



From Atoms to Galaxies
Five Steps to Inner Peace

©07.16.2021 Lewis Tagliaferre

lewtag@aol.com

Phone: 703-321-9268

PREFACE

Note: Please help to distribute this free but important ebook to suffering people who need a new resource for serenity and inner peace when bad things happen. 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 social 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 ebook 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.

Note: You may freely copy, print, and forward this ebook without changes or edits.

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. I had made the living and she had made the living worthwhile. I thought I was put on earth to take care of her, and when that role ended so did my reason for living. I was merely a dead man walking. Although we had ten years to anticipate her death from the onset of diagnosis in 1975, watching her die, her body rotted with gangrene by the pseudomonas bacteria, caused a shock that I had not anticipated and was totally unprepared to absorb. Some advisors told me I should get on with my life, but that was impossible because my life was totally changed. After living on the sunny side of life in what I valued as the perfect family, I was transported abruptly to the dark side of the moon and thrown into a very dark pit. 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 and which I certainly did not plan nor enjoy. Grief counselors and therapists have called my experience, “Complicated Spiritual Grief.” I met all the criteria for the *Inventory of Complicated Grief Therapy* by Robert A. Neimeyer and Dr. Laurie A. Burke in *Techniques of Grief Therapy*, (2016) With complicated spiritual grief, the suffering is compounded by the loss not only of your loved one but also loss of your connection with God. It continues to this day, driving my conscious reactions to suffering in life in all of its forms on earth.

Since I was a writer, my first therapist suggested that I do some journaling between sessions, which eventually grew into a formal search for some way to go on living when it seemed useless to do so. I began to see the suffering of people all over the world and searched

and searched for some reasonable explanation that I could accommodate with this reality. Information came to me from a wide range of sources I could not imagine and that I did not seek. They are inserted in the text for easy reference instead of being posted as conventional footnotes. My fingers often shook as I typed the words which challenged the core of my beliefs about how the world really worked. Through three decades and publishing a dozen books, and several episodes of major depression after many other losses and disappointments, my search led to this conclusion about courage and resilience when serenity and inner peace are elusive. I consider it to be the “opus magnus” of my life, but one that is a work in progress with no ending in sight, it is journey without a destination. It is written in third person because I contend that I did not create it. I am merely the messenger, a nobody, relaying the words from a source I do not know but which seems to be The Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

There are many different religious beliefs among the people on earth but since my tradition is based in Christianity, that was the original focus of my search for the means of survival when I would prefer death. 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. I was led to read a wider range of holy books from other traditions. Whether they were true or false was not the point. They all seemed to fall short of meeting my needs for survival, but I was driven to understand rather than to condemn. I began to realize a larger view of GOD, a vastly different view of God than is taught in Christianity as I experienced it. 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 as generator, operator, and destroyer of all that is, which is mentioned only sixty-two times in scripture, eleven times in the New Testament. It appears that Most-High GOD made a few cameo appearances in biblical scriptures and then disappeared into the background to wait upon the time in human evolution when mankind is ready to see its reality. *This is not the little God of the Bible which is not big enough for this role. 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 – the Prime Force in the universe, creator and controller of everything from atoms to galaxies.*

Note: The word “God” in lower case is used to identify the little god of the Bible while the word “GOD” in all caps is used to identify the Prime Force in the Universe as Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

From this research and discovery, 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 in my life. In fact, my suffering was increased as I had to let go of the traditional interpretations of biblical scriptures I had previously accepted to make sense of the world as it really is. But it provided a new form of response for living with inevitable human suffering, one that challenges conventional therapies and theories of human psychology. I see GOD as generator, operator, destroyer and it uses both cosmic/geological and human tools for the job. It does not matter whether an earthquake, fire, hurricane or pandemic and such and radical angry people do desperate things when they all result in the same human destruction. So where is the peace and serenity that we seek but cannot find in the Bible? Unless of course one accepts the notion that Satan rules now, but he will be

vanquished sometime, and the body of Christ will be saved...but only those who are called/chosen for his purpose. (Romans 1:6-7) This involuntary relationship is restated numerous times throughout the New Testament, countering the idea that people have free will to accept or to deny Christ. “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:4) But why put people, chosen or not, through such awful suffering for so long? Just as with the destruction of the house of Job and the four centuries of Jewish captivity in Egypt, that must be the will of Most-High GOD or it would be different...ergo theofatalism. And the created cannot control the Creator.

This book then is a discussion of my work leading to a new form of self-counseling I call Accommodating Reality Therapy ©. When we cannot control or change reality, we must accommodate to it – like obeying the law of gravity – or suffer not doing so. 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 reading this to accept theofatalism unless Most-High GOD wills it, but perhaps some people for whom their traditional 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, a nobody who does not speak the native language. Jesus said some of his words would fall like seeds on rocks to be blown away and lost, some would take root in poor soil and die before maturity, and some would fall into fertile soil to grow and sprout. 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.

Disclaimer - The following discussion may not apply to people suffering mental illness. As such, it is not intended to diagnose or treat a mental disease. It is not a substitute for professional mental health counseling or medical treatment. Please seek qualified help for symptoms of mental illness.

CONTENTS

Introduction

1. Derivation
2. Origination
3. Argument From Biblical Scriptures
4. Secular Corollary
5. General Principles of Theofatalism
6. The Symbol of Theofatalism
7. Criticism
8. A New Therapy

9. Commentary on Life

10. Summary

11. Desiderata

Appendix A

References

Author Biography

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

“From one small spark springs up a mighty flare; if I set forth, others may come behind.”

Dante Alighieri

Someone said everyone is either in a bad situation, is getting over a bad situation, or is entering a bad situation. These situations impact people in their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual being. Unless they find some measure of inner peace, their suffering can impact them for a lifetime. The question, “why?” seems to be a universal mystery from atoms to galaxies with no objective solution. 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. Many people turn to religion to help them navigate through the mystery of life, but what if it fails to deliver when things go badly? When bad things happen that challenge your faith in a loving God, you may seek a belief system that accommodates the reality of suffering in life to achieve some inner peace. But, where do you go when you are suffering, and you realize there is a Supreme GOD causing the suffering? How can you survive and grow through losses you did not cause and that you cannot fix? A dangerous problem is the loss of resilience normally provided by faith among those who are religious when life becomes unbearable. Desperate people do desperate things. Poet, Robert Frost observed, “It is hard to get into this world and hard to get out and what lies in between makes no sense.” Tom Clancy, author of *Hunt for Red October* (1990) said, “The difference between fiction and reality is fiction must make 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.” This mood admittedly is difficult and depressing if you feel threatened with no form of defense or regress. Our western culture actually may foster mental illness because it is based on living in constant chronic malaise of discontent with what is, always striving for something more we can never fully realize, never satisfied with what is. Contentment in this sense accepts what is actually present in any given moment: the pleasant, the unpleasant, and the neutral, letting go of the striving for perfection, goals, and stability that actually do not/cannot exist.

The late Helen Keller, although blind and deaf, wrote, “Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn whatever state I may be in, therein to be content.” 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.” Unfortunately, he did not explain the secret, except to write, “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:11-13) Perhaps the secret is not in contentment, but rather in the acceptance of discontent. Paul also described a “thorn in the flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me” that vexed him continually which he prayed three times for the Lord to remove without relief, “But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12: 7-11) This idea is a conversion of necessary opposites – weakness and strength- which may seem ludicrous to practical reasoning people. Such faith/belief is not reasonable. However, everything in the universe apparently has its opposite, and one could not exist without the other.

The world/earth and everything in it is transitory; therefore, to cling to it brings suffering when it changes. We can’t always get what we want in life, and what we do get often is very painful, yet it seems we must be satisfied with what we get if we want to reduce our suffering. Many of life’s greatest lessons are only learned from pain which is a warning something needs attention. Sometimes we must learn from the messes that we make. And the fatalism says messes all must be necessary, or they would not exist. Attachment to desire for things to be different seems to be 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 healthy, 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 late enlightened spiritual psychiatrist, Dr. David R. Hawkins, M.D., PH.D, (1927-2012) wrote, “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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.275. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) Ultimately, Dr. Hawkins reminds us all that to reach enlightenment, “We must surrender everything to the will of God.” When you expect nothing, you will never be disappointed – including health, food, clothing, and shelter. The more you expect, the more likely you will feel disappointed and depressed when it fails. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche said, “Hope is the worst of all evils for it prolongs the torments of man.” The late Ram Dass said, “It is important to expect nothing, to take every experience, including negative ones, as merely steps on the path and to proceed.” The experience of surrender begins when we give up all hope of being able to control what is and what will be. However, hope is the driver for change that brings progress – there are no one-sided coins.

The greatest enemy of inner peace and serenity may be imaginary unrealistic expectations that are unrealized in reality. However, you cannot not desire as the desire not to desire is a desire driven by the human instinct for survival. The basic desires are for food, clothing, and shelter followed by reproduction and social support and rise to ranking order among peers and on to self-actualization, according to the pyramid of needs explained by the

late psychologist, Abraham Maslow. He observed that we live by moving forward into growth with its fear, challenge, risk, stress, and indefinite uncertainty or by moving backwards into safety and complacency. Human nature includes a desire to explore, reaching out into the unknown from our comfort zone, even into the zone of mortal danger beyond safety. It gets complicated because people are found at all levels on this ladder of need. All in GOD's will of course.

Note: The late Dr. David R. Hawkins, M.D., PH.D., (1927-2012) was a successful traditional psychiatrist who moved to Sedona, AZ after his retirement. While there, he apparently was influenced by works of Lester Levenson, Hale Dworskin, Trish Elliott, et al., (the Release Technique/Sedona Method,), and others involved in New Age psychology, possibly dating back to Hippocrates. He became a popular lecturer and writer in self-development, self-publishing nine books through Veritas Publishing, Inc. and subsequently, Hay House Publishing, Inc. As with all departures from conventional psychotherapy and related pharmacology, he encountered various criticism and rejection of his ideas, which appear to include belief in reincarnation, chakras, and karma, from Buddhism and other Asian traditions assimilated in western U.S. states. However, many of his readers and pupils attest to the usefulness of his work because he appears to be one of the great enlightened sages of the modern era. Short portions of his books are quoted here under fair use doctrine of copyright for educational use. This work by Dr. Hawkins reinforces the definition of theofatalism, all in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Our culture is not very helpful in pursuing inner peace and serenity because it thrives on change driven by desire and discontent. Setting ever-higher goals and achieving them is the be all of life in the USA, to focus on the future. But Socrates reportedly said, "He who is not contented with what he has would not be contented with what he would like to have." That is a hard saying that offends human nature for those who are ill, abandoned, and homeless, those needing basic food, clothing, and shelter and those disabled physically and mentally. It seems that satisfaction derives from striving because a goal that is achieved no longer is motivational. Life for most species of life in the world is not about seeking more and more, it is about surviving here and now. Epicurus wrote, "Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you do not have."

In contrast, 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 – constantly striving for more, more, more. 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, even those telling you the air pressure in the tires is too low, etc. The trends to automated banking, order processing, and shipping and billing seem to be running faster than many older people can keep up. The rush into social media and smart phones are the latest and potentially the most damaging to human relationships to have been adopted so far from the historical development of digital technology. Time will tell whether the benefits outweigh the burdens. Marketers know they can sell more product merely by printing "NEW" on the packages. Many Americans love to buy things with credit cards they do not really need with money they do not really have, and "online shopping" is the favorite pastime for many of them. Progress through change is rewarded and stagnation is vilified, creating many losers and

a few winners in the USA. Workers must invest in constant training to keep up with the rapidly changing technology, and jobs may be replaced every few years. Employers have transferred the risks of change to the workers, leaving many people to fall behind in the race to get ahead. While many people must continue working into old age for lack of retirement savings, many others become occupationally obsolete at younger ages.

American capitalism demands more, more, more financed by increasing debt while it assigns those unfortunate souls who are abandoned to scavenge among the garbage and to beg on the street corners in order to live. The distribution of wealth widens each year between the poor and very rich. The 660 American billionaires reportedly are worth 1.6 times the combined entire bottom half of the country. The rapidly growing majority of poor and neglected people is becoming more militant and disenchanted creating political unrest and violence. The lowest ranks may be the restaurant workers who work for tips plus \$2.13 per hour, unchanged since 1991. The thirty million poorest of the poor people facing starvation in the poorest twenty countries seem to be abandoned by their creator. There is something apparently very wrong with this picture. Or, maybe, something is wrong with our assumptions about God which, after all, seem to be dependent upon where we are born and what we are taught before we are old enough and educated enough to search for meaning on our own terms.

Capitalism is based upon financial growth funded by debts, personally as well as local, state and federal governments. Economic growth is necessary to service the ever-increasing load of debt, and vice versa. Personal debt slows down national growth which must be stimulated by more government stimulus funded by more debt. This process is self-limited and eventually may require drastic correction measures that bring on suffering for generations to come. 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. The gap between the rich and the poor widens every year. In 1980, the richest 1% of Americans owned about 30% of all household wealth in the country — and the bottom 90% owned about 24% of all household wealth. But by 2012, the share of all household financial wealth owned by the top 1% had skyrocketed to more than 60% — and the share owned by the bottom 90% had plummeted below 10%. There are no perfect solutions, but the track we are on seems to be leading in a troubling direction.

All economic systems and government empires rose and fell through historic economic cycles back through eons of time, bringing great disruptions and much suffering between periods of prosperity and growth. 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 in overgrown congested cities and rural villages around the world in between these two extreme opposites, slums next to mansions. The center of economic power is shifting towards Asia, with China expected to become the world-leading economy by 2030. There must be some force more powerful than people and government leaders 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. We may encounter suffering when it is least expected.

