Unsuccessful attempts to do so are dated to 1100 BC by the ancient Babylonians. He must have a purpose for it, and it seems to be punishing sinners and proving that he is the Lord, plus possibly providing the motivation and opportunity for practicing unconditional charity. “A theodicy that is too adept at justifying evils cannot be Christian, and a theodicy that is Christian will never finish the job of justifying evils.” (*God and the Problem of Evil (Spectrum Multiview Book Series)*. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition). Five positions have been debated recently, with no clear agreement. 1) According to the classic position, associated especially with the determinism of the Augustinian tradition, God permits evil and suffering as part of the grand narrative of divine providence to bring about the redemption of creation. Sin presages suffering which presages redemption. 2) Molinism modifies the classic view by adding God's middle knowledge to the picture, in which God has knowledge of what creatures would do in all possible worlds, but he cannot control them and also provide free will because they are mutually exclusive. 3) Open theism rejects the determinism of the classic view in favor of an account of God as a risk-taker who does not know for sure what the future holds among mankind with free will. 4) Essential kenosis goes further in providing a comprehensive theodicy by arguing that God cannot control (the creatures he created) with free will and thus he cannot unilaterally prevent evil. 5) Skeptical theism rejects the attempt to provide a theodicy and instead argues that, if God exists, we should not expect to understand God's purposes.” (*God and the Problem of Evil, Spectrum-Multiview, IVP Academic, 2017*) All of these diverse opinions plus the debates about them must be the will of Most-High GOD because there can be no other.

The Bible makes this conditional declaration about suffering, “...the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will and grace of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him (and) who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28) It is very difficult to apply this statement in general to human conditions around the world. In fact, it seems to be predestined and restricted to the few who are called/chosen: “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called;

those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:27-30) This scripture and several others seem to negate the claim of free will and provides the basis for John Calvin to declare predestination. That Christians were “called” or “chosen” occurs many times in New Testament scriptures. This calling eventually includes suffering for everyone. “In the world you will have trouble...” (John 16:33) The debate about human free will and determinism does not include any discussion of the many sources of human suffering not caused by people including natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, disease pandemics, accidents, etc. But theofatalism concludes that these tragedies all must be necessary, or they would not happen.

The Christian premise that God is all loving, and all knowing, and immaculately just, but he permits evil immoral behavior among people to sustain their free will so he can save some of his creation from his eternal punishment in hell if they accept his son Jesus as Lord and savior – but only those he calls or enables by predestination before time began - is logically incompatible. But that does not prevent 2.4 billion people from believing it is true by some force above their conscious control. This belief does not accommodate natural disasters of geological origination and the brutality of the food chain nor does it justify immoral human evil which apparently God cannot control. Placing such limitations upon God is nonsense, like debating if he could make a rock too big for him to move because God can or cannot do anything he is not capable of doing or not doing. But, the mere existence of the debate must be necessary, or it would not exist, along with other as yet unresolved concepts including randomness, infinity, zero and nothing. Christianity raises issues about God that are unsolvable paradoxes, given its form of theology that claims he is omnipotent and all loving, but imposes massive suffering on his creation, either to punish them or to prove he is God or to create the need and opportunity for charity. To accommodate its paradoxes, one must go beyond biblical theology into the realm of theofatalism where paradoxes are creations of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

Yet, Christianity is the predominant religion on earth, self-proclaimed by an estimated 2.4 billion people. However, Islam is nearly as popular and is growing faster, plus there are thousands of other religious belief systems among the additional four billion people around the world. They have been expressed through architecture, art, literature, music, rituals and more. How come?

A rational explanation, of course, is to take a different view by assuming existence of Most-High GOD above gods, the prime force in the universe, controller of everything from atoms to galaxies and the creator of all religions. Considering this possibility by inference as reality requires the utmost imagination – not unlike but exceeding the imagination driving all religions. This imaginary GOD is bigger than all other imaginary Gods, and humans cannot know all its attributes at this time in their evolution. Its discovery and use (or not) in counseling troubled people who desperately wish things were different is, of course, the will of Most-High GOD, the Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Ergo, theofatalism.

APPLICATION to LIFE

Don't judge the day by the harvest you reap, rather by the seeds that you sow.

Robert Louis Stevenson

In spite of all my uncertainties, I feel a solidity underlying all existence and a continuity in my mode of being.

C. G. Jung

The world is not something in which certainty is possible...and therefore you must learn to act on things which you still very much doubt.

Bertrand Russell

While hanging on the cross, Jesus cried out, “My God, why have you forsaken me?” This is a lamentation quoted from Psalm 22:1. If the Son of God felt abandoned in his peak time of need, what shall we make of this God of the Bible who would sacrifice his only son to correct a decision He made to give mankind free will, knowing what the outcome would be? Decades after his suffering, Jesus was immortalized and became the symbol of a religion that fails to bring serenity and inner peace to the world. Surely, the God of the Bible could have created a different kind of world if He willed. But maybe not. Reality as we experience it just does not support that thesis. Theofatalism says the writers about the little God of the Bible must obey Most-High GOD of the universe and write as they were commanded. Evil and suffering exist, whether from God or Satan, so we must accommodate it as being necessary, or it would not exist. Much as ACIM would have us believe there is only unconditional love, unconditional evil is its necessary opposite. We experience both benefits and burdens at the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. But Saint Paul thought every burden comes with benefits. “We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance produces character; and character, hope.” (Romans 5:3) Buddhist nun, Pema Chodron wrote, “The spiritual journey involves going beyond hope and fear, stepping into unknown territory, continually moving forward.” Walking our own labyrinth through our lives is the pathway within, and no one can do it for us.

A letter to C. G. Jung from a former patient reads as follows: “Out of evil, much good has come to me. By keeping quiet, repressing nothing, remaining attentive, and by accepting reality—taking things as they are, and not as I wanted them to be—by doing all this, unusual knowledge has come to me, and unusual powers as well, such as I could never have imagined before. I always thought that when we accepted things, they overpowered us in some way or other. This turns out not to be true at all, and it is only by accepting them that one can assume an attitude towards them. What a fool I was! How I tried to force everything to go according to the way I thought it ought to! So now I intend to play the game of life, being receptive to whatever comes to me, good and bad, sun and shadow that are forever alternating, and, in this way, also accepting my own nature with its positive and negative sides. Thus, everything becomes more alive to me.” (*The Commentary of the Secret of the Golden Flower, C.G. Jung, 1929.*)