At this writing, the Covid-19 viral pandemic is a worldwide threat to everyone, disrupting routine living and terminating lives of loved ones, threatening world economies. “All things change and nothing remains the same, so to place the source of our happiness outside ourself on that which changes means it is only a matter of time before depression ensues. If we place our security on that which is transitory, disappearing, coming and going, or changing, including our temporary bodies, then the vulnerability is ever present. The power is not in the event or in something ‘out there’. The power of creating the meaning in our experience of all events in life lies within each of us. Thus, it is by re-owning our power to create meaning that we can learn how to reduce stress caused by adverse events we do not cause or control. To try to escape a strong reaction, including fear and anger, will only prolong it. The ego/mind will try to figure out ways to escape the emotional energy as though that will reduce the pain; however, the pain actually comes from resisting the experience. What you resist, persists. To handle this, one just sits down and lets go of resisting it, choosing instead to be with it. The more one opens it up, the faster the energy is let out, and the quicker the stressful experience will be over. The whole thing can be released instead of allowing it to drag out endlessly, agonizingly, through hours, days, weeks, months, years, or even a whole lifetime.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery. Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.*)

This conclusion is influenced by continuing research showing perception and judging are affected by our beliefs, subconscious minds, and even our physical bodies which influence how we see the world through a filter and engage in life. (*Proffitt and Baer: Perception – How Our Bodies Shape Our Minds, 2020*) To Stoic philosopher Epictetus, all external events are beyond our control, so we should accept them calmly and dispassionately whatever happens, even unto death. In this philosophy, 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. On the other hand, feelings can drive thoughts without our conscious awareness. These concepts have morphed into the trend towards “positive psychology” that in previous times was called a sanguine healthy-mindedness, the opposite of a melancholy nature. “Since you alone are responsible for your thoughts, only you can change them. You will want to change them when you realize that each thought creates according to its own nature. Remember that the law works at all times, and that you are always demonstrating according to the kind of thoughts you habitually entertain. Therefore, start now to think only those thoughts that will bring you health and happiness.” (Paramahansa Yogananda, *Where There is Light, 2017*) Mahatma Gandhi reportedly said, “A man is but the product of his thoughts; what he thinks, he becomes.” Of course, one cannot just think themselves into health, wealth, and happiness because actions speak louder than words.

This instruction is not always helpful. The “you” that has this power to control thoughts never is explained. Thoughts do not just originate in the mind but also are received from external information sources. If we were just thought-beings, our judgments might not be such a problem, but thoughts connect to bodies that can take action—including sharing thoughts out loud. Thoughts deserve our attention, evaluation and confirmation or rejection as applicable. To a farmer, rain may be thought a blessing, but to an outdoor hiker or camper rain may be thought a problem. It all depends upon the circumstances and our perception, which are relative to situations. To a lender, bankruptcy of a client may seem like a problem,

but to the debtor it may seem like a solution. “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.2019 Kindle Edition.) Popular self-help gurus claim if something is bothering you, just stop thinking about it and think of something better. 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.) The Buddha reportedly said, “Our life is shaped by our mind, for we become what we think.” Cognitive therapy challenges automatic negative thoughts with alternatives that are more realistic. But the who or what controls such thinking never is explained. It is a mystery. Mindful acceptance of human nature with its alternating cycles of life and death, suffering and happiness, peace and war, is offered as a response in theofatalism as ©Accommodating Reality Therapy.

The relationship between thoughts and minds is an unsolved puzzle, neither of which can be found in some physical location in the body. *A Course in Miracles* (1976) states, “Seek not to change the world, but choose to change your mind about the world. Our own change of mind about what we are and why we’re here is all that’s needed. If we make the decision willingly to forgive, to shift from a fearful vision to a loving one; the Holy Spirit does the rest, reaching out to other minds through ours.” (Rosenthal MD, Robert. *From Loving One to One Love*, p.153, G&D Media, 2020 Kindle Edition.) “Some students may yet be in a period of exploration, but once one gets the ‘fire in the belly,’ the urge to reach God becomes like a drivenness or relentless drive, or even, in the eyes of the world, a ‘madness.’ From that point on, there is no patience for amusement or diversion. It depends on decision, will, the level of consciousness, and karmic propensities. As it gets more intense, the love for God and of God allows no delay.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Discovery of the Presence of God*, p. 113. Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.) Biblical scripture says, “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:13)

This instruction implies there is some controller of the mind called “you” who owns and controls “your” mind. Thoughts precede words, and words converted to actions become reality. The pioneering auto manufacturing genius, 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.” Some people seem to have a happiness setpoint that does not move very much regardless of what happens to them. Presumably, there are happy people in poor third-world countries and unhappy rich people in gated communities. Thoughts may not be facts, but they can initiate emotions and stimulate actions. Can thoughts exist without words? Words/thoughts/ideas ultimately derive from sources which science cannot measure or capture. But, if thoughts control feelings and actions, where do thoughts come from and what controls thoughts, if not Most-High GOD?

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. Some experiments in bio-feedback seem to show some control of the body is possible with thoughts. The brain can be likened to the hardware of a computer with its internal operating system and the mind as the software applications that are installed and updated or replaced at will by the user. When we (the Self) 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, or we caused some others to suffer, 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, 2015 Kindle Edition.*) She came to accept that only lifelong dependency upon anti-depressant medication could maintain sobriety in her chronic condition.

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, and it comes with both benefits and burdens. “The crisis is the very event of the spiritual healing. It is out of the crises that the healing occurs.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery. Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.* Dr. Laurie A. Burke and Robert A. Neimeyer developed the *Inventories of Complicated Grief Therapy* to help meet the needs of their mourning clients who felt abandoned by God and had lost the benefits of whatever faith they had in his loving care after a traumatic loss in the family. It contains descriptions of twenty-eight ways in which sufferers react to grief that threatens to destroy their traditional belief in and reliance upon a loving God in times of acute suffering. Living through such a crisis can drive one through misery to get out of hell. It may require demolishing and reconstructing one’s world view, i.e., the very basic assumptions about what it means to be human. The Inventory is provided in Appendix A.

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, PH.D., 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. Spiritual distress or struggle arises when a person’s basic belief system is shaken, and it can take place whether or not they are religious. Even those who don’t believe in a Higher Power usually have some belief in how the world works that gives them a sense of safety and security.

Serious illness and tragic events can challenge these anchors and throw a person into turmoil. Personal spiritual enlightenment has been beneficial in healing such deep psychic wounds. This work develops a new hopeful therapy for such cases.” (www.spiritualcompetency.com)

Humans are a small step removed by their ancestral genes from other sentient hominid species on earth who must compete among themselves for survival. Plans do not work out, people disappoint and die, and life is not fair. Possibly, one of the worst tragedies is to be unjustly imprisoned or even executed for some alleged crime one did not actually commit. 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. Among the human race, there is no “them” there is only “us,” regardless of our wide range of beliefs, nationalities, cultures, behaviors and societies but it seems to be a super-secret at this stage of human evolution. All in GOD’s will of course.

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. Therapies divide interventions primarily into two classes: behaviors and thoughts, directive and nondirective. Both of them are affected by feelings/emotions. Theory says if you change one you can change the other: act the way you want to be and you will become the way you act, or think the way you want to be and you will become the way you think. Who or what does the changing, called the “Self,” is a mystery. Such mind treatments may have their place, but they are insufficient and unavailable for many sufferers since the mind/body problem still is unsolved. Researchers have found a correlation between thoughts and the immune system which indicates some form of connection between negative emotions and the genetic reaction. When we are living by the hormones of stress for long periods of time, inflammation increases, and the function of our immune system becomes compromised, exposing the body to invasions of predatory bacteria. Why talk therapy, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, along with prescription drugs, work for some mental patients and does not work for others is unknown. For some people suffering terminal conditions, rational preemptive suicide, possible under new laws legalizing medical aid in dying, (MAID) seems to be a preferred way out when life becomes unbearable. Public-private attempts to understand and prevent suicide still are in the incipient stage. How can one worship 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.

“Don’t we all want to know more about those large forms that roll beneath the surface of our lives? Don’t we all want to experience the full joy and terror of the ride? Don’t we all want to engage with whatever carries us through this journey we call life?” Maybe not.

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 seem to exist/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. Sometimes, the truth is, “I don’t know.” 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. We all apparently must navigate white water on the way to our inevitable waterfall, and the closer we get the faster time seems to accelerate. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche said, “Those who have a why to live can bear with almost any how.” Unlike scores of books attempting to discuss why life hurts if there is a loving God, this work offers a contrarian 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)

DERIVATION

"The sign of an intelligent mind is the ability to entertain an idea without accepting it"
Aristotle

There is a belief called theofatalism that offers to make sense of the apparent nonsense and suffering in the world. Life is a struggle between joy and despair, love and fear, trust and betrayal, and then we die. Life always is fatal. 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. We did not create life, and we cannot fix it. Nothing, from atoms to galaxies happens - past, present, and future - outside the will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer – possibly a new form of Trinity to help suffering souls feel better inside no matter what happens outside. Resilience and Inner peace may lie therein.

Theofatalism is belief in the primary triune Supreme 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 argue for a supremely intelligent source of all from atoms to galaxies and a supreme intelligence in opposition to the possibility of randomness and free will. Science is good at discerning the “how” of life on earth and even throughout the cosmos, but it has no theory for “why.” Some of us may desperately need a theory of why things are as they are while other people take things as they are without question. The earth and its many 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 for those who think about it. 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 some 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,

i.e., 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. Believe it or not.

Theofatalism is derived by integrating four 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 from atoms to galaxies, birth, life, and death. 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,

3) causal determinism which infers that all events and thoughts are culminations of all 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 here and now,

4) The concept of a GOD above gods mentioned in the Bible as the Most-High God twenty-seven times that is not distinguished from the little God of the scriptures, but should be.

Theofatalism consolidates these four precepts into the concept of GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer, the Prime Force in the universe and whatever other universes there may be. This assumption concludes that 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 all gods. Although creation and maintenance of the universe may be attributed to God in some form, many people cannot accept the “destroyer” aspect of GOD, while 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 by free will. This assumption is false if everything is created by Most-High GOD, including the illusion of free will. The discourse on free will versus determinism is endless among religious philosophers, but in theofatalism, the only plausible answer to “why?” is GOD's will - from atoms to galaxies; no exceptions – which includes belief in free will for those who must as necessary opposites. Whatever you believe, feel and think, and do is GOD's will because there can be no other. 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 – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - in your personal life and in all created reality. Please read on.

ORIGINATION

“Life is a wonderful opera, except that it hurts.”

Joseph Campbell

Theofatalism was discovered by Lewis Tagliaferre (1933 -) while he was searching for emotional comfort after the untimely death of his wife, Rosalene, 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 in

attempting to replace her only deepened his grief and increased the depression that followed as he attended many funerals and lived alone in isolation in his senior/terminal years. One might see him as an unhealthy codependent in a flawed marriage, but as one he was destined to live. 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) “Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” (Psalm 10:1) Indeed. If it is true that in ordained spiritual marriage two become one, must the survivor also die if the other one succumbs to death? (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5) C. S. Lewis died shortly after his insurmountable loss in 1963 at his age of sixty-five.

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. There was no comfort to be found anywhere. 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. Biblical scriptures about God even made things worse. “Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.” (Lamentations 3: 32-33) If he does not do it willingly, what kind of superior power forces him to do it? Does this statement apply for modern man or is it only applicable to the time and place of the ancient writer? His faith in the Lord and his people seemed to have forsaken Tagliaferre, just as the chosen twelve 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, apprehension, depression, resentment, anxiety, emptiness, despair, sadness, and isolation. Although he was an ordained deacon and Sunday school adult teacher, Tagliaferre found no peace or comfort in scripted proof-texted theology as published by his church. 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 resilience and inner peace through reading and journaling during his retirement years.

Tagliaferre wrote a dozen books discussing what he learned. 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 – except for those who seem to enjoy the special favor of God. 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, attachment and loss, etc., and then we die.

Theofatalism claims that any religion which denies this reality is false and delusional but necessary or it would not exist. 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.* Freud 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.

ARGUMENT FROM BIBLICAL SCRIPTURES

“We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.”
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

The Bible and its Christian religion have sustained billions of people for more than 2,000 years through many wars, tragedies, and natural disasters. But not always. The following discussion presents views of the Bible not often preached in churches because they challenge the traditional interpretations of scriptures. The Bible will be seen to be a flawed document that actually does not support the religion of Jews and Christians who may depend upon it for solace during times of suffering and fail to get any comfort or inner peace from it. 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 scriptures referenced in this different context to see the Bible in a different way than is usually preached in churches and taught in seminaries. The little God of the Bible is not big enough to explain the entire universe as it is known today. This section concludes with an argument for theofatalism as the only way to explain the popular dominance of Christianity as well as the human reliance on many other holy books and many religions. The discussion leads by inference to the Most-High GOD as the Prime Force in the universe, the Generator, Operator, Destroyer of everything from atoms to galaxies. The GOD above Gods.

Note: The first issues of the Bible were rare scrolls on parchment and papyrus (the processed skins of animals dating from the second century BC and organic materials). 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 some edits along the way. The oldest fragments of biblical scriptures probably dated to the second century are scraps called the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in caves

near Qumran on the West Bank from about 1946-1956. They are written in ancient Hebrew and date from the time of Christ and before. They are held at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. The Nag Hammadi library is a collection of early Christian and Gnostic texts discovered near the Upper Egyptian town of Nag Hammadi in 1945, housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo, Egypt. Roman Emperor Constantine ordered fifty copies of the Bible to be compiled by Eusebius in 331CE, but none survive. Pope Damasus's commissioning of the Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible, c.383, was instrumental in the fixation of the canon in the West. We shall never know how many books did not survive the purge of Roman Christianity. 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. The first translation of the Bible into English was ordered by King James in 1611, largely based on the Tyndale version of 1526 which was banned by the Church, and the modern English translation by a team of scholars is the New International Version (NIV) which is revised periodically. Currently, there are sixty different translations of the Bible posted online at www.biblegateway.com.

Orthodox Christianity teaches belief 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 and beliefs for what he created, according to Theologian, Millard Erickson who 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*, pp.51-76, Baker Publishing Group, 2018 Kindle Edition.) Such absolute power of the Creator seems to make the assumption of human free will a myth. However, Mahatma Gandhi reportedly said, “Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.” Tragically, Gandhi was assassinated by a member of his own Hindu sect who feared the new regime he was creating granted too much freedom to Islam. Jesus declared, “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.” But, this statement places a condition that does not seem to be based in unconditional love as is declared by Apostle Paul. “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (John 15:12-14, Romans 5:8) Pastor Nancy Fitzgerald (Ret) commented: “John's gospel is all about conditional love due to the on-going church fight (up to about 90CE). At the time, the Jesus Jews were on the losing side having been kicked out of synagogue in Jerusalem. So all the quotes tend to favor one side over the other, hence conditional because

“we” recognized the Messiah and “you” didn't. Of course, God couldn't possibly love both sides.”

It seems that people are given to grant belief/action to some authority source be it the Bible, Mahatma Gandhi, a military superior officer, Billy Graham, Adolph Hitler, Jim Jones or Donald Trump or Qanon. It all seems to be the same mental process at work determining who you are going to believe and obey. Which one people choose to follow seems to be outside of conscious control. 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, “the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience,” can be derived from superior knowledge, higher rank, position of power, and confidence by faith in the leader. It is driven by perceived rewards and perceived punishment as when Christians fear eternity in hell unless they accept Christ and assume eternal life in heaven if they do. In controlled experiments, domesticated dogs have demonstrated they will obey their human masters to get a treat even when they must deny their own senses to do so. People apparently are no different. All in GOD’s will of course.

Experiments over the recent past have proven that once authority over a group or an individual is established, most people will obey to extreme lengths like children do when they are good so Santa Claus will grant their wish for Christmas presents. This human learned response to authority is confirmed in military basic training, as any veteran will attest. Perhaps the best current example of national mass authority is the way the Kim dynasty has controlled North Korea for three generations. Historically, the takeover of Germany by Adolph Hitler is a case in point. Another example of mass authority – some might call it hysteria - may be the way his base followers believed everything claimed by former President Donald Trump, whose grandfather was from Kallstadt, Germany, was true even when obviously it was not. He reflected the will of his base followers, watching where they are going and getting out in front of them, appearing to lead while, actually, he was following from the front. Moreover, many of their information sources are unvalidated apps on social media spouting fake news taken as truth. Many of his subjects face prison for their willingness to invade the Capitol at his perceived command. Human nature has not changed much at all in two millennia. “Few of us desire true freedom and liberty; most of us wish only for a fair master.” (*Sallust, Tribune of the Plebs. Rome, 62 BC.*) How could one man with absolutely no political standing or any experience in governing acquire so much power over so many followers, unless some force greater than human free will was at work?...the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer.

Note: Consider the authority of former President, Donald J. Trump. Mary Trump, PH.D., daughter of his late elder brother, Fred Jr. wrote in her book “Too Much and Never Enough” 2020, their father, Fred Sr. drilled into them losing was the worst possible disgrace - possibly what he got from his mother whose husband died young, so she programmed her son, Fred to rule. The elder brother, Fred, Jr. would rather be an airline pilot. He died early from alcohol abuse, and the role of corporate emperor fell to Donald. So, the family dysfunctional paranoia and narcissism go back three generations, and it seems to be contagious. His second impeachment on January 13, 2021 was the first time for any U.S. President, and the angry reaction of his base followers was totally predictable. The danger is the disease may be so

rampant it will not be contained with seventy million people infected by the Trump authority. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

The authority figure holds only as much power as followers give to it, by believing in it and obeying it. Challenging authority is risky, but so is obedience. Saul of Tarsus suffered greatly for his obedience to Christ as Apostle Paul to the gentiles. (Acts 9:15- 16, 2 Corinthians 11:23) Christ suffered greatly on the cross for his obedience to Father God, and he declared to his disciples that they would be persecuted for his namesake. (Matthew 24:9, John 16:33) More than 900 believers died at the command of their cult leader in the infamous Jonestown mass suicide in 1978. How could so many people have lost their grip on reality? And why were they so easily duped by the self-proclaimed Rev. Jim Jones? A similar phenomenon occurred when the German people embraced the Naziism of Adolph Hitler which caused WWII and deaths of fifty-five million people. Similarly, the republican party lost its traditional way under the authority of Donald J. Trump. His supporters who raided the U.S. Capitol upon his orders on January 6, 2021 are reaping the whirlwind he created. Something happened to all those people that made them relinquish their wills, their disbelief, and their reason to the power of authority, whether sacred or demonic. All in GOD's will of course.

Authority is determined more by the followers than by the leader because without willing followers the leader is impotent. The infamous Milgram experiments showed that some normal people will inflict pain on human 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. Different sources produce different beliefs, hence so many different religions in the world. This writer quotes various sources, but he subscribes to no human theological authority, so his discussion of the Bible is unaffected by such influence; it is driven by his own reason and the biblical scriptures just as they are presented in the New International Version. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course. Ergo theofatalism.

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 is 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 even to beheading anyone who blasphemes the authority of Muhammad. Muslims grant authority to interpret the Quran to imams, and Christians grant authority to interpret the Bible to pastors and priests and seminary professors. 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 biblical scriptures by church authorities. Jungian analyst, Dr. James Hollis, expressed his belief as follows: “I believe this life ends it all. All we can do while here is love and make the best of it as we can. I wish that there were an afterlife to be together again with those whom we love, but I have no convincing evidence that such is the case. I simply accept that the universe is unjust, unfair, and absurd--but I don't have to like it.” 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. We may have choices, but GOD controls them. A brief discussion of biblical history is needed to illustrate the evidence.

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, “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 myth, humans and all the animals were herbivores; how some became carnivores is not explained. (Genesis 1: 29) After they disobeyed God and 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 burnt blood offering, the killing of an innocent animal and first blessing by God on blood sacrifice. The second burnt blood sacrifice – a pleasing aroma to the Lord - appears after the great flood that Noah and his family survived in the mythical Ark. (Genesis 8: 15-20) Sacrificial bloodletting of animals 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, Ezra 8:35) *Later, God changed his mind and instructed Moses on the details of making a grain offering to the Lord. (Leviticus 2)* Cain was so jealous he killed his brother, who was replaced with another boy born to Adam and Eve named Seth. No other children are mentioned for Adam and Eve. Cain was not punished by God, who actually protected him to become the father of cities later referred to as Edom. (Genesis 4:1-17) 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.

Note: Christian dogma claims that Jesus voluntarily accepted crucifixion on a cross as the vicarious blood sacrifice necessary to absolve the sins of humanity. But, biblical scriptures describe blood sacrifices throughout. Possibly one of the most brutal of all blood sacrifices in the Bible is that of an innocent child described in the book of Judges. Jephthah, a leader of the

Israelites in their struggle with the Ammonites, makes a vow to God before battle: "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return victorious, shall be the Lord's, to be offered up by me as a burnt offering." (Judges:11:30-31) The Israelites are victorious, killing 42,000, under Jephthah's leadership. Upon his return, his daughter, his only child, is the first to rush to meet him "with timbrels and dancing." He tears his clothes and cries, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low; you have become the cause of great trouble to me.... I cannot take back my vow." (Judges:11:35) His nameless daughter asks for some time with her companions. At the end of two months, she returns and apparently is sacrificed. Her story ends with this tribute: "Henceforth, for four days every year the daughters of Israel would go out to lament the daughter of Jephthah." (Judges: II:40) The eerie destruction of all first-born sons among Egypt as the ultimate plague attests to the willfulness of God to practice child sacrifice for his purpose. (Exodus 12:13-14) Although scholars may disagree, human child sacrifice appears to be attributed to several kings: Moab, II Kings 3:26, Ahaz, II Chronicles 28:3, and Manasseh, II Kings 21:6, Herod, Matthew 2:16-18, in addition to the well-known story of Abraham and his son, Isaac. (Genesis 22:2) Actually, child sacrifice is found among Israel many times in the Old Testament, usually condemned by God resulting in their deserving punishment. (http://www.openbible.info/topics/child_sacrifice)

One may ask, given all the evil debauchery and idolatry practiced by the Jews, why Jesus the Christ was sent to them in one final attempt by God to reconcile his Chosen People with the Old Covenant established with Abraham and renewed with Noah (who lived for 950 years, which violated the human longevity established by God at 120 years.(Genesis 6:1,9:29, 17:1-14) As with all biblical scriptures, the reader must ask, "What has the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter got to do with me here and now - because Apostle Paul wrote, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."(2 Timothy 3:15-17)" At that time the only existing scripture was the Old Testament because the New Testament gospels were not yet available.

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 in succeeding generations 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 during his 600th year, Noah, and his family of three married sons, plus pairs of every kind to repopulate the earth in a giant wooden ark that it took him a hundred years to build. Someone said the Church is like the Ark; it is a very messy place but if you get off, you drown. 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 people acted like evil humans whom he created. Moreover, the descendants of Noah were no better. Soon as possible, Noah harvested wine and got falling down naked drunk, which discovery caused his son, Ham, to be cursed and made the servant of the other two. As it was with the first family, incest probably was involved in reproducing the human species once again through the sons of Noah. (Genesis 9:1-28 God made a promise, marked by the rainbow, that he would never destroy all humans in a flood again, even though they all were "evil from birth." (Genesis 8:21) Remember, he created them as such. 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. (Genesis 11:1-8) Since no one really knows how all the various languages developed from a common ancestor, the story of Noah and the ark is as good as any, and it provides a good illustration for children's biblical coloring books. Although God declared that people are evil in their hearts from birth, he created the rainbow to symbolize his decision never to destroy people by flooding them again. (Genesis 9: 13-16) 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, miraculous Isaac, who was born after his normally fertile age – after exiling his illegitimate son Ishmael who was born sinfully to his wife's slave to become a great nation of Edomites - through his son Jacob/Israel, who stole his birthright from the elder brother, Esau, because God loved Jacob but hated Esau, who had thirteen sons and one daughter with two cousins/wives and their respective two servants, through King David, a murderer and adulterer who had at least nineteen sons and one daughter, seven wives and many concubines and who killed many thousands in battles, through centuries of continuing disobedience by the chosen people and their repeated punishment and forgiveness by God. He laid out the rules of obedience and punishment in his covenant with Moses mainly in the book of Leviticus. About a millennia later, the miracle birth, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of God's only son, Jesus Christ/Messiah was the ultimate virtual blood sacrifice to redeem sinners who are called/chosen to accept his gift of universal forgiveness by faith. Time and again throughout the Old Testament God punished their idolatrous behavior by wars and disasters, and time and again he restored their culture, like a good shepherd takes care of his flock of sheep who have gone astray, after they were routed by their enemies. God's punishment, though, was never an end in itself, nor did he punish in wild anger or frustration. Rather, he punished them repeatedly to bring the chosen Jews to repentance and to show them he was their Lord and God. "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 988-990). eBookIt.com. 2014, Kindle Edition.*) The Jews seem to be very resilient but slow learners since they reject the Messiah to this day, which biblical scripture says is their destiny. (Ezekiel 36:11,23,32,38) One can wonder if God still loves his chosen people since Jesus chose Apostle Paul posthumously to take his gospel to the Gentiles, and the Jews were scattered about the earth after their final revolt in 135 CE until Israel was reconstituted in 1948. (Acts 9:10)

Note: The relationship between God and the Jews in the Old Testament is presented as one between a good shepherd and his flock of sheep that go astray time and again. In the New Testament that relationship is extended to Jesus as the good shepherd and all his followers as the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. (John 10:14-16. Conversely, Jesus also is displayed as an innocent lamb led to slaughter in the crucifixion to accept vicarious punishment of all sinners among mankind, i.e., "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29,36, 1

Corinthians 5:7) This did not work out with the Jews who disbelieved he was their Messiah after his crucifixion and the alleged resurrection. So, his emphasis shifted to the Gentiles when Jesus called Saul of Tarsus posthumously to that mission. Apparently, his promise now includes all who declare he is Lord and believe in their hearts God raised him from the dead, and those of the Jews who refuse are lost for eternity, but those and only those who believe and obey his commands by the will of God will be saved. (John 3:16, Romans 10:9-12) All in GOD's will of course.

But wait. Jesus came to his own people and they rejected him in one final act of God who then extended his favor, taking the gospel to other nations. That is a fact. "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." (Matthew 15:24, John 3:16) The Jews appeared to be unable to sustain the Old Covenant and 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) "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (2 Corinthians 4:4) Where is the free will?

Now we know why the Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah and still do to this day. GOD's will. "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) They had to reject and condemn Jesus to empower him as Christ, otherwise he would have died merely as a failed heretical Jewish teacher, which is claimed by orthodox Jewish rabbis to this day. Although God condemned human sacrifice many times in the Old Testament, he did not hesitate to offer up his only son as the ultimate blood sacrifice of all time. (John 3:16) It seems the mission of Jesus to Israel was ordained to fail from the beginning, which was necessary to set up the circumstances for his message to be carried to the Gentiles by Apostle Paul. (Matthew 15:24, Acts 9:15-16) The separation of Judaism from Christianity was complete by the fifth century.

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 some Christian apologetics claim up to 300 scriptures in the Old Testament foretold the coming of Jesus as Messiah, the chief of which may be Isaiah 53 and Ruth 4:13-17). Since all the scriptures apparently were written long after the events occurred, all such prophecies could of course be fulfilled. This would be like stating, "In 1935 Winston Churchill predicted Adolph Hitler would cause WWII in 1940," or "President Kennedy predicted in 1962 men would walk on the moon before 1970." Of

course, these foreknown “prophesies” came true. Apostle Paul wrote that eventually, every knee will bow to Jesus, and every tongue will declare he is the primal Lord/King. Since that has not yet happened it is indefinitely uncertain. (Romans 10:9, 14:11, Philippians 2:10) However, a remnant of “Jews for Christ” appears to be surfacing again. Ergo theofatalism.

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. The left brain is linear and logical and learns things sequentially in a piecemeal fashion. The right brain circles over a situation, and by sheer repetitious exposure and familiarity basically understands the whole thing.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.) “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, pp.54, 58, 69. Yale University Press. Kindle Edition.) Researchers believe that each person relies more on one side of the brain that can make the personality traits characteristic of that side of the brain to be more dominant than others. To determine your preference, visit <https://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/3178>

People can obey a religious idea by tradition, by teacher, or by holy texts, like Christians obey the authority of the gospel of Christ in the *New Testament*, Muslims obey the *Holy Quran*, and others obey *The Book of Mormon* and *A Course in Miracles*, and many people obey anonymous sources on the Internet. 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. Another example is the way Catholics relinquish their reason to render obedience to Church clerics. Every guru in every religion must exhibit such authority or they would not have any followers, and their followers must suspend disbelief to believe the unbelievable. 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. Jesus declared that if the blind lead the blind, they both will fall into a pit. (Matthew 15:14) 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 many people that wants to know belief in some form of God will take them into a utopian heaven to escape eternal suffering in hell for their sins, whether that God is depicted as “He,” “She,” or “IT.” Samuel Clemens aka Mark Twain wrote,

“Go to heaven for the climate, go to hell for the company.” All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

The Rev. Michael Rogers, who teaches the default destiny of every person on earth is hell unless they believe in Christ, wrote, “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? 2013, p.198. Crossway. Kindle Edition.*) Imagine that. If everyone in God’s creation is destined for hell, one may ask why Christians keep making babies. Perhaps they cannot help themselves because God ordered Adam and Eve to “be fruitful and multiply” to take dominion over the earth. (Genesis 1:22,28) The Rev. Rogers does not describe how hell came to be made. If it did not make itself, who did? If there is only one Creator, the answer is obvious, GOD made it. Thus, hell and heaven are necessary opposite concepts whether they are real or merely imaginary ideas/thoughts. In the creation story, God called the firmament (atmosphere) heaven. (Genesis 1:8 KJV) The kingdom of Heaven is described variously by Jesus as being within you and among you, something that can be seen and entered, something that is here now and is yet to come, something that will be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth. (Revelation 21:1) Although the word “heavens” appears 167 times in the Bible as the creations of God depicted by the stars in the sky, and “heaven” appears 455 times as the abode of God, its description is left to various interpretations, like having streets paved with gold, etc. Hell is mentioned only fifteen times in the New Testament, described as a place of eternal burning torment where there is “weeping and gnashing of the teeth.” (Matthew 8:12, 9, 13:42,50. Mark: 9:43,) All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Concerning the afterlife, the Bible presents a very confusing prophecy about the end of time principally in the books of Isaiah and Daniel in the Old Testament and Revelation in the New Testament, plus scattered statements by Jesus and Apostle Paul (called eschatology.) Thousands of books have been published that offer some version of an afterlife, how the world will end and what comes after, 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 with rewards and punishment, but theologians cannot agree on their various interpretations of the afterlife from their reading of biblical 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 in a new heaven and new earth under a kingdom of God. There are other more complicated versions predicting a great tribulation, a thousand years of peace and eventual elimination of all evil and suffering in a great war. Which one they teach appears to depend 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 as the Sun burns up its hydrogen fuel and becomes a red giant. By projecting further into the future than human imagination can go, science has predicted that the whole universe may burn itself out leaving only infinitely cold, black space-time with nothing left. So, the biblical prophecy of a new earth and a new heaven after fire engulfs sinners in the end may not be total fiction. (1 Corinthians 3:13, 2 Peter 3:7-13) 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 survivors must live without them until we die. And no manner of therapy or library of self-help books can change that fact. Although circumstances vary widely, death of a loved one is a traumatic event that most people are unprepared for even when it is a natural and expected end of life. Survivors must answer the question, "Who am I without my loved one?" And what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. But, theofatalism presumes the writers of the Bible and the cosmologists all were doing the will of Most-High GOD, conflicts and contradictions and uncertainty included.