The Psalmist wrote, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil...” (Psalm 23:4) For there to be mountains there also must be valleys. *A Course in Miracles* states, “What could you not accept if you but knew everything that happens is for your good? Disobeying God’s will is meaningful only to the insane. In truth, it is impossible... all actions

are either a call for love or an expression of love.” The man who watched his wife swept away and lost his house in hurricane Dorian, the immigrant woman who watched her husband and infant daughter drown in the Rio Grande, warriors who see their buddies killed and disabled in battle and return with post trauma shock, parents who lose their kids to illegal drugs, people who are driven into bankruptcy by medical bills, millions who are killed by raging pandemics, other millions who lose their jobs, and homeless refugees who are driven from their demolished countries by civil war might find this idea difficult to accept. The “*Course*” claims that releasing fear leaves only love. But one cannot exist without the other. Fear and love appear to be necessary opposites we cannot live without. “If you are an extrovert, you need introverts for a comparison. If you are male, you need female in the same way we see in the classic reversible symbol of Taoism: yang needs yin to define what it is.” (*Niebauer Ph.D., Chris. No Self, No Problem (p. 58). Hierophant Publishing. Kindle Edition.*) It is very difficult to accept that life is beautiful and broken at the same time. We may need a different outlook to make it through the walk of life we are given that accommodates both of these necessary opposites. Perhaps this is it.

(Note: Historically, wars, pandemics, and many natural disasters have claimed millions of human lives, but their population continues to grow because people must make babies regardless of their suffering. One observer said of human reproduction, the position is unseemly, the pleasure is momentary, and the results are abominable. God commanded Adam and Eve to multiply and subdue the earth, so they had no choice. Humans occupy a vast array of climates and geography in a wide range of advanced and primitive cultures around the earth from plains to mountains, deserts to wetlands, and from the arctic to antarctica. They live in modern cities and slums, rural lands, and isolated islands. The most primitive people may be the Sentinelese tribe untouched by modern civilization living on North Sentinel Island in the Bay of Bengal protected by India. They have no written language, and their speech is said to sound more like that of a chimpanzee than a human. At the other extreme are people in modern cities who cannot live without their smart phones and computerized lifestyles. Lifestyles vary from the regimented communism of North Korea to the Old Order Mennonites in Belize. All in GOD’s will of course.)

Life moves on in one form or another whether you want it to or not because the generator and operator is in control along with the destroyer - GOD. Psychiatrist, Victor Frankl lost his pregnant wife and family in the Nazi holocaust and survived the concentration camps to write in his book, *Man’s Search for Meaning, (1946)* that life can take away everything but your reaction to it. Millions were lost in the gas chambers, but he remarried and lived with his new family for decades until 1997 in relative health and prosperity. He claimed that he no longer feared anything except his God. If you hold on to the past, grasping onto what no longer exists, you’ll create suffering for yourself and others. But if you let go and let GOD, who knows? Can you let go of the pain and hold onto only the pleasure, then die with a smile on your face? Charles Dickens (1812-1870) wrote, “Reflect upon your present blessings, of which everyone has many, not on your past misfortunes, of which everyone has some.” Mindfulness experts say even when it feels like everything is out of our control, we can still control what we pay attention to. We can turn off our alerts to keep the news or social media from hijacking our awareness. We can drop our ruminations and negative fantasies by attending to what is actually happening in our inner

world, right now, here in the present, while letting go of the past and not worrying about the future.

Mindfulness therapy experts claim that living in the past invites depression and living in the future invites anxiety, but if you must, you must. Someone said that anxiety is imagining the future without Christ so there must be a lot of anxious people on planet earth - by the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Dr. David Hawkins wrote, “It is impossible to exist anywhere at all except in the drastic, radical reality of now. This instant is all there is.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 59). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) This idea really is not new. It can be traced to Aristippus of Cyrene (c. 435 – c. 356 BCE). He recommended that one should concentrate on the present day, and indeed on the very part of it in which one is acting and thinking. “For only the present,” he said, “truly belongs to us, and not what has passed by or what we are anticipating: for the one is gone and done with, and it is uncertain whether the other will come to be.” Like the notes of music that fade away as soon as they are sounded, the experiences of life are fleeting and ephemeral. Each moment is already in the process of ceasing at the very instant it arises. Everything comes to pass. Accepting the uncertainty of the future moment by moment seems to be the key to living in the reality of today. Uncertainty is the only certainty there is. Learning to live with insecurity is the best security.

Living mindfully aware here and now moment by moment - physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually - clears the soul from all manner of perfidy and baseness – if you can. It means developing awareness of what is happening outside and inside through the senses and feelings. Just as our thinking can be refined and developed, so our access to awareness can be refined and developed with practice. “To cultivate mindfulness requires that people/we pay attention and inhabit the present moment and make good use of what we see and feel and know and learn about ourselves in the process. I define mindfulness operationally as the awareness that arises by paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally, being willing to face the full catastrophe of their own lives, in both pleasant and unpleasant circumstances, when things were going the way they wanted and when they were not, when they felt things were under control and when they didn’t, and to use these very experiences and their own thoughts and feelings as the raw materials for healing themselves.” (*Kabat-Zinn, Jon. Full Catastrophe Living (Revised Edition). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.*)

When you live here and now, depression caused by dwelling on the past and anxiety caused by fear of the future are reduced with the conviction, or insight, that the immediate *now*, whatever its nature, is simultaneously the goal and fulfillment of all living things. Jesus instructed not to worry about tomorrow because the problems of today are enough, so why borrow trouble? (Matthew 6:25-34) Worrying does not take away tomorrow’s trouble, it takes away today’s peace! The past is gone, you do not get any “do overs,” and the future is not yet, so all we have is now moment by moment. Living in the imaginary past or the uncertain future does not change anything, and worry can impact resilience needed to solve the problems of today. You can assume that everyone is doing the will of Most-High GOD under their circumstances, including those who cause others to suffer. However, this awareness does not offset human anxiety. Jesus sweat drops as blood in anguish anticipating his suffering and death on the cross. (Luke 22:44) But, after his season of suffering came the resurrection into new life. This story is repeated in many cultures as the myth of the “hero’s journey” into darkness and return to life in a

new form with confident assurance of its divinity. “It is not so easy to do this. It requires a lot of energy to stay focused and concentrated in the present.” (*Kabat-Zinn, Jon. Full Catastrophe Living (Revised Edition) p. 138 Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.*) So, be patient and kind to yourself during your season of suffering because you have the right to be here and, no doubt, your life is unfolding as it must.