Note: Did you ever think of what heaven will be like?? Socialism at its zenith. A one-king kingdom with no opposition parties, nothing to do but worship the king all day, no sickness, no death, no competition, no crime, no sin, no no no...and no more people being born because they all will be like the angels, whatever they are. So why are some people so afraid of one-world government and socialism?

The Bible is not about Most-High GOD because it is what the writers wrote about a little God from their time and place more than 2-3,000 years ago 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 still be so popular. 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*.

Note: The Bible isn't a textbook, but a collection of stories that have parts of histories that different people remembered woven together into books, along with poetry, songs, worship documents and letters, sermons, and gospels in their own genre. All written over vast periods of time, many came from the time before writing so it was passed down orally. The Bible doesn't fit together in any sensible order to one with current mind and access to much knowledge and history of humankind. What, or who, is behind its endurance for two millennia unless it is Most-High GOD? Beyond description, beyond knowing. Like the blind men feeling various parts of the elephant, we only know in part. (1 Corinthians 13:9) Different religious groups include different books in their biblical canons, in varying orders, and sometimes divide or combine books. The Jewish Tanakh (sometimes called the Hebrew Bible) contains 24 books divided into three parts: the five books of the Torah ("teaching"); the eight books of the Nevi'im ("prophets"); and the eleven books of Ketuvim ("writings"). It is composed mainly in Biblical Hebrew. While the Septuagint, a collection of manuscripts written in Greek that closely resembles the Tanakh but includes additional texts, is the main textual source for the Christian Greek Old Testament.

Christian Bibles range from the 73 books of the Catholic Church canon, the 66 books of the canon of some denominations or the 80 books of the canon of other denominations of the Protestant Church, to the 81 books of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church canon. The first part of Christian Bibles is the Greek Old Testament, which contains, at minimum, the above 24 books of the Tanakh but divided into 39 (Protestant) or 46 (Catholic) books and ordered differently. The second part is the Greek New Testament, containing 27 books; the four canonical gospels, Acts of the Apostles, 21 Epistles or letters and the Book of Revelation.

The King James Bible contains 80 books: 39 in its Old Testament, 14 in its Apocrypha, and 27 in its New Testament. (Wikipedia) Are you confused yet?

Worshipping the little God in the biblical stories requires accepting their authenticity by faith – belief without proof. 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. Faith is described as a gift of God and/or a personal choice in various scriptures. (Matthew 16:15-17, John 3:16) But the Bible really is a helluva book compiled by several dozen writers (some sources cite forty writers) over more than 1,500 years, as in a giant chain letter linked together by some mysterious force. 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 Most-High 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) That must include both cancer and smart cell phones, chocolate, and meth addictions. 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. If God is GOD, then nothing can occur outside of its will, whether we call it good or evil. 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 and therefore is subject to some Higher Power, 2) God could relieve suffering, but he chooses not to, so he is not all good, and 3) God causes suffering. If God exists and is omnipotent (controls everything) 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. St. Clement declared that God rules with two hands, Christ in one and Satan in the other, which helps to explain all the suffering in the world. Theofatalism suggests that the little God in the Bible and all human beliefs are the work of the Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. This concept 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*, p. 154, *Random House 1963*) In this view, GOD is not a being, entity, or even a reality in the way we think but an idea, but rather it is a way of thinking, an imagination, image or hypothesis like a vision in your mind that has no substance. Praying to God is like meditation, reflection, introspection and contemplation and we reward ourselves with answers from within ourselves. God is within us all if you believe and have faith in yourself, just like a child and their imaginary friend. But to prove there is a god is impossible for God only exists in those who believe. For those who are given to believe, GOD – generator, operator, destroyer, is the sovereign supreme power in the universe that drives all things. Whether that belief is a choice or a gift or a curse cannot be known.

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. They quote only those scriptures that describe God as loving and kind by using proof texting to illustrate their point. 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, pp. 195-197 eBookIt.com. 2014, Kindle Edition.*)

“We must recall the fundamental character of Christian life which is, in all its forms, an attempt at the Imitation of Jesus Christ. This effort implies a radical conversion of natural human attitudes, more especially with regard to suffering. The human being has, by nature, a horror of suffering and a desire for happiness. The man who kills himself almost always does so to escape from the suffering of this life towards an unknown happiness and calm. In any case he says in his heart, “I want to go somewhere else. I do not wish to endure this suffering which has no meaning and is beyond my strength.” It is here that the spirit of Christianity intervenes with its tremendous paradox. Yes, live and suffer. You should not be surprised that you suffer. If happiness were the meaning of life, it would indeed be a revolting and finally improbable condition. But the situation is different if life is a justification, the progress towards a transcendent goal, and if its meaning were in fact evident in suffering and achieved through suffering. “Lord, to suffer or to die,” prays St. Theresa. Yes, in spite of all those optimistic believers, life is the carrying of a cross.” (*Landsberg, Paul Louis; Kerr, Margaret. THE EXPERIENCE OF DEATH: and The Moral Problem of Suicide (p. 90). Living Time Global Publishing. 1937, 2009, Kindle Edition.*) (Note: Paul Louis Landsberg died in the Nazi holocaust.)

So, where do you go when you suffer and discover GOD is causing the suffering? Theologians cannot seem to agree on a description of the little God in the Bible that accommodates his universal love with intentional mortal suffering. A wider vision is needed to

accommodate the real dark side of GOD as Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Three in one, the ultimate Trinity. We must begin with reconciliation of opposing – even heretical - scriptures in the Bible, going beyond proof texting to replace a singular view with the full content as it is given.

You probably won't get this in church, but many 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 who disobey his commands 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 God also shakes up our lives when we get off the labyrinth of life we are destined to walk. "Stern discipline awaits anyone who leaves the path; the one who hates correction will die." (Proverbs 15:10) By his discipline those whom God 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 teaching 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. 2018, Kindle Edition.*) A few examples in biblical scriptures suffice to display the negative power of GOD:

Recall from the Old Testament that after Naomi lost her husband and two sons and returned from involuntary exile to her homeland to escape a famine with her widowed daughter-in-law, Ruth, totally bereft, she lamented, "Don't call me Naomi, she told them. Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD (*Not Satan*) has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me." (Ruth 1:20-21) It seems the writer thought Naomi's troubles were caused by God. Ruth survived through forced marriage to Boaz, which continued the genealogy of Jesus through his heirs, Obed, Jesse and King David. (Matthew 1:5, Luke 3:32) But Naomi disappeared into history with her deceased husband and two sons. (Ruth 4) Thus, it appears that God destroyed Naomi, her husband and two sons to arrange for Ruth to sustain the genealogy that produced Jesus from Nazareth as Messiah. He did not ask for their permission and they did not volunteer. Neither could they possibly know the important links they provided in the emerging chain of history. And neither can we. But, we may assume each person plays the role assigned to them in the unknowable plan of GOD who are called for its purpose, or we may assume there is no plan and every life lived is a random occurrence with no purpose. However, whichever we believe of these necessary opposites must be the will of Most-High GOD.

Note: The genealogy of Jesus Christ is traced back to King David to his father Jesse to the marriage of Boaz with Ruth which was set up by the decisions of Naomi and her husband and two sons, which she claimed was caused by the Almighty Lord. (Ruth 4:16-22) If true, this sequence of events spread over many generations leading to Christ illustrates the power of the Most-High GOD to carry out its will through the behaviors of people that are not under their

conscious control. It also indicates the lineage of Jesus had roots in Old Testament ancestors which were necessary human links to his birth, so the “immaculate conception” of Mary by the Holy Spirit as is claimed by Catholics probably is mythical. Each person apparently performs their assigned role in the chain of events which leads to inevitable consequences here and now. And the work of GOD does not require compliant or righteous people. Ergo theofatalism.

In his classic book, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, (1983) Rabbi Harold Kushner wrote, “God does not cause our misfortunes. Some are caused by bad luck, some are caused by bad people, and some are simply an inevitable consequence of our being human and being mortal, living in a world of inflexible natural laws. The painful things that happen to us are not punishments for our misbehavior, nor are they in any way part of some grand design on God's part.” Note that he did not quote any biblical scriptures that might support his claim. In contrast, here are some biblical scriptures about the power and willingness of God to cause suffering:

“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. 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) Since several prophets who could not possibly know what the others had written wrote much the same idea, perhaps it is an idea bearing some truth. God is not always described as good in the Bible.

Biblical scripture proclaimed the birth of Jesus thus, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:14) But the adult Jesus declared, “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.” Matthew 10:34-35) “I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! Do you think I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.” (Luke 12:49-51, 21:16) But then he also added this necessary opposite, “I have told you these things, so that (believing) in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble/suffering. But take heart! (Be brave, courageous, confident.) I have overcome/conquered/defeated the world. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27, 16:33) This assurance sounds like Jesus contradicted himself, does it not.

Or perhaps each writer did not know what the others had written, which is most likely. 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, including this writer. No exceptions.

It seems like the power of God to cause suffering applied to Jesus himself 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 suffering 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, much more of the former than the latter. (Jeremiah 18:2-6, Isaiah 64:8, Romans 9:19-21) We may not see little God of the Bible or Most-High GOD of the universe, but we can see the creation and, while most of it is very impressive, much of it stinks very badly. If you must live in the stinking parts, or even cause them, it may be difficult to see the will of Most-High GOD in that situation. After all, Jesus did not abolish slavery, poor people, or even wars while he claimed, “My kingdom is not of the world.” (John 18:36) Maybe so, but people must live in the world into which they are born until they die. And who created that? If there is only one GOD as creator of all, it must all be GOD’s will of course.

The crucifixion of Jesus is not the end of the story for Christians, but this unlawful evil act of suffering serves to support the assumption that nothing happens outside the will and grace of GOD. In fact, the crucifixion of Jesus was part of the plan of biblical God from the beginning. (Acts 2:22-24) “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 and a lot to be forgiven for. After all, it was God who created the serpent, gave Eve and Adam free will fully knowing they would 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. Throughout all of Genesis 3:1-7, God designed the stage, set the stage, placed the players, and let it happen—and I assert it happened just as He intended with the results He had intended. God the Great Designer is in complete control and all of the events of the Genesis account occurred by design. Man’s fall was not a cosmic mistake. Man’s sin was not an experiment gone wrong. It was all by design.” (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer Kindle Locations 1065-1068. eBookIt.com. 2014 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. God also prevented people from eating fruit of the Tree of Life, so they never were granted immortality in the first creation. 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 as described by its obedient writers who wrote apparently as they were directed.

Consider the Jewish captivity in Egypt. Just as God had ordained, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel 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 15:12-21, Genesis 32: 24-28, 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 four centuries of Jewish captivity by Egypt. After he killed an Egyptian overseer for beating a fellow Jew, Moses, a Jew who was raised in the house of Pharaoh thereby escaping the genocide of male Jewish infants, fled into exile to be recruited back in his old age as their deliverer. (Exodus 2)

Finally, after four centuries of captivity and slavery, little God called the escaped murderous Moses out of exile to free the Jews as it was prophesized to Abraham. 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 including that of Pharaoh, (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. Modern Egypt is mostly a Muslim nation.

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, Jeremiah 18:5-7) Where is the mercy for those souls who suffer and lose their lives for no reason or fault of their own? And yet, Saint Augustine wrote, "God has made us for himself and our hearts are restless until we find rest in him." Blaise Pascal wrote, "You and I have a God-shaped vacuum/hole at the center of our being, and we are restless until we find rest in him." Some

research in neuroscience is looking for a scientific basis for the universal appeal of religions without much success. The brain is not revealing much of its secrets as yet. Conclusions about many human behaviors can only be drawn from logical inference absent hard scientific evidence. Where is the rest in God who ignored his chosen people in Egypt to suffer captive slavery for four centuries? Where does the free will and faith among those who suffer and still hope/trust in God, like Job did, (Job 13:15) come from unless it comes from Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer? 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 after 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 presumably he had created. (Genesis 15:17-21, 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.

Biblical 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 by the will of God. (1 Samuel 19:9) David was punished for his sin of adultery with Bathsheba by the infant death of their first born. After his second son, King Solomon replaced David, there followed the reign of numerous kings of the Jews, 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 66-73CE 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) The Jews had to reject Jesus so that he could be crucified and resurrected to create the Christian religion. Thus, it appears they were and are sacrificed in order to expand the religion beyond the Chosen People. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

God's will also is invoked in biblical scripture for 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 appear to suffer only by the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. Nowhere is this assumption more controversial 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. Neither can other tragedies. In the news, two young sisters died when a brick wall their hammock was anchored to fell on them. A married father murdered both of his young daughters before killing himself when his wife threatened divorce. A college student was shot and killed by a stray bullet while sitting outside his rented townhouse at 2:30AM. So was a small child as she exited her six-year-old birthday party. A mother watched as her two children and her husband drowned in a rip tide at the beach. A mother of four was killed by a stray bullet fired from the gun of a neighbor while he was cleaning it. A family of seven was killed in a head-on auto collision by a drunk driver. A father and young daughter both drowned in their backyard pool as neither one could swim. The odds of such things happening in probability theory are so small they can only be explained as the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer – with a probability of one. Now the challenge for the survivors in these families plus all others who suffer such deadly tragedies is to adapt to their losses and to live in the new normal of their reality while reconciling courage and surrender. Mortal fear and anger are appropriate reactions to the power and willingness of Most-High GOD to destroy its own creations.