Poet laureate, Robert Frost lost his wife and four children by his age sixty-six and lived to age eighty-eight to think about it. His remaining daughter shunned him, and he lived alone with a housekeeper. He said, “It is hard to get into this world and hard to get out and what lies in between makes no sense.” One literary critic wrote, “Frost's best work explores fundamental questions of existence, depicting with chilling starkness the loneliness of the individual in an indifferent universe.” Frost wrote, “Lord, please forgive my many little jokes on thee, and I will forgive thy great big joke on me.” His epitaph states, “I had a lover’s quarrel with the world.” Nothing makes sense until we make sense of it. Nothing has a purpose except the purpose we give it. It is up to us to give life meaning and to make life worth living. However, the other side of this is the need to invest in the now in order to have a better future that is uncertain and in the hands of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. And the opposite idea; you don’t have to work on your purpose because you cannot avoid it any more than an apple seed can avoid becoming an apple tree. (Psalm 139:16) Like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, each person has their own time and place, a time to be born and time to die. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

The universe is so big, and we seem to be small and powerless – yet, each one is both insignificant and indispensable to the whole like grains of sand on a beach, living in mindfulness to experience life as it is in the here and now. Mindful meditation focuses attention on the senses, paying attention with awareness of all the sights, sounds, tastes, and textures of details, letting thoughts and emotions rise and fall without being attached to them. Just living life, one inhalation and one exhalation at a time without judging, accepting things as they are and doing what you must moment to moment, letting thoughts and ruminations pass by like logs floating down a river of consciousness. Can you imagine that? The experts claim this is not disengaging from life but embracing it more fully as it is without judging or keeping score. Research in neurology indicates this practice can reduce stress and enhance awareness for better health and mental serenity by balancing the left brain thinking with right brain feeling. Accepting things as they are does not mean agreeing with them or not attempting to resolve inner and external challenges. Does it solve all your problems? Of course not. We must plan for the future and manage the bank account with some tolerance for indefinite uncertainty about unforeseeable events we cannot control. But if you live in the present here and now, there is less to grieve about the past and less to fear about the future, because it all must be GOD’s will, or it would be different, from atoms to galaxies. Some theologians speculate that time does not exist as we know it in heaven so here and now are always and only present. Albert Einstein proposed that time and matter are interrelated in spacetime, and cosmology is taking him seriously.

Mindful meditation may include contemplation of Most-High GOD. When Moses asked God whom he should say sent him to free the Jews from Egypt, the reply was, “Tell them I AM has sent you.” The best meditation upon GOD may be the name of God given to Moses: “I AM who I am – here and now” because that is the source of all we have for sure. (Exodus 3:13-14) It also focuses on the spirit and not the temporary body or material wealth or comparing yourself to others. Each person is a unique creation of GOD – “The spirit gives life. The flesh

counts for nothing.” (John 6:63) “God is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24) Meditating on the mantra – “I Am Relying Fully on GOD - here and now” - sustains reliance on the highest of the highest powers in the universe and may help to create some inner peace and serenity during times of personal suffering and insecurity for those who are destined to receive it. Breathing meditation is a very old practice in Asia where “monkey mind” was recognized as unhealthy jumping around in thinking that is not helpful managing the stresses of life. In contrast, mindfulness living is consciously doing one thing at a time. It can be learned. Make this a daily practice; Sit quietly in your favorite upright chair with feet flat on the floor and with hands on knees. Eyes closed, focus on breathing and count backwards from 100 inwardly with each exhale, breathing intentionally from the diaphragm. Repeat the cycle three times which takes about thirty minutes. You may need to set aside time for it and do it daily for several months to feel healing results. Let thoughts come and go without judging them while contemplating Most-High GOD that makes life possible. Replace conflict with compassion for all sentient beings because they all are creations of GOD. This is an ancient practice that invokes the right brain feelings to balance the incessant thoughts of the left brain that dominates in western cultures. For more details on mindful living, visit: www.mindful.org and www.everyday-mindfulness.org.

C. G. Jung said many of his troubled patients lost contact with whatever resilience was provided by their faith, and no one recovered who did not regain it, i.e., “they made peace with GOD.” “Be thankful in all circumstances because this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) Saint Paul wrote that instruction to Christians when some were being crucified for their refusal to worship Caesar. It is not clear if he was referring to thankfulness as God’s will or to all circumstances as God’s will – perhaps, both. Perhaps he was aware that Greek philosopher Cicero said, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, it is the parent of all the others.” If nothing else, we can be thankful that each day is one less to suffer on our walk minute by minute through the labyrinth we are given. Some people thank God for being healed. Can you thank GOD for being harmed? Can you thank GOD for losing a loved one? Despite their distress, or possibly because of it, Paul instructed persecuted Christians to think of things that are “true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy.” (Philippians 4:8) Perhaps this was the beginning of what is now being called, “positive psychology.” We are not self-sufficient. We did not create ourselves nor anything else. We may not even create our own thoughts and emotions. We depend on parents, friends, society, the earth, GOD, the universe and even the government to provide what we cannot provide for ourselves. But what if Most-High GOD gives and also takes away? All beginnings come with endings. If we imagined the endings, perhaps there would be fewer beginnings in human relationships. Seeing with grateful eyes requires that we see the web of interconnection in which we alternate between being givers and receivers.

The self-reliance so highly valued in our culture is based on the illusion of free will. “I thank whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul. I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.” From atoms to galaxies, nothing happens outside the will of Most-High GOD – including our thoughts about it and including the poem, *Invictus*, by William Ernest Henley.

This outlook requires a personal transformation to accommodate the world as it is for every sentient being – plant, animal, and human. If this is the world GOD has made, including the God of the Bible, it must be necessary as it is, all the grief and suffering included. “The

nature of Creation is as it is and is not in need of correction.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 221). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) Things are as they are and can be no other. If this is true, forgiveness of yourself and others may be helpful but it is unnecessary because everyone must walk the labyrinth pathway they are given. The individual and cultural changes must be unfolding as necessary or they would be different. The aging of individuals comes with changes in outlook and perceptions in some people and not in others. Some people continually grow, and some reach a plateau and remain there. C. G. Jung proposed the second half of life is preparation for the personal development that leads to a transition from physical to spiritual maturity that he called “individuation,” i.e., removing the dross of life to rediscover who you were born to be, whatever that is. He declared, “Those who look outward dream, those who look inward awake. Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart.” Often, this process is initiated when life slaps you in the face to get your attention, sometimes called a “mid-life or existential crisis.” Of course, his use of the word “heart” obviously cannot be taken literally now that we know heart transplants do not change the personality or character of the recipient. It might refer to the “gut feel” or to the right-brain hemisphere in current neurology. The word “heart” is used 795 times in the Bible attributed to both man and God and is used commonly in literature with the same problem, but there presently is no accepted substitute word. All in Most-High GOD’s will of course.

What matters most appears to be the awakening of your own mind, whatever that is, through discovery of subconscious content with mature insight. This process involves knowing your native personality type and accepting a lifestyle in physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects that is most compatible with it. (Visit www.16personalities.com and www.personalitypage.com) Alan Cohen wrote, “Your task is not to roam the earth seeking someone smarter than you to tell you what to do. Your task is to dive into your heart and remember what you know. The ultimate guru lives within you. Let the world know you as you are, not as you think you should be.” (*Cohen, Alan. A Course in Miracles Made Easy (p. 119). Hay House. 2015 Kindle Edition.*) But what if the world rejects you as you are?