Some Christian apologists may claim that God is perfectly just, so he only causes his chosen people to suffer when they drift away to other gods, or they disobey and fail to live up to his holiness, or they just do not display total and complete love for him, 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 biblical 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 little God 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 that controls everything from atoms to galaxies, including human religious beliefs. Ergo theofatalism.

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. 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) Throughout the Bible, God is depicted as causing suffering to punish his chosen people for their sins or merely to show them the power of his might to prove he is their Lord. (Ezekiel 14, John 9:1-3) The natural human reaction to the power of this little God is fear. Fear of God and others is a theme running throughout the Old and New Testaments. References to fear occur 268 times in thirty-four books of the Old Testament and sixty-eight times in sixteen books of the New Testament. “Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, 4:7, 9:10,) “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) “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, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:12-13)

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) Ananias and his wife Sapphira both were struck dead for their deceit in withholding some of their personal assets from the first incipient communal church in Jerusalem, so, “Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.” (Acts 5:1-11) It appears that fear of God was necessary to control human behavior. In these biblical scriptures, faith appears to include fearing God enough to make impossible sacrifices. Many early martyrs of the Church made the ultimate sacrifice for their unshakeable belief for nearly three hundred years. A full life is not exempt from fear, but on the contrary, it is one that is lived in full experience of fears of all kinds in which we live in spite of our fears. “All fear is fear of loss of identity—existence/survival. The resolution of fear is therefore the willingness to surrender one’s existence in all its expressions to God.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.276. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) The issue here is that GOD may require more suffering in your life than anyone could anticipate, as it was in the life of Apostle Paul and the story of Job.

Fear has its place to warn us from harm, but it may be balanced with its opposite, love of self and others. “Love” also is very popular in biblical scriptures. It is mentioned 425 times in thirty-four books of the Old Testament and 261 times in twenty-six books of the New Testament. Jesus declared the first commandment is “Love the Lord with all your being” and the second is “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37) Obviously, this command emphasizes loving your “self” before you can love others, but it leaves unexplained who or what that is which loves yourself as it implies something superior or above your Self. It still is a mystery. Without love for self, it seems one may exhibit self-destructive behaviors including criminality, addictions,

and suicide. Throughout the Bible, some scriptures view God as punitive to those he chooses, whereas others present God as nurturing to those he chooses – necessary opposites. In the middle of his lamentations upon the destruction of Israel by God, the prophet Jeremiah incredibly wrote, “Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.” (Lamentations 3:22) “But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.” (Psalm 33:18) God as love which overcomes fear also flows through the New Testament. “God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son....” (John 3:16) 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)

But, hey, recall that Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” (John 15:1-3) He said this about his disciples before there was an organized church in Jerusalem. “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.” (John 15:12-14) Some of his commands seem to be addressed to his twelve apostles only while others appear to be generalized for all his disciples. Identifying the ones that apply to us may require inspired interpretations. The summary may be, love God and get his love in return, love God and surrender all to him, past, present and future, or suffer the consequences. These conflicts require accommodation of these apparently necessary opposites of fear and love of God in biblical scriptures. The most enlightened people may live in the gray area between such opposites, but they are rare. F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) wrote, “It is a mark of maturity to hold the opposites and still function normally.” Like holding grief and joy, love and fear, anger and peace, predestination and free will. All in the will of Most-High GOD will of course.

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, at the end he instructed his disciples to go and make disciples of all the nations. These events seem to be an example of necessary opposites in comparative biblical scriptures. Love your neighbor with unconditional charity and withhold/refuse your neighbor any charity. Confine the gospel to the chosen people and spread it to the wider world. (Matthew 15:21-28, 28:19, Luke 10:25-37, 24:47, Romans 1:6-7) After Jesus explained the selfless charity provided by the “good Samaritan,” he instructed his disciples, “Go and do likewise.” (Luke 10:30-37) Each reader must ask themselves, what has that got to do with me?

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...and though he slays me I will still trust in him.” (Job 1:20) 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. 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. You will die if it's his will, or live if it's his will.” (*Piper, John, Coronavirus and Christ, pp 39 -42, Crossway,2020*) This view is not shared by many critical book reviewers. Whether you believe this or not, either way your opinion must be the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. Say it again, “GOD did not make any one-sided coins.”

This view of theofatalism states that nothing from atoms to galaxies 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, perhaps 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.*) Sometimes GOD uses Satan to carry out its will through the evil actions of people. This truth was shown in the Old Testament story of Job and possibly in the modern story of the holocaust in Nazi Germany during WWII. The fact that the murder mystery novels by the famed author, Dame Agatha Christie (1890-1976) have outsold all books except the Bible seems to illustrate how attractive is the satanic nature of human beings. The gladiators of Rome, the combative full contact modern sports and yes, even wars, show that mankind are disposed to cause suffering among their peers. 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 will 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 and survivors of the wars and pandemics and those suffering the hell of depression contemplating a life that might had been if they only had made different decisions, although all decisions apparently are the will of Most-High GOD.

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 much later by scribes who described the restitution of all he had lost 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/trust in him.” (Job 13:15) He might have recalled, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not rely/depend/lean on your own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5) Thus, not only suffering, but faithful reactions 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 apparently 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 plus the devotional acceptance of them by willing believers – or their rejection by the skeptical ones. GOD makes atheists and agnostics also. Ergo theofatalism.

Note: “God may not be provable through mathematical formulae or properties of physics, but we live in an era where the evidence of an Intelligent Designer is all around us. Just look through the Hubble Telescope and peer to the edge of the massive cosmos. View the monitor of an electron-scanning microscope and delve into the intricate world of a microscopic cell. Try to comprehend the massive library of complex information inherent in the digital code that turns a fertilized egg into a human being. Study principles of quantum mechanics and investigate the world of extra-dimensionality. Scan the unlimited species of life on planet earth in the air, on land, and in the sea. Review the nature of your conscience, subconscious, standards of morality, and thoughts of religion. Then, try to reconcile all of these realities with a basic theory of randomness and chaos.” ([Does God Exist \(http://www.allaboutcreation.org\)](http://www.allaboutcreation.org))

Unfortunately, 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 apologetic preachers continually affirm the dogma that the Bible is the infallible Word of God and is truthful in all respects while ignoring the biblical scriptures that expose its many flaws, leaving many things open for discussion. For example, the genealogy of Jesus is traced back 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. In Luke, the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam contains seventy-generations; in Matthew genealogy from Abraham to Jesus contains forty-generations, leaving thirty-generations from Abraham back to Adam. In Luke, this is listed as twenty-one generations. Since the writers had no written records dating back to the beginning one may wonder where they came from and how accurate the listing really is. If Jesus had human ancestors, perhaps the “virgin birth” is purely mythical unless, of course, he was both man and god. 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, if not absolutely literally accurate, in some symbolic way that mere humans cannot fully understand.

Here is a biblical 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 who cannot work? Paul does recant a little by commanding believers to care for widows and orphans in the churches. “If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.” But he actually instructed some widows to remarry. “So, I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.” (Timothy 5:3 -16) He also told the church at Galatia to help carry each other’s burdens. Apparently conflicting scriptures like these seldom, if ever, are quoted in churches by pastors and teachers because they fear the loss of members who may be impacted by them.

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) However, reason would say it is not wise to provide unconditional charity to those who would misuse it for harmful effects, i.e., drug addicts and criminals, which encourages an underground economy. America has moved away from person-to-person charity by delegating it to government shelters through taxation, except possibly for the Amish and Mennonite sects and some close-knit families. The increasing numbers of homeless people in America must look out for themselves. All in the will of Most-High GOD, or course.

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, i.e., pseudepigraphic, which was a common practice among writers of that day. Four of the anonymous epistles in Paul's name are: Ephesians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, and Titus, and three other epistles are of questionable authorship, Hebrews, Second Thessalonians and Colossians. This situation could explain some of the discrepancies and apparent contradictions among them. Also, Paul and the others wrote before the four gospels were written so they had no scriptures to rely upon directly from Jesus, except for oral quotations. All in GOD's will of course.

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, 20) Note that he said he would come back to get those at the table – not including everyone outside the room. 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?* 2013, p.85. *Crossway. Kindle Edition.*) Note that he does not cite any biblical scriptures to support his claim. 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 claim otherwise is overgeneralizing. Some scriptures seem to be generalities and some specifics. Making specifics into generalities seems to be the basic issue in all proof texting.

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.

*Note: Unlike reading the Bible in linear fashion page by page, book, chapter and verse, 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. Admittedly, this non-traditional way of Bible study is bound to create resistance and opposition because it exposes the many contradictions which are avoided by regular proof-texting, i.e., selecting specific scriptures isolated from the overall biblical story. Theologians having a personal career vested in proof-texting obviously will not be enthusiastic about this approach to exegesis. For example, reference to “destiny” occurs twenty-one times in scripture (NIV) so the original meaning in context depends upon which verse you emphasize. The same reasoning applies for the word “light,” which appears 174 times in the Old Testament and 84 times in the New Testament. There is a vast difference in meaning between “let there be light” and “I am the light of the world.” “In much of the Gospels, speech was metaphorical. Those culture-specific types of references could easily be grasped by audiences then, as they were in many cases common expressions, effortlessly understood in that environment. The problem now is that we are far removed from that manner of speaking and from that society, and therefore many of those turns of phrase have lost their direct meanings, or worse, those expressions have taken on entirely different meanings.” (Eltzroth, Daniel. *The Gospel of Thomas: Lost Sermons of Jesus Restored: A New Translation for Today's World.* Antiq Publications. 2015 Kindle Edition.) A complete analysis of such issues in the Bible is beyond the*

scope of this book, but it remains for readers to discern for themselves the interpretations they are given, all in GOD's will of course.

This type of research was not possible before publication of the Thompson Chain Reference Bible in 1908, now in its eighth edition. Topical biblical research 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 that is now possible with many such resources discloses apparent contradictions if you take them literally, and if they cannot be taken literally as guidance for daily living, why take them at all?

But, if the Bible was inspired by GOD, such opposites must be necessary, or they would not exist. 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.

Interestingly, including the detailed records by the Roman Empire that occupied the area, there is no official evidence for the life of Jesus of Nazareth outside of the Bible, except for a short doubtful reference in 94 CE by first century Jewish historian, Josephus, who briefly mentions Jesus and his brother, James the Just by hearsay. Roman historian, Tacitus also referred to Christus and his crucifixion in 116 CE. Jesus never wrote anything himself, and all of the gospel narratives were written several decades after his death. Nevertheless, believers feel assured the New Testament contains the authentic teaching of Jesus, although the four gospels present somewhat differing accounts by anonymous writers who were not eyewitnesses. Since the writers of the New Testament were not eyewitnesses to any of its contents, which were transmitted orally for several decades after the death of Jesus, what if the Bible is a total ruse to fill the non-taxable treasuries of churches and to control the lives of superstitious people over many centuries? What if the Bible is the greatest myth ever sold? What if it is not a unique story about a unique life? Historian, Kersey Graves wrote a book in 1875 in which he described sixteen religious characters throughout antiquity who were crucified, many others who ascended into heaven, and some who were born to virgins. He claimed much of the theology in the Bible mimics similar works in Asian mythical literature. What if all religions fulfill some primal needs of human beings to feel fatal remorse and guilt for some past behavior imagined to require their eternal retribution, which can be avoided by adopting their dogma by faith? And what if that is all the will of the Most-High GOD who must want it that way or it would be different? What if this is the supreme power in the universe controlling everything from atoms to galaxies? Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Ergo theofatalism.

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?* 2013, p.100. Crossway. Kindle Edition.) Scripture plainly says that people who disbelieve once they are informed are destined for hell. “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.” But Jesus also declared, “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.” (John 3:36, John 15:22) This declaration by Jesus seems to exempt from hell those people who do not get the Word. It seems like ignorance of the law was an excuse at that time and place, but it may contradict his threat to the Pharisees elsewhere. “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) The Rev. Rogers claims the default destiny of all humans is hell unless they accept Christ, and he quotes scriptures to prove it. That is, of course, the opinion he was given by the will of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer.

Scripture says the Word of God is flawless, (2 Samuel 12:31, Psalm 12:6, 18:30, Proverbs 30:5) That obviously is not true as will be shown, but these examples illustrate the principle of necessary opposites in biblical scriptures. Consider these two opposing gospel 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.” Romans 10:9: If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” John 3:5: “You must be born of water and spirit to enter the Kingdom of God.” John 6:44,65, “No one can come to me unless the Father calls/enables them.” Is this either-or or both-and, does one need to be called by God or not to be a Christian? Jesus declared to his twelve apostles, “You did not choose me, I chose you.” (John 15:16) What happens to those who are not called and the Jews who rejected him, calling for his crucifixion? Where they necessary to complete the resurrection of Jesus to make way for the coming of Holy Spirit as predicted in the Old Testament? 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) “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:4) Where is the free will? Or, are these apparent conflicts in holy scriptures there because some Higher Power – Most-High GOD - wanted them to be there?

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.” But, Apostle Paul declared that “all have sinned” and need 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 3:9-12, Psalms 5:9,14:1-3; 53:1-3; Ecclesiastes: 7:20) Perhaps, these various writers did not know what each other had written. And it all must be the will of Most-High GOD or it would be different.

Another apparent confusion exists about the fundamentals of salvation: 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. Matthew 10:32-33: “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.” John 14:6: “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 6:65: But, he also said, “No one can come unto me unless they are called/enabled by the Father.” Matthew 18:3: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” Romans 10:9: If you declare with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” 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 apparently 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. This is only one of apparent conflicts between the teaching of Jesus and Apostle Paul, who claimed that he was called to preach by the commission of Jesus himself posthumously. (Acts 9:1-19, 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) The Bible says people are naturally in rebellion to God, “Because the carnal mind is enmity (hate) against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Romans 8:7) It seems that purging all life on earth with the ubiquitous flood did not solve that problem if that was intended. 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 “heart” in biblical literature. Besides, it was God who created the human heart, evil as it may be.

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.

A quicky: Matthew 12:40: “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Although the four Gospels seem to agree the tomb was found empty on the morning of the first day of the week, Sunday, they differ on the accounts of the Last Supper, the inquisition, and the crucifixion and resurrection. (Matthew 26:17-20, Matthew 28:1, Mark: 15: 1-15), Luke 22:7, John 13:10-2, John 18:28, John 19:13-14) Scholars have not reconciled this apparent discrepancy.

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, 27:45 “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done...my God, why have you forsaken me?” This does not sound like Jesus had any choice, or does it?

Plus this: John 6:53-57: “Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.” John 6:63: “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.”

And one more: Genesis 6:3: 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 9:29: “After the flood Noah lived 350 more years. Noah lived a total of 950 years, and then he died.” It seems that God made an extreme exception for Noah, unless the translators misunderstood.

Finally, and most important, 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.” “(Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32: But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” These scriptures seem to be mutually exclusive. Jesus could not both know and not know when the end shall come. Either it would come in that generation or not until the gospel is preached to all nations. So, the Word of

God does not seem to be flawless, although Christian apologetics have attempted to reconcile such disputes many different ways.

Also, recall that a one-world kingdom of God as described in the book of Revelation 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, so there will be no free will, only obedient robots. It will be a utopia in which the only will is that of the Most-High GOD. 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, Revelation 20:4)

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. 2014, Kindle Edition.)* Qualified theologians can make the scriptures mean almost anything, but they must choose their words carefully to appeal to the congregation at their various levels of spiritual maturity which can vary widely. Apostle Paul wrote, “I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.” (1 Corinthians 3:2) Words are needed to convey thoughts. The definition of words requires other words which are not perfectly translatable except by using other words, and they can change. Note how computer “program” changed into computer “application” which changed into “app.” When new thoughts occur, new words are created to express them, like astronaut and cosmonaut. Words can be used in literal, figurative, or symbolic senses, and one biblical interpretation is as good as another if 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 that lies above consciousness. Whether infants can have thoughts before they learn words is unknowable. The various religious holy books are interpreted locally by each generation of readers, which may explain their perpetual renewals with each generation of believers. This fact, alone, might suffice to conclude that there is some force greater than human reason controlling what people read and believe in all the wide range of cultures throughout the world. This might be a common force controlling everything from atoms to galaxies in the universe, and idea whose time has not yet come. 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, a concept apparently beyond human knowledge at the present time.

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 Father, Son, Holy Spirit 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.

Note: As for Jesus being also God, scripture appears to present some ambiguity. Isaiah prophesized the virgin will bear a son and call him Immanuel, "God with us." (Isaiah 14:7) The main scripture often used to claim Jesus was God is the first verse of the Gospel of John, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." (John 1:1) However, there is no confirmation of that claim in the creation accounts in the book of Genesis, and Jesus said he did not know when the end would come because only the Father knows. Jesus refers to "my father" forty-one times throughout the four gospels in reference to God as in a father-son relationship. At his baptism by John, the voice of God was recorded as saying, "This is my son, whom I love. With him I am well pleased." Jesus praised Peter for recognizing him as the Messiah, by the will of God. He also declared that no one can come to him unless the Father calls/enables them. (John 6:65) Jesus also declared, "No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. Whoever sees me has seen the Father" (John 14:6-9) And this: I have come here from God. I have not come here on my own, God sent me. (John:8:42) . During the night before his crucifixion, Jesus prayed fervently to God as Father. (John 17) "Be glad that I am going to the Father for the Father is greater than I. (John: 14:28) Jesus seems to admit being called Messiah and King of the Jews during his inquisition by Pontius Pilate, who he said had no power over him not given from above. He also declared, "My kingdom is not of this world." Moreover, Jesus suffered, bled, and died in the crucifixion as any human being would. His humanity was displayed many times throughout his ministry through fear, compassion, and temper. Apostle Paul declared, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Corinthians 8:6). The Book of Revelation says that Jesus will reign at the right hand of the Father in the new earth, not as one. Still, one may reasonably use biblical scriptures to conclude that Jesus was or was not God or was both fully man and fully God. Either way, people who claim to have a personal relationship with the living risen Jesus seem to possess a very active imagination. Jesus may be the very best imaginary friend imaginable. However, actions speak louder than words as Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commands." (John 14:15) However, his commands are distributed throughout the gospels, without any topical indexing. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Issues of conflict and interpretation in scriptures make the Bible very difficult to read by a suffering critical thinker, possibly misunderstood by the layman, and problematic among theologians. For this reason, the Catholic Church prohibited laymen from possessing and reading the Bible. 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) "It goes without saying that a great mystery to mankind is God's essence to be all powerful, all knowing, and in control of all things, and yet within that scope of control to maintain the free will of creatures to the point where the creatures exercising their free will are held accountable for their actions. And yet it fits with our proper concept of God, as One who is so Great, so Pure, He cannot be comprehended." (Lolli, William. *Why God Wills You to Suffer* (Kindle Locations 828-830). eBookIt.com. 2014, Kindle Edition.) Indeed, Most-High GOD

works in mysterious ways, controlling everything from atoms to galaxies. Therefore, IT also creates apparent opposites, such as belief in free will and determinism, 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. 2014, Kindle Edition.*) In other words, GOD apparently controls what people believe plus what they do.

Note: No complete copies of the original Bible manuscripts survive. There are some 130 small pieces of New Testament parchments dating from the third century in various libraries and museums around the world. Jesus apparently spoke Aramaic, but the earliest manuscripts are in Koine Greek. How and by whom the Greek translations from ancient Hebrew of the Old Testament and Aramaic of Jesus were made are unknown, but the Syriac version dating from the second century called the Peshitta is claimed to be an authentic translation. Many words and phrases in the New Testament connect to first century Aramaic. Koine Greek is the language of the Christian New Testament and in the Septuagint, (the 3rd-century BC Greek translation of the earlier Hebrew Old Testament, called the Tanakh,) and of most early Christian theological writing by the church founders. 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) which are 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 in English posted at www.biblegateway.com. Given the many uncertain origins of the modern Bible, we can only assume that it contains what the Most-High GOD wants humans to read of it.

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. 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 opposing 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 infamous political career by writing a book while he was in prison for inciting revolution. One might see a similarity here

with the political support of former President Donald J. Trump by his loyal followers who seem to be mesmerized by his oratory. Each 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 of theofatalism 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?

In conclusion, it appears that Judeo-Christian theologians may have been deceiving people for 2,000 years about GOD. Here is how. Whatever benefit may be obtained in church membership and belief in Christ as Lord and Savior, it may not be derived from biblical scriptures without some inspirational insight. 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 apologetics 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. They readily accept the authority of theologians who are happy to oblige them with threats of eternal suffering in hell if they do not declare Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead – plus join the church obviously. 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. Preachers sometimes must relocate from church to church periodically when their popularity with the present congregation wanes, and some end up changing careers. One may only wonder how the preachers and priests feel about all those who are doomed because they don't get the message. Upton Sinclair said, "It is difficult to get someone to understand something when their salary depends on not understanding it." But the story does not hold up to reason, as was argued by revolutionary pamphleteer, Thomas Paine in *The Age of Reason*, (1794 – 1807) and by Christopher Hitchens in *God is Not Great*, (2008), and by Richard Dawkins in *The God Delusion*, (2008) and by many other authors, some of them being theologians who left the faith after they no longer could support its traditional dogma

For example, the very basic dogma of Christianity appears to be a fallacy that is not supported in biblical scriptures. Here is why: In Christianity, mankind is claimed to be destined for hell from birth by inheriting the sin of first man, Adam. Apostle Paul declared, "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, 1 Corinthians 15:21) The standard Christian claim that all humans deserve eternal punishment in hell because they all share in the disobedience of Adam who ate the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil follows: “The Augustinian viewpoint understands Scripture to say we all actually sinned in Adam’s defiant act. You and I were fatally wounded because we were present in the person of Adam, our representative head. 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?* 2013, p.37. Crossway. Kindle Edition.) Let’s explore that contention.

First, after they sinned by eating from the prohibited Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve were prevented by God from eating of the Tree of Life in the Garden called Eden. One may only wonder why the serpent did not tempt Eve to eat of that tree first and live forever. (Genesis 3:22-24) “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) So they apparently were not created immortal, like the gods. Therefore, Adam and Eve were destined to die before they sinned by eating from the prohibited Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. (Genesis 2:15, 3:1-6) They were destined to die even as God spoke, before they had sinned. Their disobedience did not bring on their death because it was created into them from the beginning. God warned them they would surely die the day they ate the forbidden fruit, which was untrue because they lived long after that day. 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 biblical 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 to their heirs by the sperm of Adam alone, the man, or alone by an egg of Eve, the woman. Of course, the ancient writer claiming to be Apostle Paul could not have known that, and he lived in a patriarchal society where women had little legal standing. Moreover, 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) The serpent was part of the creation of God, and several times scripture says, “and God saw that it was good.” So, who really is to blame here for the sins of Eve and Adam?

Third, the Book of Genesis does not say the sin of Adam was projected onto all mankind for ever more. In fact, God’s punishments of Adam and Eve were expulsion from the Garden, working the soil for a living, pain in childbirth, and enmity with the serpent that was made to crawl on the ground. (Genesis 3:14-24) Propagation of the human race must have occurred by incest among the first family. Note that the little, vindictive, narcissistic God later admonished the Israelites as follows: “I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:5-6) Note it does not say punishment goes on forever and engulfs everyone in some eternal lake of fire, although it says innocents must suffer for sins of their ancestors. The basic doctrine on “original sin” in Judeo-Christianity seems to be fatally flawed. It is there in print for those with eyes to see. Of course, the whole story in Genesis possibly is a fable or myth that is offset by theories of

modern science proposing a different story about the origination and development of human species on earth through natural selection. Necessary opposites. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Since Christianity is based upon an apparent flaw, the rest of the story is suspect, although billions of people are given to believe it. They seem to suspend their ability for critical reason and disbelief to accept the authority of religious dogma, regardless how implausible it is to a rational person. They seem to be driven by God himself to believe the Messiah had come. “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.” (Matthew 16:15-17) If the original sin of Adam and Eve is not projected upon everyone for all time, then just what was the purpose behind the crucifixion and alleged resurrection of Jesus? mmmmm? Jesus replies: “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners. It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.” But after the Jews rejected him as Messiah and had him crucified by Rome, Jesus called Saul of Tarsus as Apostle Paul posthumously to carry his message to the Gentiles, teaching them to obey all his commandments, and the rest is history. (Matthew 15:24-26, 28:20, Mark 2:17, John 15:22, Acts 9:15-16)

Many desperate people seeking relief from suffering and feeling convicted of sin demanding eternal penance still are attracted to the Christian religion, especially children of present members. However, upon close reading and analysis, it presents a system of contradictions and ancient beliefs that are impossible to reconcile with modern understanding. Considering its confusion, one can understand why the Church prevented/discouraged laymen from reading the Bible and why people who rely upon their church leaders for their understanding are misled. But even that must be the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. “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. 2014, Kindle Edition.*) If that is true, theologians err by picking and choosing biblical scriptures on what God controls and what he does not. If human behavior is all controlled by God, including the sins of Eve and Adam, plus all the writings in the Bible, plus acceptance and rejection of scripture as the Word of God, plus all the other religions on earth and everything that happens from atoms to galaxies among all the various life forms, plant, animal, birds, fish, and insects, each doing what they must, assumption of free will must be questioned, given by Most-High GOD of course, (the GOD above all Gods) and no one may be responsible for whatever they think or do if it all is the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Ergo, theofatalism.

Summary

Here is the summary of this section: the biblical argument for theofatalism. After his traditional Christian faith failed to provide any comfort in his insurmountable grief from untimely death of his wife, Lewis Tagliaferre searched for another solution in the Bible and elsewhere to enable him to survive that enormous loss. He discovered a view of biblical scriptures differing from those normally presented in churches through selecting isolated verses

called “proof texting” that provided a different form of faith. This different reading of biblical scriptures is based on linking topically connected subjects instead of the usual linear book, chapter, and verse reading. It led him to a new and different interpretation of Most-High GOD as the Prime Force in the universe – Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

An estimated 2.4 billion people worldwide profess to be Christians who have made the Bible “the most popular book never read.” What if it really is a story of God for that time as inspired by the universal GOD? And, what if the believing people and their churches both are the will of the Most-High GOD – not the little God in the Bible - who must want it that way or it would be different? What if this Most-High GOD is the Supreme Power in the universe that unites the very small with the very large from atoms to galaxies in some way as ONE that equations of scientists cannot explain, as yet. Some people see things as they are and ask why, other people see things as they could be and ask why not.

Suffering is the bane of human existence, and all living beings must die. 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 because there is apparent confusion in the Bible about its history, mythology, theology, and in other holy books and among various religions. For example, Jesus reprimands a rich man, “To be perfect sell all you have, give it to the poor and come follow me, and you will have treasure in heaven...Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and vermin destroy, but lay up treasures in heaven where neither moth nor vermin can destroy...Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 16:19-21, 19:21-24) but he also praises a rich man, “For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. (Matthew 25:28) But such conflicts in biblical scriptures do not deter the faithful followers, who are given to embrace their various doctrines, traditions, and rituals – some would say by will of the Holy Spirit. One can believe the Bible is perfect and such conflicting interpretations are errors of human origin, or one can believe their questions are valid and the Bible is not perfect. These seem to be necessary opposite opinions, and I am given to believe that either way the belief must be given by the Most-High GOD. The Bible has no comment on religions of all the many worldwide cultures of its time, except for enemies of the Jews, that presumably also are creations of GOD. Evidence for ancient human civilizations dating back to 14,000 BC has been discovered on all the continents on earth, and prehistoric remains are much older than that. They are so fantastic that creation of them must come from a Higher Power so mighty that it controls human cultures and beliefs around the world – past, present, and future. The lifespan of a modern human being is a miniscule segment of historical life on earth, but everyone occupies the place and time of GOD’s choosing, each one being insignificant but indispensable.

Although science has evolved over time with new discoveries and updated textbooks, billions of people still rely upon the Bible, a religious book that is more the 3,000 years old, for their eternal salvation. Tagliaferre asked himself why this situation should be as it is. He concluded that all religions and the suffering of their believers must come from a Higher Power

than any of them individually, the GOD above gods, i.e., the Supreme Force in the universe, Most-High GOD – 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 themselves. 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. Some experts claim the mind controls the brain which controls the body. We are subject to all kinds of effects of the unconscious and conscious beliefs that our mind is holding on all of our bodily systems. This theory claims if you can change the contents of mind, the body must follow. “The mind has enormous power over every aspect of the body’s functions, right down to the smallest molecule and atom. It has been discovered that every atom and every molecule within the body is influenced by consciousness levels and beliefs. Every physiological and chemical transaction that goes on in the body is the result of a blueprint of it within consciousness. All of them can be changed by changing consciousness. The placebo response is illustrative of the power of mind over body. Research over the decades has demonstrated that approximately one-third of patients will improve or recover when they believe that a particular inactive pill is curative.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.*)

Dr. Hawkins proposed that above the mind is consciousness and above that is awareness and above that is awareness of awareness, etc., until one reaches the ultimate purpose of enlightenment – the goal of life which may take many lives to achieve. “Consciousness research indicates that the human ego/mind is constitutionally unable to differentiate truth from falsehood by virtue of its construction. The mind is like the hardware of a computer that will play back anything for which it has been programmed, whether it be propaganda, misinformation, emotional distortion, bias, fallacious memes (slogans), etc.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God, pp. 49-50, Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) Dr. Hawkins claims we can train the mind to achieve inner peace, but he does not explain who or what that “we” is that does such training. What controls the mind still is a mystery. After centuries of discussion, the mind/body interaction still is poorly defined and is difficult to research in a living brain. In traditional Asian medicine, anger is connected with the liver, fear is connected with the kidney, joy is connected with the heart, sadness and grief are connected with the lungs, and worry is connected with the spleen. Study of the living brain/mind in neurology is very primitive, hardly better than exploring the moon with a telescope. Although progress is being made in neurology, it cannot predict future discoveries with certainty. Physical health seems to be related

to a healthy mind and vice versa. In traditional Chinese medicine, emotions and physical health are intimately interconnected. The integrated mind/body approach to healing operates in a dynamic loop where emotions impact the health of the body and vice versa. Dr. Hawkins claims that he discovered the body will follow what the mind believes in both health and actions and was able to cure himself of several chronic conditions.