The world is composed mostly of special relationships where one person needs something from another, i.e., unhealthy mutual codependency. In contrast, ACIM describes a holy relationship as one between two people who have looked inward and, finding no lack, are able to share the world independently with mutual respect for each other as they are through unconditional love and acceptance. The transformation requires examination of the influence of your family, what you learned in school and the social environment you lived in, your work life, and your natural personality to uncover your authentic self – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual as a child of Most-High GOD, created without sin hence needing no punishment. Jesus declared, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.... Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3, 19:14) They must not be born sinners to make this work.

Reviewing our personal life stories allows us to pay tribute to all the various people in our lives – parents, ancestors, teachers, coaches, friends, spouses, children, and siblings – who contributed to our journey on the labyrinth pathway of life. This might be done by writing a personal journal of memories to pass on to the next generation. Because everyone sees the world through their own unique filter, roles, and social conditioning, there may be few completely authentic people having authentic relationships because they are more “human

doings” than human beings. Shakespeare penned this instruction by Polonius to *Hamlet*, “This above all: To thine own self be true, and it follows as night the day thou canst not be false to anyone.” The oracle at Delphi instructed, “Know thyself.” All journeys outward ultimately lead to the journey inward. This inner work is hard, but Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living. But uncovering the self within may be dangerous if it discloses personality disorders, and the old saying, “Let sleeping dogs lie,” might apply. Additionally, it may require the help of a therapist or pastoral counselor, which most people never obtain, to sort out the benefits and burdens in our personal lives. Whether you do the inner work, or you don’t, must be the will of Most-High GOD, of course.

C. G. Jung said, “The way to yourself is the longest way and the hardest way. Everybody would pay anything, his whole fortune, to avoid going to himself. Most people hate themselves, and for nothing in the world would they go where they are, where their native town is, because it is just hell. The dread and resistance every natural human being experiences when it comes to delving deeply into himself is, at bottom, the fear of the journey to Hades.” (*The Vision Seminars, vol 1, p. 30*) Founder of DBT, Dr. Marsha Linehan wrote, “We must go through misery to get out of hell.” The gate is small and the road to it is very narrow, so few people ever find it. (Matthew 7:14)

Buried in the subconscious is a person we really may not want to know, what C. G. Jung called “the shadow,” in form of the opposite to that which is displayed in the conscious state. The shadow is all the repressed thoughts, feelings and concepts about ourselves that we do not want to admit and face up to. Thus, the “saint” carries a “sinner” within, and vice versa. Perhaps, there is a nun inside every whore, a whore inside every nun, a rapist inside every priest, and a priest inside every rapist. Saint Paul lamented he was a “wretched man” because, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. I myself in my (conscious) mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my (subconscious) sinful nature a slave to the law of sin. Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:23-25) If the Apostle Paul still was driven by his demon after being chosen by Jesus, how can we hope to avoid this dilemma? Everyone does countless things daily that are driven by their shadow, which can cause remorse and guilt until they are admitted and forgiven – repeatedly. (Matthew 18:22) Thus, there may be some merit in the confessional and repentance practiced in the Catholic tradition, which presumes mankind cannot save itself from its own darkest behaviors and needs a savior to put things right. However, those born with a sanguine nature seem to focus on the good in human nature while those born with a melancholy nature seem to focus on the evil side of people in general. Necessary opposites. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

God’s servants in scriptures did not volunteer. God’s selection of Abraham to sire his chosen people was not optional. Saul of Tarsus was called by Jesus to his ministry to the Gentiles as Paul; he did not volunteer. Jesus himself was sent “only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” so it remained for Paul to carry the message forward. Jesus declared, “This is the man I have chosen. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” (Matthew 15:24, Acts 9:16) He did not promise Paul health, wealth, and happiness for his service. John the Baptist, who was born to herald the coming Messiah, was imprisoned and beheaded after criticizing King Herod for consensual adultery with his brother’s wife. (John 14:9-12) So, when you suffer, consider the source – GOD - and remember, as stated elsewhere, we are the clay and it is the potter – making some for royal use and some for common use. (Romans 9:21) Relief from

suffering in this life apparently is not the will of GOD for everyone, and some people suffer more than others. The awareness of Most-High GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer can only be described as awesome, an “out of this world” experience. It also can be very depressing if we are not given to be submissive and accepting of the labyrinth pathway in life we must walk when it is what we are given to assume should be different – and GOD does not need our permission.

The late psychiatrist and controversial spiritualist, Dr. David Hawkins (1927-2012) wrote, “Most people live their lives as though they're sleepers unawakened to the perception of who they really are – *a creation of GOD, Generator, Operator, Destroyer*. In fact, they frequently do not know why they are doing what they are doing - *which must be the will of GOD as there can be no other*. People are terrified of facing themselves - *because they would see the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in each of us*. Many dread even a moment of aloneness *that would expose their subconscious contents*. Thus, the constant frantic activities: the endless socializing, talking, texting, reading, music playing, working, traveling, sightseeing, shopping, overeating, gambling, movie-going, pill-taking, drug-using, and cocktail-partying. There is restlessness and the endless pursuit of “fun” activities to avoid the pain of facing our own inner self...Without divine intervention, the return to Reality is not possible, and thus, mankind’s solution is only by means of the grace of God.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (pp. 216-217). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*)

Jesus told the masses to seek the Kingdom of Heaven which is within/among you, which can imply seeking the “being” mode of life to balance the “doing” mode that is needed badly in our modern world. (Luke 17: 21 KJV) Neurology research has discovered the brain exhibits different reactions to these modes; the left brain is more into doing while the right brain is more into being. Try to practice more “being” mode whatever you are doing. Stop and smell the roses and play the game of life without keeping score. Most-High GOD that created the galaxies also created the beautiful earth and all of its marvelous vistas and the fertile lands that produce the food for its human beings. Life is ugly and beautiful, painful and joyful, and meant to be felt as well as thought. In Western cultures, people are so busy “doing,” many of them need help in seeking the “being” mode, which is a goal of mindfulness meditation. As was described above, this may be as simple as sitting quietly, feet on the floor and hands on your knees, paying attention to your breathing and counting backwards from 100 inwardly upon each breath for three cycles - while contemplating GOD that makes it possible. It is difficult to change one lifetime practice into a different lifetime practice, unless you assume the possible benefits are more valuable than the perceived burdens. Thus, psychic pain must be evidence of inner work being done toward the goal of personal individuation – a confrontation with GOD the Creator in spirit. “God is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24)

The spiritual energy we project unconsciously through thoughts and feelings returns to us like a boomerang through reflections from others through the law of reciprocity: What we project, we perceive, neither of which is reality. This reaction is like an animal who encounters his image in a mirror and does not realize it is his own reflection. This faulty perception may be corrected at some future time, but not yet. “For now,” says Saint Paul, “we see in a mirror dimly, but then [we shall see] face to face” (1 Cor 13:12) In reality, what we give we receive in the measure that we use as Jesus said – give love, receive love, give fear, receive fear, give

hate, receive hate. (Luke 6:38) Hence, peace and war, marriages and divorces, inner peace and suffering. See to it that nothing goes forth from you that you would not wish to be returned in kind. Follow the “Platinum Rule” and do unto others what they would have you do unto them. All in GOD’s will of course.