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 may be energetic conditions of mind which unconsciously precede feelings and cause physical and instinctual reactions. They must be essential to human survival or they would not exist. A list of emotions in dialectical behavior therapy includes anger, disgust, envy, fear, happiness, jealousy, love, sadness, shame, and guilt but others also apply. Because they are physical forms of energy, emotional reactions 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 emotional 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.

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. 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 appear to be driven by unconscious resources – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. 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. It can and does make choices that are harmful as well as helpful. This assumption helps explain actions and reactions that seem to be out of conscious control. There seems to be an undiscovered control loop connecting the body with the mind and the mind with the body, possibly through the complex network of hormones and biochemical neurotransmitters being studied in the field of epidemiology. In Eastern beliefs, this network is explained by neural pathways which can be accessed and treated with acupuncture and various energetic methods being investigated as alternative medicine.

Brain cells do not die instantly after the heart stops beating, so thoughts may continue for seconds or minutes after cardiac arrest and possibly even longer. Resuscitation of patients in cardiac arrest and clinically dead is uncommon, but it does happen. People with terminal illness who report a near-death experience (NDE) after cardiac arrest commonly describe loss of fear

and a feeling of love in an altered nonmaterial state of being, which *A Course in Miracles* (1975) (ACIM) declares is our normal condition that is submerged in subconscious mind, buried under the dross of daily living with its many challenges, joys and sorrows in the imaginary world of our own creation. The International Association for Near Death Studies declares, “The Self does not die. Across thousands of years and in cultures around the world, people have described powerful experiences that follow this general pattern with its common features. At its broadest, the experiences involve perceptions of movement through space, of light and darkness, a landscape, presences, intense emotion, and a conviction of having a new understanding of the nature of the universe.” (www. iands.org)

A Course in Miracles (1976) is perhaps the most radical of all secular explanations of reality ever published. It was scribed by the late medical research psychologists Dr. Helen Schucman and her working partner, Dr. William Thetford while they were employed at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center of Columbia University in New York City. They claimed it is a new revelation from Jesus given to correct the allegedly mistaken teaching of the New Testament. It uses terms including God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Heaven, Son of God, and Atonement in different contexts with different meanings from the Bible which can be confusing to its readers, but it claims to be a thought form and not a religion. Its basic premise seems to rely upon the Hindu concept that all we can observe with senses is an illusion while the real world is one of spirit that can only be perceived through enlightenment. Jesus declared, “My kingdom is not of this world.” Although some churches have accepted the *Course* for study, orthodox theologians see it as heresy because it imputes to God ideas that are not biblical wrapped in Freudian psychology and seasoned with sprigs of Vedanta Hinduism. It describes two parallel universes, one is the real nonmaterial spiritual abode of God (heaven) in perfect love and inner peace among all creatures and the other is an unreal material world created by the human ego filled with sin, guilt, suffering, death, and punishment. “The God of the *Course* is not the ego-god of the Bible and Christianity. God, as the *Course* describes Him, does not judge, does not condemn, does not punish, does not test, does not cause people to suffer, does not see His children as sinners, is not jealous, loves you unconditionally, and shares everything He has with you. You can answer the following questions with these answers: Q. How could a perfect God create imperfect people? A. God did not create any people. People are only illusions in a dream. All of God’s Sons are perfect (spiritual) creations. Q. How could a perfect God create an imperfect world? A. God did not create the world. Q. Why does God let bad things happen to good people? Again, the question makes no sense. There are no real people! If this were the real world, God would be cruel. For no Father could subject His children to this as the price of salvation and be loving.” (Wells, Raymond. *A Course in Miracles Clarified: A Quick and Easy Guide*, pp. 78-79, 81. Kindle Edition.)

Moreover, ACIM says the ego has deluded people into believing the dream is reality. ACIM proclaims the world we perceive is an illusion as if in a hologram, physical matter really does not exist including all the woes of humans, there is no suffering in reality because we never actually left the safety and security of heaven, and the real world actually is a utopian bliss in perfect love with the oneness of God. It teaches that we cannot be hurt by what is unreal and does not exist, which is the whole material universe as we mistakenly have projected it. Why this situation exists is not explained.

ACIM appears to be an attempt to help people avoid and deny the suffering in life and conflicts between people from divorces to pandemics to hurricanes, murders, earthquakes and wars by thinking differently about it, that it is not real so it cannot be harmful. It claims the perceived world merely is a projection of active imagination created by the evil spirit of human ego, and what does not exist cannot harm you. “Our ego made this dream universe and all things, living or inanimate within it— and thus God did not create it.” (*Wells, Raymond. A Course in Miracles Clarified: A Quick and Easy Guide, p.77. Kindle Edition.*) Wells continued, “The dream, AKA the illusion, is filled with pain! It does not matter that this pain is not real in the sense that God did not create it. It still hurts like Hell! Unforgiven guilt (and all of us have copious amounts of it) demands that we be punished, and there's no way to escape it, short of forgiveness (of self and others.)” Who or what it is that implements this universal unequivocal forgiveness is not explained in the *Course*, which refers to “you” multiple times without defining it. There seems to be a trinity of mind as “Ego,” “Holy Spirit,” and “You.” Again, ACIM claims that God did not make this world, it was made by the ego as a dream and does not really exist, so there actually is nothing to forgive or to fear because in the real world of spirit there is only love. No one who is real actually sins or dies because they never left eternal life in heaven, at least in spirit/mind. (*Note that Jesus said, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63)*)

It appears in the *Course in Miracles* that peoples’ egos are the cause of their own suffering, which is not real, in opposition to the will of God and the equally resident Holy Spirit. The *Course* claims, through more than 1200 pages in three volumes, (a text, workbook, and teachers’ guide) if the ego created the dream the “you” can awaken from it, but only with help from the Holy Spirit provided by God for this purpose when “you” choose to and are willing to accept it, although that may take many lifetimes to achieve. Why some people choose to awaken willingly and others do not is not discussed, only that it is inevitable, the only option being when you choose to awaken whether in this life or some future reincarnation. This conversion is called the “atonement,” which cannot occur until everyone chooses to awaken from the dream because it takes everyone to compose the whole that presently is fragmented by the illusion of separation from God as described in the creation myth of Adam and Eve. There is no difference between the rich man living in a mansion in a gated community and the poor homeless mental case living in the gutter because both are the image and likeness of God composing collectively the same Son of God, oneness in mind/spirit if not in the flesh.

The *Course* illustrates how people who are suffering intolerably can deny it is happening and create an alternative universe that cannot hurt them, in the extreme case becoming catatonic through complete withdrawal in defense of a mortal threat. In traumatic circumstances the mind may create an alternative reality, sometimes that alternative reality is so far from the truth that we call it madness. “To those convinced that their delusions are real, truth must appear insane.” (*Rosenthal MD, Robert. From Loving One to One Love (p. 156). G&D Media. Kindle Edition.*) Those voters who believe Donald Trump won a second term as President except for a fraudulent election illustrate this trick of the human brain. *A Course in Miracles* seems to turn perceived reality upside down and states that to think we exist as individuals and the world we experience is real is the fundamental error. “Nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists.” ACIM claims the only thing real that exists is love. If the world does not really exist, then suffering and death are not real. The opposite would be

overwhelming fear and anger causing violent behavior to self and others. When fantasy seems better than reality, many people apparently prefer to accept the fantasy to survive, altering their perception to support their belief and seeing what they believe.

The human ego/mind is a very creative structure when defending itself. The historical denial by President Donald Trump of his election defeat in 2020 and the blind agreement among his supporters illustrates this phenomenon. It is easier to fool many people than to convince them they are being fooled. Magicians have demonstrated this blind-spot of humans for centuries. At this time, ACIM has been translated into two dozen languages and is studied world-wide by several million people. Several public domain versions are posted on the Internet along with many third-party commentaries. Its scribe, the late psychologist, Helen Schucman, who was raised a Christian in a Jewish family, explained, “I know it is true, but I don’t believe it.” She claimed to be an atheist and disavowed the *Course*. She kept it stored in her closet until the late psychologist, Dr. Kenneth Wapnick discovered it and made it his life work from 1975. Wapnick said, “If the Bible were considered literally true, then (from a biblical literalist's viewpoint) the *Course* would have to be viewed as demonically inspired.” So, how could this demonic belief system become popular outside of the will of Most-High GOD?

Of course, if the ego/mind made the universe as an illusion, then the biblical assumption that God made it from his spoken word is false. ACIM claims although you were born whole and complete as God created you, the ego hides this truth so you may seek to regain that awareness in many unhealthy ways including creating a perceived life based upon a lie that you are incomplete, guilty and need eternal punishment. The ego causes many people to believe they are so badly flawed that they are fit only for eternal punishment in hell unless they accept Christ as Lord and Savior, according to the Bible. (John 3:16, Romans 3:9-12, 10:9) If so, the question then is, what made the ego and its powerful illusions? ACIM does not address this issue at all. Unless the ego is more powerful than God, the reply only can be, Most-High GOD, the prime force in the universe and beyond created the ego. Thus, GOD – generator, operator, destroyer - created the mind that wrote *A Course in Miracles* and all other minds by extension that write everything, including this work. Ergo theofatalism.

Note: The purpose of A Course in Miracles is creating inner peace by healing broken relationships through replacing the unreal world of ego with love and forgiveness with help from the Holy Spirit, while the purpose of theofatalism is accommodating the world as it is, including suffering and broken relationships that cannot be fixed, as the will of Most-High GOD - generator, operator, destroyer – necessary opposites.

If such thoughts as those expressed in the *Course*, which was composed in the late 1960s, and the Bible, which was composed two-three thousand years ago, and the Quran which was composed in the seventh century for Muslims, and the Book of Mormon which was composed in the nineteenth century for Latter Day Saints, control believers, one may ask, what controls their 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. Thoughts 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, like the base of an

iceberg is hidden beneath the water and the visible top must go where the base takes it. If thoughts motivating religious beliefs are brought into consciousness, behaviors usually are changed one way or the other. A conversion of thinking from one way to another is not unique to religions and occurs in all social-cultural contexts among people all over the world. It all must be the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer - or it would not happen. Ergo theofatalism.

The human brain, which may be the most complex structure in the universe, is not a static construct. A small change in any part of it may impact large changes in observable results, as in strokes and mental disorders. 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, new information and behavioral feedback, both voluntarily and involuntarily. Programming of the mind/brain is a well-known but poorly understood process in the fields of education and military indoctrination. 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, inventor, 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. Often, the mind plays a trick on the brain which causes the body to suffer – or to do some amazing things for good and evil. How this process occurs may be the ultimate mystery in the universe.

The late psychiatrist and spiritualist, Dr. David R. Hawkins wrote, “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 real.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p.211, Hay House 2012 Kindle Edition.*) This may be why Henry Ford declared, “If you think you can or think you cannot, you probably are right.” In this mode of living, we are seeing only a reflection of our own minds and think it is real and true. Where such thoughts come from is unknown. Some thoughts merely are passing fantasies of no consequence, while others change the course of human history. To address this filtering effect, 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. *Here is an example: The Bible is the word of God. The Bible contains contradictions. Therefore, biblical contradictions must be the will of God, and they illustrate the Principle of Necessary Opposites in Theofatalism. Another: GOD exists as the primary force in the universe. The universe includes destruction as well as generation and operation. Therefore, GOD causes destruction.* Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is intended to address faulty reasoning based on false premises by challenging their validity. In addition to in-situ sessions with a personal counselor, CBT now is available in virtual on-line versions. For details, visit www.online-therapy.com. All in GOD's will of course -AIGWOC.

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/faith without proof, as it is displayed by Jesus in the Bible and in some other religious venues. (Matthew 9:22, 29, 15:28) 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 inadvertently, as in the placebo effect. “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. 2019, Kindle Edition.*) The present political uprising in America based on false news that is believed to be true fully proves this aspect of human nature. Why this human behavior exists is not explained, unless of course it is the will of Most-High GOD.

The human brain seems to contain the command functions driving the body through creation and distribution of a complex system of hormones called neurotransmitters. Their identity and operations still are very mystical. Increasing serotonin and decreasing cortisol appear to improve mood disorders. The brain is composed of two hemispheres connected by a bridge of nerves called the corpus callosum. The right hemisphere is far more inventive in interpreting beliefs than the left hemisphere's more sensory, literal approach to information management. This confusing dichotomy may help to explain why people often say, ‘I feel that ...’ when they should say “I think that ...” and vice versa. The left brain controls the right side of the body and the right brain controls the left side of the body, as confirmed by paralytic strokes in each hemisphere. The left brain may employ sensing and reason while the right brain may employ faith and imagination. Both sides are needed for a balanced personality, but one side seems to dominate the other, with men usually more left-brained thinking types and women usually more right-brained feeling types. The best decisions seem to be made where actions of the left and right brains using thinking and feeling coincide and overlap, sometimes called “wise mind,” the left brain being driven by thoughts and ideas while the right brain is driven by feelings and values.