Dr. Hawkins concluded, with the Buddha, that inner peace comes by accepting everything “as it is,” a feat that is beyond the natural tendency to oppose and to attack that which we will not accept. “Peace is literally a choice and a decision, although not a popular one in our society despite all the rhetoric about the term. The decision to accept the seeming inequities of life instead of reacting to them is a choice.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I* (p. 194). *Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) He likened life as being given a movie on DVD that contains the beginning and the ending and everything in between which must be played through. Indeed, the whole universe could be depicted as such a DVD, with GOD creating and seeing both its beginning and ending as the “Alpha and Omega.” (Revelation 22:13) Another model may be a “mobius” made by twisting a narrow strip of paper once and attaching the ends together, thus making a continuous loop. Canadian psychiatrist, Dr. Richard M. Bucke saw this spiritual awareness as the highest level of human evolution, which only a few ever achieve. Individually and collectively, it rises from physical instinct at birth to the ultimate universal being of cosmic consciousness – what he called the “radiant summit” – being in the world but not of the world and yet interconnected in the universe at the level of Spirit as One with GOD. (*Cosmic Consciousness, 1901*) The highest levels of consciousness may be observed only in those few who achieve the spiritual perfection of nirvana, called “avatars” in Hinduism. At this stage of their evolution, the sentient beings may be likened to a ship on the ocean, moving in a convoy of many ships, all in the water but not of the water, the navigator of which is Most-High GOD.

Cosmic consciousness surpasses human achievements and may have been the meaning of novelist Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938), the youngest of eight siblings, who wrote, “You have reached the epitome of success when you are no longer interested in money, compliments, or publicity.” He died at age thirty-eight, after he was rich and famous of course. Jesus declared, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14) When? That is the question. C. G. Jung said faith, hope, love and insight are the highest achievements of the human development – right brain functions. Perhaps, astronauts in the orbiting international space station may have such a perception of life on the earth from where there are no visible boundaries of separation to be seen among nations on the planet – or even no life forms to be seen. This awareness seems to be a state of being we cannot achieve by conscious effort on our own; it seems to be a gift to those few chosen to receive it through intuitive experience.

Consciousness wells up from unknown depths and seems to create itself which, of course, is impossible. The masses created by GOD who are living at the lower levels of consciousness should not be rejected or judged, but merely loved and accepted because they also are doing GOD’s will in their own circumstances, living the lives they are given on their personal DVDs, including criminals, the rich and the poor and homeless, the famous and infamous. Theofatalism says nobody can help but be who they are, where they are, when they are in school, at home, at work, in church, in prison, in refugee camps, in hospitals, in nursing homes, mansions, or wherever. Resisting this conclusion can only cause you emotional pain, but if you must, you must. All in Most-High GOD’s will of course.

Further, C. G. Jung stated, “The greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally unsolvable. They must be so, for they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating system. They can never be solved, but only outgrown.” It seems we are given problems to learn how to solve problems. The human brain even invents puzzles (jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, murder mysteries, the Rubik’s Cube) to satisfy its need to solve problems. However, some people avoid puzzles and prefer to bypass problems instead of confronting them. For many people, this means ignoring problems and going on with life as though nothing happened – seeking happiness outside of themselves – called repression. “We divert our attention from disease and death as much as we can; and the slaughter-houses and indecencies without end on which our life is founded are huddled out of sight and never mentioned, so that the world we recognize officially in literature and in society is a poetic fiction far handsomer and cleaner and better than the world that really is.” (*James, William. The Varieties of Religious Experience: Complete and Unabridged (Illustrated) (p. 25). 1901 CrossReach Publications. Kindle Edition.*) “Everyone is exposed to life in its expression as nature and also human interaction, called society. This interaction is impersonal, and the vicissitudes of life are inevitable and unavoidable. This can be either challenging or depressing, depending solely on one’s point of view.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 193). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) One must ask, where does the point of view come from? Answer: the will of Most-High GOD.

Things are happening unconsciously inside that may display in unexpected ways outside; the line between genius and insanity is very thin. Celebrated author, Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) said, “Life eventually breaks everyone, and some people grow stronger at the broken places.” But some things that are broken cannot be fixed, so we have divorces, cemeteries, junk yards and prisons. Hemingway committed suicide at the age of sixty-two. Classical artist, Vincent van Gogh, (1853-1890) who could not sell his paintings during his lifetime, committed suicide at the age of thirty-eight. Van Gogh was considered a madman and a failure in his lifetime - possibly suffering major depression. Now, his paintings are worth \$millions each. He became famous after his suicide as the quintessential misunderstood genius, the artist “where discourses on madness and creativity converge.” He reportedly said, “To suffer without complaint is the only lesson we have to learn in this life.” To repeat, the line separating genius from insanity is very thin. All in GOD’s will, of course.

One also might mention the works of poet Emily Dickinson and novelist Jane Austen as examples of talents who were not fully recognized during their lifetimes. Newton’s law of gravity was not verified until seven decades after his death, although people lived under it from the beginning of time. DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is the genetic code, or blueprint, that plays a big part in defining who you are. The existence of DNA was imagined since 1866 from experiments in breeding peas by Gregor Mendel, decades before technology evolved making it possible to decode and use the information about humans in practical ways by Francis Crick in 1954. Many people who helped to change the world were not recognized during their lifetimes. But maybe their time for rewards will come in heaven where Jesus declared, “The last will be first and the first will be last.” (Matthew 20:16)

The late British philosopher, James Allen wrote, “When, after much searching and suffering and sacrificing, the light of an eternal principle dawns upon the soul, a divine calm ensues and joy unspeakable gladdens the heart.” Nietzsche said truth always is on the side of the more difficult. But the necessary opposite of Occam’s Razor seeks the solution in the

simplest option. Instances of confusion are common among people who become dazzled by ideas too great or energies too powerful for their mental capacities to grasp and their personality to assimilate. The infant digests only milk until the child consumes soft food before the adult tolerates mature nutrients, and so it is with spiritual enlightenment. (1 Corinthians 3:1, Hebrews 5: 12-13) Dr. James Hollis wrote, “We are daily obliged to choose between anxiety (fear of the future) and depression (grief for the past), which comes from being an animal who can become aware of just how thin the thread by which it hangs really is.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996, p.103) Dr. Hollis knew this awareness himself as his body contracted prostate and bladder cancer. This knowledge can be very stressful if you think about it. But, if there were no pain, how could we know pleasure? If there were no wars, how could we know peace? Most-High GOD did not make any one-sided coins. Some people get heads and some people get tails. “If we can accept that people cannot be other than what they are at any given moment or in any given circumstance, then most negative feelings and judgments can be avoided. People are then seen more as being limited rather than as ‘bad’, ‘selfish’, or ‘wrong’. Life is then considerably easier and more peaceful.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 199). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*)

Dr. Hawkins concluded that war is a necessary part of human society which will continue until the end of this age according to Jesus. War, the driver of much scientific research and weapons development that convert to commercial use, (e.g., computers, Internet, and GPS,) and Adolph Hitler, who caused the deaths of millions of people in WWII, should be accepted if not loved because he was doing the will of GOD. Jesus said there would always be wars, but the end is yet to come. (Matthew 24:6, Mark 13:7) This prophecy probably is not much comfort to survivors of the Nazi genocide and families supporting disabled battle veterans. But it all must be GOD’s will, or it would be different. It is worth repeating: Jesus said, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63) Dr. Jason Mitchell interpreted this scripture as follows: “John 6:63 is talking about flesh counting for nothing towards being in a right relationship with God.” In all sentient beings, the flesh is composed of matter in the form of atoms and molecules which collectively displays life, but individually they are inanimate in their basic form of the elements without the will and grace of GOD to supply the energy of life. Clearly, something transpires at conception between matter and spirit that we might label energy which converts the inanimate matter into the animate spirit. Life emerges from the infusion of matter with energy. We know from atomic reactions that matter can be turned in energy, but we are not able yet to turn energy into matter, as occurred apparently at the creation of the universe. But inanimate elements and stellar objects throughout the universe move and interact. The two phenomena must be caused by a common intervening force, i.e., Most-High GOD. We could broaden this discussion to include non-material plasma and forms of radiation including electromagnetic waves, but that is a different book.

The controversial spiritual theory of Dr. David Hawkins suggests that all human suffering is caused by negative feelings projected onto others and reflected back in like manner – chiefly apathy, depression, fear, grief and guilt, desire, anger, and pride, - and his solution is to identify them, surrender, and let them run out their natural course without resistance even if it takes hours, weeks, months or years, to be replaced naturally by higher feelings of courage, acceptance, love, and peace before “we” leave the body and let it return to the dust of its origin. (*Letting Go*, 2012) This must be an instantaneous process repeated endlessly until all “Isness” is replaced with nothing. Very few people climb very far up this ladder of spiritual development. This inner journey does not seem to be designated for everyone. Jesus said the

gate to eternal life is very small and the road to it is very narrow so only a few ever find it. (Matthew 7:14) As the Buddha said, “Few are they who endeavor to make the journey, and fewer and rarer still are those who succeed. Krishna said the same thing in the Bhagavad-Gita.” (Hawkins, David R. *The Eye of the I* (p. 208). Hay House. Kindle Edition.)

Things happen and thoughts and feelings result, and people react instinctively if they are driven by subconscious contents. Uncovering the contents of the subconscious is the work of psychotherapy. C. G Jung said, “If you do not uncover the subconscious contents, it will drive your life and you will call it fate.” Most therapies imply that you can access the subconscious mind to change thoughts to change feelings and change behavior, (whatever “you” are). But what if “you” do not control your own thoughts and feelings (whatever they are)? Where do thoughts and feelings come from? Here is something to think about. “The self we all take for granted is in fact an illusion, and this illusion is the cause of much, if not all, of the mental suffering we experience as humans.” (Niebauer Ph.D., Chris. *No Self, No Problem* (p. 125). Hierophant Publishing. Kindle Edition.) If self does not exist there is nothing to feel suffering. In Eastern tradition, self is imagined as an illusory container containing nothing.

There literally are thousands of different religions and many variations of Christianity practiced among the estimated eight billion people on earth, and they all must come from the same Source, Most-High GOD above gods. Mystical writer Abd-ru-shin (a.k.a. Oskar Bernhardt (1875—1941) who was big on free will, intuition, and personal volition declared in *The Grail Message*; (1941): “All teachings (thoughts, ideas, interpretations) were at one time willed by God, precisely adapted to the individual peoples and countries, and formed in complete accord with their actual spiritual maturity and receptivity.” It is obvious that religious practices and lifestyle customs are driven by the family and the locale in which a person is raised. “Culture affects us not only by defining what is possible and impossible, but also by influencing how we interpret the world. Our cultural assumptions influence which facts we find salient and convincing, make us more likely to reject or ignore the views of people who differ from us, cause us to interpret contested situations to accord with our own worldview, and make us miss our own blind spots while ascribing others’ blind spots to bad motives or to ignorance. Cultural influences are pervasive and overwhelming. Although some of them stray from their roots, the most common faith journey that people take is to form spiritual commitments as children and teenagers that typically last for the duration of their life.” (Greenfield, Kent. *The Myth of Choice: Personal Responsibility in a World of Limits* (pp. 80, 89, 94). Yale University Press. Kindle Edition.)

Time, place, and circumstance really do matter in forming religious beliefs. What you believe is based on who you believe, and that is not of your own free will but is based on the authorities who molded your life, and still do. Some people search for meaning in various sources, but most people do not move far away from the religions in which they were raised because the situations drive their choices. Conversely, all religions meet people where they are or need to be. If you were raised in Italy you probably are Catholic, if you were raised in Tennessee you probably are Southern Baptist, if you were raised in India you probably are Hindu, if you were raised in China or Tibet you may be Buddhist, Taoist, Confucianist, etc. If you were born into a Mennonite or Amish family, guess what? Most-High GOD assumes many different forms among all the cultures on earth, and apparently it makes atheists also. Since there presently is no cultural base for adoption of theofatalism, its future is indefinitely uncertain. A new form of liturgy and dogma is needed to promote its acceptance and growth, which is beyond the scope of

this book. That must wait upon the will of Most-High GOD. But Saint Thomas a Kempis wrote in *The Imitation of Christ*, “It is better to leave everyone to their own way of thinking rather than give way to contentious discourse.”

Dr. David Hawkins wrote his version of the common elements of all true spiritual living: “Choose to be easygoing, benign, forgiving, compassionate, and unconditionally loving towards all life in all its expressions, without exception, including oneself. Focus on unselfish service and the giving of love, consideration, and respect to all creatures. Avoid negativity and the desire for worldliness and its greed for pleasure and possessions. Forego opinionating, the judgment of right versus wrong, the vanity of being ‘right’, and the trap of (worldly) righteousness. Seek to understand rather than to condemn. Venerate the teachers of these basic principles and ignore all the others.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 74). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) This requires judgment to evaluate the different beliefs of life in terms of the benefits and burdens in each situation. We can choose only which combination of benefits and burdens we want to live with, but the choice we make is the will of GOD of course.

One of the greatest problems some religious people face is the integration between theological rituals on Sunday and daily living throughout the week, in other words, practicing what you preach in times of trouble as well as comfort. Most people virtually are hypocrites. Some of their religious teachings are downright incredible. Jesus told his disciples, “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.” (Matthew 21:22) “If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it you.” (John 16:23) This promise is restated with an important caveat: “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” (1 John 5:14-15) But there is a catch. “When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. Don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.” (James 4:2-4) “What people value highly is detestable/an abomination in God’s sight.” (Luke 16:15) Consider applying that to American capitalism. Many people who rely upon that promise by Jesus are disappointed, but others continue to hope for answered prayers, which Nietzsche claimed was the worst of all evils because hope “prolongs the torments of man.”

Note: For centuries, theologians have discussed the apparent connection between hope and faith in the Bible, and there are many interpretations. “Faith is confidence in what we hope for.” (Hebrews 11:1) “Hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?” (Romans 8:24) The word “hope” occurs ninety-seven times in sixteen books of the Old Testament and eighty-three times in twenty-two books of the New Testament. The word “faith” appears 171 times in twenty-four books of the Old Testament and 287 times in twenty-six books of the New Testament. Biblically speaking, Faith says whatever you are hoping for is here now. Hope says there is an indefinite chance of it happening sometime in the future. Faith and hope are depicted in the Bible as being both a decision based on free will and a gift based on the will of Most-High God. Both are connected to works because, “Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (James 2:17 ESV)

Maybe you have no choice in what you believe or hope for. Mother/Saint Teresa said, “God does whatever he/it wants with whoever he wants whenever he wants, and (sheeple) all must take what he gives and give what he takes.” She considered her lifelong mission to aid the

poor of Calcutta as a drop of water in the ocean, but “one the ocean would be less without.” *And so it may be with this work as well, a drop of water in the sea of human suffering.* Apparently, Saint Teresa thought that suffering was a necessary part of the human condition to stimulate a charitable response in service to God. It appears that Most-High GOD creates poor people so others may perform charity because Jesus told a rich man, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me...if you help the least of these you also help me.” Jesus did not eliminate poverty or slavery, but he condemned those who ignored it. (Matthew 19:21,28, 25:34-46) “The poor you will always have with you...From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” (Matthew 26:11, Luke 12:48) Apostle Paul wrote, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” (1 Corinthians 13:1-13 KJV)

(Note: Charity is translated as love in the New International Version and most modern translations. From his pioneering work in kinesiology, Dr. David Hawkins estimated that only four percent of the world’s population ever reaches the level of Love, and only 0.4 percent reaches the level of Unconditional Love. (Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (p. 42). Hay House. Kindle Edition.)

Even the saints can fall short of this ideal in a world of universal suffering. In her terminal illness that lasted ten years, Saint Teresa wrote in her journal to Jesus, “If you treat everyone as you have treated me, no wonder you have so few friends...my soul is no longer one with you.” Her dark night, what Catholics call “spiritual dryness” and “the great desolation” apparently lasted some fifty years, from 1947 to her death in 1997. This journey through darkness of the soul was described by Saint John of the Cross in 1577-1585, in his poem, *The Dark Night* and two volumes of commentary, possibly while he was imprisoned. The Church claims that the light at the end of the dark night points to divine union with God, but it may take death to reach that goal because many people suffer in darkness all their lives until they die. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote, “In a real dark night of the soul, it is always three-o’clock in the morning.” He died at age forty-four.

Theofatalism says whatever you believe and experience in life must be the will of Most-High GOD because there can be no other. We all must be who we are, saints and sinners, rich and poor, sick and healthy, predators and prey. Thus, theofatalism concludes that people and all other sentient beings on earth must be robots of GOD, believing and doing what they must. Think of the women in the movie, *The Stepford Wives (1965)*. We all are sheeple, people, in prisons, in court rooms, board rooms, church rooms, school rooms, lunch rooms, living rooms, bath rooms, bed rooms, research labs, factories, and hospital operating rooms. Understand?

Concerning his discoveries in human psychology C. G. Jung said, “I do not have to believe because I know. The mind perceives and reasons, but the heart knows.” Jung saw the world through his observation of people in real life, which he said was more educational than “reading a book a foot thick.” This knowing was the imagination that drove Christopher Columbus to sail west in order to go east when the time was right for Queen Isabella of Spain to finance his exploration into the unknown. Breakthroughs, like discovery of theofatalism, often are very acute and dramatic, initiating opposition and rejection, including emotional and

mental suffering when inferior beliefs must be abandoned and replaced with the new superior knowledge. Einstein noted, “Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.” Jonathan Swift declared, “When a true genius appears, you can know him by this sign: that all the dunces are in a confederacy against him.” (*Cohen, Alan. A Course in Miracles Made Easy (p. 15). Hay House, 2015 Kindle Edition.*) C. G. Jung wrote, “I made many enemies. A creative person has little power over his own life. He is not free. He is captive and driven by his daimon. There is something heart-rending about that.” (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections, 1973*) When Galileo discovered in 1609 the earth was not the center of the Universe the Church threatened to excommunicate him for refuting its dogma and he was under house arrest the remainder of his life, but he never changed his belief. It is dangerous for discoverers of breakthroughs to challenge established traditions or to threaten digestive limits with new ideas like theofatalism. It possibly can even be life-threatening. But such human progress cannot be restrained when it is the will of Most-High GOD.

“Without divine intervention, the return to Reality is not possible, and thus, mankind’s solution is only by means of the grace of God.” (*Hawkins, David R. The Eye of the I (pp. 216-217). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) And so it is with theofatalism which postulates in every life, there is only one way, GOD’s way. Helen Schucman, scribe of *A Course in Miracles (ACIM)*, wrote, “When you have learned how to decide with God, all decisions become as easy and as right as breathing. There is no effort and you will be led as gently as if you were being carried down a quiet pathway in summer.” Of ACIM, she said, “I know it is true, but I just don’t believe it.” She decided to accept untimely death at age seventy-one by pancreatic cancer saying, “I must die to get out of its way.” Whatever you do or don’t do, think or don’t think, feel or don’t feel, moment by moment and step by step, is the only thing for you as there can be no other. Theofatalism is the ultimate absolute infinite explanation for what is – from atoms to galaxies. Whether you believe this or not is the right choice for you also. As with the law of gravity, you can ignore it, but you cannot avoid your destiny. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Scripture says there may be nothing new under the Sun; it is all there since the beginning waiting to be discovered and used – possibly stored in some as yet undiscovered astral plane or the “collective unconscious” proposed by C. G. Jung – scarcely different from the Akashic Records in Hindu mythology. (Ecclesiastes 1:8-10) Dr. William Ferraiolo wrote, “Each of us is faced with a set of initial circumstances to which we did not consent. Events transpire within and without our bodies, and these shape us neurologically, biochemically, psychologically, and in innumerable other respects that determine our beliefs, desires, aversions, attitudes, proclivities, etc. These all jointly culminate in decisions and actions. Thus, one becomes a cheat, a liar, a coward, a hero, a stalwart, or what have you. To develop sincere appreciation for being born in a brutal world not of your making, to struggle and fail time and time again, to feel repeatedly lost, bewildered, frustrated, and hopeless, to swim in this ocean of misery, and, ultimately, to drown in it; this is the beginning of wisdom.” (*Meditations on Self Discipline and Failure, 2017, p.163*) C. G. Jung said life is an experiment we did not set up, and neither the beginning nor the ending are ours to command. He appeared to be conflicted on suicide, both supporting and opposing it, but accepting it as destiny for those who choose that form of exit.

The belief in theofatalism may not be confirmed until the time is right, regardless of any criticisms that might be published in the meantime. It is not about them or what they contain,

but about the One source behind them, all of them. This is not about the content of holy books, but about how they are created, accepted or rejected, and promoted. Theofatalism is as unimaginable as was the discovery in 1609 CE by Galileo Galilei that earth was not the center of the universe. He recanted after the Church threatened his excommunication and spent the rest of his life under house arrest until his death in 1642, but he did not change his belief because he knew he was right. *(Need I say it? All in GOD's will of course. We can count the seeds in an apple but only Most-High GOD controls the number of apples in a seed – and the fruits of all holy books or the discovery of theofatalism.)*

The human psyche/soul is a bottomless pit, and there always is something more to learn, although there is nothing really new of course. But beware of consuming too much knowledge that stresses your limits of absorption. The great King, Solomon said it was chasing after the wind. “With much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.” (Ecclesiastes 1:17-18) What you don't know cannot hurt you, ignorance is bliss, etc. Beware of a bloated ego. C. G. Jung observed that some discoveries during mystical enlightenment can produce ego inflation. “The inflation has nothing to do with the kind of knowledge, but simply and solely with the fact that any new knowledge can so seize hold of a weak head that he no longer sees and hears anything else. He is hypnotized by it and instantly believes he has solved the riddle of the universe.” Dr. Hollis says, “A problem occurs when the ego thinks it is separate from nature and nature replies, no you are not.” So, perhaps it is healthy not to think too much about Most-High GOD because you might go mad trying to absorb the infinite that is above and beyond human understanding. Just live the life that you are given until it ends. You will anyway. One Zen proverb says, “Before enlightenment I chopped wood and carried water; after enlightenment, I chopped wood and carried water.” However, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, “A mind that is stretched to a new idea never returns to its original dimensions.”

Summary

In summary, after watching his wife die untimely after a decade of breast cancer, Lewis Tagliaferre was thrust into a religious and spiritual crisis when his traditional church could not provide any comfort. He began a search for recovery from complicated grief and depression, seeking inner peace through reading, therapy, journaling, and mental health treatment. His study of the Bible led to the need for a belief that goes beyond the standard dogma and explains the normal suffering among all sentient beings. His search led him to a vision of Most-High GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer – the prime force in the universe, controller of everything from atoms to galaxies. It is derived from Biblical scriptures, Hindu beliefs, the philosophy of causal determinism, and theological fatalism; it is called theofatalism. This belief helps to explain situations in life that people pay little attention to until a crisis hits, including suffering from natural disasters and human behavior, but which occur continually among plants, animals, and humans. It also accommodates all other beliefs, including atheism, because theofatalism says nothing happens outside the will of Most-High GOD, from atoms to galaxies.

This belief challenges the assumption of human free will, which is presented as a necessary illusion at this time in human evolution, because the conscious mind is driven by contents of the subconscious mind. If human free will is a prerequisite to eternal salvation, then many people who never get the message and children who could not understand it would be consigned to hell a-priori. This is indeed the position of the most conservative among Christian

theologians. Theofatalism avoids this conundrum and emphasizes living mindfully and serenely surrendering to here and now instant by instant with courage because living in the past invites depression, and living in the future invites anxiety.

Tagliaferre chose as the symbol of theofatalism the Chartres Labyrinth, which is different from a maze that is meant to confuse and frustrate. The labyrinth presents a pathway for each person to walk, from birth out into the world and back again to the Source in the center. There are no options in the labyrinth walk of life because the journey of each person must follow the pathway that is given to them through four quadrants of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual energies. The energies in these four quadrants feed into each other in a closed loop so a problem in one affects the other three. This pathway is within and may be established before birth by the will of Most-High GOD. Everyone can recall from their personal history the many decisions they made linking up to their present situation. As such, there may be no mistakes, only predestined decisions with inevitable consequences presented as learning experiences, all connected as links in a chain of the gigantic tapestry that makes up life among all the sentient species on planet earth. Remorse, regret, and guilt are thus replaced with acceptance of what is as being necessary, or it would be different.

The belief in theofatalism comes with five general principles of reality and five steps of response. Together, they comprise a new form of treatment for religious and spiritual problems called © Royal Accommodation Therapy. This development provides a new and different way of managing the Religious and Spiritual Problem defined in the psychiatric manual of diagnosis, DSM-V. It may help to understand and manage the stress which comes through challenges to faith, “the dark night of the soul,” offering a pathway to more resilience and inner peace in the spiritual realm when trust in traditional religion is impotent and unable to defend suffering people from mortal threats to their survival. Being adaptable to reality requires seeking information from a wide range of sources and considering options outside of learned boundaries. Through his personal journey of more than three decades after untimely death of his wife, Tagliaferre wrote several books that discuss life and death on earth from the perspective of theofatalism. He offers this work to pastors, therapists, and suffering souls who may find in it a new way of accommodating life as it is. All in Most-High GOD’s will, of course. AIGWOC

DESIDERATA

“Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant for they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive people because they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself to others you may become vain and bitter; there will always be greater and lesser people than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your career however humble, it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is. Many people strive for high ideals and everywhere life is full of heroism.

“Be yourself. (*Those who matter will not mind, and those who mind do not matter.*) Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and stars, you have a right to be here. And, whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore, be at peace with God whatever you conceive Him to be. Whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams it still is a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.” Amen.

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