But, a simple right-brain/left-brain model of the mind is a gross over-simplification because the brain is organized into hundreds and maybe even thousands of modular-processing systems that are continually in the process of dynamic change. 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 on earth and throughout the universe. Consequently, there is no benefit in either being jealous or critical of anyone because that cannot change anything. 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. 2018, Kindle Edition.*) Please read the referenced books *No Self, No Problem* and *The Eye of the I* for more 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, whether building

bridges, creating smart cell phones, or planning dinner. Some people imagine doing big things and some people may imagine only small things. The results are self-evident in each life. Some people become rich and famous, and some people mow the lawns of the rich and famous. Some people live in mansions and some people paint and clean mansions. Some people are employers, and some people are employees. 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 right 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 sin to be repented is of course unconsciousness.” Unfortunately, many people seem to endure an enormous amount of suffering before they turn inward seeking peace and reconciliation. It seems almost impossible to gather enough time and motivation and discipline to go within deeply enough to understand ourselves enough to avoid the many decisions that bring troublesome consequences. How can we get suffering souls to leave behind the worthless external activities for internal serenity? Some people seem to be more naturally inclined to do this inner work than are others. Jesus asked, “What does it profit anyone to gain the whole world but lose their own soul? What can anyone give in exchange for their soul? (Matthew 16:2, Mark 8:36, Luke 9:23-27)

The contents of the personal unconscious library seem to include memories of everything we ever did, thought, said, or experienced all linked up to the present- possibly going back through all previous lifetimes if such exist – including the behavioral models of parent, adult, and child that we were given or learned. It also must include the billions of interactions among the neurons in our brains that are not conscious forces which drive human decisions, creating some serious challenges to the concept of free will among humans. 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 visible 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 in a chain of actions, many of which are driven from the subconscious mind like the base of an iceberg that is hidden beneath the waves. These apparently subconscious forces impact the lives of individuals from the least significant to the most powerful.

Some secular examples of unconscious content within human brains 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 drivers while he was carpooling to work. Elon Musk got the idea for implanting microchips with robotic surgery in human skulls to treat brain and spinal conditions in his company, NeuroLink, after he organized SpaceX rockets while building Tesla electric cars after he emigrated from South Africa by way of Canada to America and became the richest man in the world at his age of forty-nine. 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. The leader of famous rock band, *Bon Jovi*, John Francis Bongiovi, Jr. got the idea in 1983 to shop his first album to radio stations around New York and New Jersey after recording it with the aid of his cousin who owned an interest in the recording studio. 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. Jennifer Lawrence got the idea to be a movie star when a talent scout discovered her at age fourteen while on vacation in New York with her mother. 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 allegedly found under a tree as a youth. Helen Schucman got the script for *A Course in Miracles* while she was a professor of psychology at Columbia University. Mike Lindell got the idea for his "My Pillow" business when he was a divorced drug addict and alcoholic – then he got the idea to be a fanatic supporter of President Donald Trump. 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 Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and 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 what the leading edge of future trends including artificial intelligence, social media, factory automation, clean energy, and space travel will develop in the near future that is indefinitely uncertain.

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. Perhaps there is a necessary opposite to the subconscious mind in a superconscious mind from which all creativity and imaginations come. Jung 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 reportedly equated imagination with intuition. “The only real valuable thing is intuition. There is no logical way to the discovery of these elemental laws.” Whatever made him special, it was not found in the physical examination of Einstein’s brain after he died. C. G. 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 rapid changes in 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 fuels much of modern social communications surging across the Internet on personal computers and smart cell phones without regard to truth or fiction. Active imagination/intuition also enables and supports the belief in theofatalism – the GOD above gods as Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Nothing happens outside the will of Most-High GOD.

But how can people have faith and hope in any unprovable imaginary belief unless it is given to them from a Higher Power that is beyond their control? Churches are populated by people who are given to believe they are born destined for eternal torment in hell because of the inherited capital punishment from the sin of the first humans God created in his own image, 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/God, volunteered to be crucified to absorb punishment for the sins of all human beings who accept it, 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 in a gigantic war and replaced by a new heaven and new earth. (John 3:16, 10:17-18, 14:2-3) “If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.” (Mark 13:20) Imagine that.

Christian theologians teach that all the unbelievers will spend eternity in hell where there is “weeping and gnashing of teeth” unless they accept and declare Jesus is Lord. (Romans 10:9) 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, here now and yet to come at some unknown time. 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 (and obey his commandments until the end.)” (1 Cor. 2:9. Some things just are unknowable, including the cause of happiness.

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 idea seems to be 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.” Chinese philosopher and legendary founder of Taoism, Lao Tzu wrote, “Be content with what you have, rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you.” Imagine what life was

like at that time and place in history. Henry David Thoreau wrote, “A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to live without.” Imagine applying that thought to homeless people and those poor millions living in poverty around the world today. Nearly a billion people reportedly have no access to uncontaminated water in the world made by GOD. Another rule says to be happy people need something to do, someone to love, and something to look forward to. Such rules seem to be unimaginable if you are in acute distress or facing imminent danger, unemployed or homeless. According to these ancient views, disease, calamity, and even war should be submissively accepted, and it might even be blasphemous to wish them away.

The range of human imagination seems to have no limits, either for good or evil. Moral laws developed in the course of human evolution 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 seems to have no free will, and we do not consciously control it. It must be modulated by some superior force for behavioral control to provide balance between creation and destruction, 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. “A quick definition of determinism is the belief that we could not have acted otherwise if all causal factors were the same. The choice was made but the events before the action caused that action to happen—and no other choice was possible. The question is not if we make a choice or not, it is how did we arrive at that choice? Could we have acted otherwise? The illusion of free will means that if every factor preceding the exact instant of your decision was identical then the result would be the same every time—that is determinism.” (*Probulos, I. M. The Illusion of Free Will (Book of Lists) (p. 13-), I. M. Probulos. 2016, Kindle Edition.*) Perhaps it was best defined by Baruch Spinoza, (1632-1677) “In the Mind there is no absolute, or free, will, but the Mind is determined to will this or that by a cause which is also determined by another, and this again by another, and so to infinity. From a given determinate cause the effect follows necessarily; and conversely, if there is no determinate cause, it is impossible for an effect to follow.” In other words, causal determinism says “here and now” is the inevitable culmination of all the little things leading up to it in a chain of links that makes life happen for every sentient being on the planet. In some mysterious way, it seems that all sentient beings are linked in a universal chain of causality that has been recognized by sages for centuries. The late civil rights martyr, Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote while in jail, “In a real sense all life is interrelated. All persons are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the inter-related structure of reality.” Life can be seen as an infinite series of “now” linked one upon another. “Add to this the proof that ahead of you on the time-line are a near-infinite number of unintended consequences that will be produced by the interaction of the near-infinite variables that went into constructing your ever- present sense of now. Recognize that your life will be nothing that you could have ever predicted nor conceptualized. There are simply too many variables. Nothing will ever turn out exactly like you planned. It may turn out better, or it may turn out worse, or it may turn out in a way you never thought; but the fact is, that is the way

things are. So go ahead and make plans for your life —then hand them over to God and see what happens next!” (Lolli, William. *Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 1720-1721)*. eBookIt.com. 2014, Kindle Edition.)

In this view, 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. 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, including job, marriage and children, 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.*) GOD creates the body through generation (G), it controls the body through operation (O), and it terminates the body through destruction (D), all in a time and place according to its plan with one link in the chain connected to another and another, etc. Ergo theofatalism.

A primary example of causal determinism and indefinite uncertainty is the thousands of 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 such tragedies. Some auto 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. Similarly, a wheel came off a truck and crashed into the windshield of a car, killing the woman driver. A drunk felon driving with a suspended license crashed into a van, killing the young mother of twin boys. You can assume either that these were totally random accidents 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.

To illustrate causal determinism, 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 and cultivation of coffee plants, to the formation of planet Earth and its place in the Solar System which exists in the Milky Way galaxy. 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 at Intel by Andrew S. Grove (1936-2016) to invention of the transistor by William B. Shockley, Jr. (1910-1989) the first digital calculator by John Vincent Atanasoff (1903-1995), 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) to Charles Babbage (1791-1871) 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.

Here is more. 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 that fuels the rockets. 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, back to his marriage, back to his birth, and back to the births of all of his ancestors.

If any link in the chain of determinism 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 including the discovery and development of theofatalism. 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.180. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) Events today among all species on earth - including belief or rejection of theofatalism – apparently are creating necessary 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, including the solar system, the Milky Way galaxy and all other

forms in the universe. Everything that happens affects everything else, from atoms to galaxies. It all appears to be interconnected somehow as One.

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*, p.7) King Nebuchadnezzar declared, “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and God 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? And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.” ACIM declares, “No one can waken from a dream the world is dreaming for him. He becomes a part of someone else’s dream. He cannot choose to waken from a dream he did not make... We are all just the Sons of God playing all the different roles in the world of dreams.” (*Wells, Raymond. A Course in Miracles Clarified: A Quick and Easy Guide*, pp.51,64. 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) If all this is true, that general declaration must include criminality and wars and everything bad that happens like the degradation of the great King of Babylon. (Daniel 4:28-37. We may have no choice. Perhaps, without knowing the full script, we all merely are dreaming a part in a play that is written by Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Where this dream goes may be envisioned in the cutting-edge research in artificial intelligence of such groups as the partnership between MIT and IBM creating the indefinitely uncertain future.

The Bible says it is all God’s will. “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 1:5) “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) 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) These and similar scriptures seem to imply that Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - is and has been controlling human lives from conception until death, including writers of the Bible and all other holy books, 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 and the immensely complex workings inside the human brain, 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 biblical scriptures as above indicate the meeting of a specific sperm and egg cell was ordained at the time of conception to create a unique sentient being. 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. Rev. Dr. Rick Warren attempted to provide the answer in God's will for his churches in his popular book titled, "*The Purpose Driven Life, 2013*" In school, many people study what they like and end up working for whoever will give them a job, smothered in student debt. Other students seem to follow a defined pathway to fame and fortune creating a pyramid of success with very few at the top. 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. Capitalism and economic equality do not coexist. 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 or technically unqualified or live in poor areas, so defining yourself by what you do is not helpful. Many people identify themselves with their jobs. Although money is required to pay for living essentials, human worth is not defined only by a job or lack of one, except under capitalism where it is. The richest investor, Warren Buffet, reportedly said, "There's class warfare, all right, but it's my class, the rich class, that's making war, and we're winning." Poor and average people help create jobs by consumer demand for goods and services, while rich people make ruthless decisions to increase their share of wealth. Corporate oligarchs have been concentrating wealth rapidly for the past few decades that now threatens social stability and political traditions, and government seems unable to constrain it. Even openly discussing it seems to be taboo in the political arena, and average citizens are incompetent to do so. If you are not scared and confused, you may not know what is happening around the world. Whatever the future brings, personally and collectively, theofatalism assumes it must be the will of Most-High GOD or it would be different.

Although everyone needs money to survive and pursue happiness, you are not valued by GOD for what you do but for who you are regardless of your net worth. Everyone appears to be both equally indispensable and insignificant to the universe. Like each grain of sand on all the beaches of the world and each drop of water in all the oceans, you are indispensable to the universe although it may be that you are insignificant also. 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. The seed cannot avoid being the plant or tree it is intended to be, and neither apparently can you. You may assume your purpose and that of the earth is in perfect rhyme with the will of GOD, or not. 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 instant by instant or you would be some other place, past, present, and future – even as though you are a slave to the purpose of GOD. Jesus did not abolish slavery. Apostle Paul wrote, "Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear,

and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. (Ephesians 6:5-6) The Creator is the potter and we are the clay, some made for royal use and some made for common use.” (Romans 9:19-21)

There are many examples in nature of God’s creation that show it must be what it is. 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. The king cobra is the most virulent snake. A drop of its venom can kill a man in minutes as the blood turns from a liquid into a solid. Its favorite food is another snake. The aquatic venomous cone snail paralyzes its small prey fish with its spear-like tongue and then absorbs it alive. A few microliters of its toxin can kill a human being. Monarch butterflies begin life in a cocoon containing caterpillars and migrate hundreds of miles in their short lifespans ranging from a few months to a few years. The carnivorous Venus flytrap plant contains bilobed trapping leaves with sensitive hairs, which, when touched, trigger an electrical impulse that travels through the whole plant, instantly isolating the insect prey which then is slowly digested. The female Komodo dragon can reproduce asexually by laying infertile eggs that hatch without any male sperm, and so can about seventy other known vertebrate species, called parthenogenesis or virgin birth. The Great Barrier Reef east of Australia houses countless species of marine life all living in a cooperative environment for thousands of years. A species of small krill fish was discovered living under the permanent ice at the south pole, apparently feeding on microscopic amoeba. Since the plants, fish, animals and insects all must live as GOD programmed them to do, perhaps humans must live as Most-High GOD programmed them also, each person in their own time and place walking the pathway they are given in relation to everything from atoms to galaxies.

Perhaps, as quoted from Albert Einstein elsewhere herein, we all have been unwittingly programmed without our conscious assent, driven by some force we cannot detect. 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. This attitude includes all those people who are programmed to assume free will and accept responsibility for their behavior as well as those who do not. 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 chaplains and the volunteers who help families care for the dying, those whose only part left in living may be converting oxygen into carbon dioxide and loving their caregivers. These services are respectful, loving alternatives to the standard American medical model of treatment at all costs, but you likely will have to ask your doctor for them because they imply that you and they are giving up. Doctors may assume there always is hope of treatment to avoid their personal feelings of despair and failure. It follows that you and your family need to know all your options – physical, mental, emotional, spiritual - at end of life to make those decisions, not just the ones that prolong life at any cost. Although this is a painful and traumatic time, entering the last stage of life brings the opportunity to say goodbye to loved ones and to seek their love and forgiveness, an opportunity people who lose some loved one suddenly may not have. Palliative care physician, Dr. Ira Byock wrote in *The Four Things That Matter Most*, Atria Books, 2004) that family and friends of the dying should say to each other: “Please forgive me, I forgive you, thank you, I love you, goodbye. In the final ending, we must acknowledge life as it was and let go. “What patients have shared with me is that they found out that control is just an illusion. We have choices... but not control. We waste a lot of time and energy trying to control everything around us. The dying will come to a place of peacefulness when they come to terms with what is happening and stop fighting the process.” (Willi, Mary Beth. *Learning How to Let Go: Simple Answers about Hospice and End of Life Care* (p. 44). NEOMediaWorks LLC. 2003, 2018, Kindle Edition.) The suffering of life may be balanced by the sweetness of death. Our moments of greatest suffering may be moments of greatest loving, but family members who are not well prepared may suffer a lifetime of unresolved grief if they cannot adapt to the reality of their loss through personal love and self acceptance. The love of GOD completes the circle of life. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” (Revelation 22:13) If we had all the answers, trust would not be trust, so we must live the questions. To help in preparing for terminal family losses please visit www:finalexitnetwork.org.

*Note: “Getting older brings a big change in your lifestyle. Often there is a decline in vision, hearing, and mobility, which means you are increasingly dependent on the care of others for things that you accomplished previously without a second thought. Old age can be annoying. Suddenly, you are incompetent in areas where you once excelled. As you let go of feeling annoyed, however, you see that the incapacities of old age serve a purpose. They get you ready to leave the world. If you were still involved as a “star” in some area of life, you’d resent leaving the world. You wouldn’t be very graceful about it. As you decline, it gives you time to adjust, get used to the fact that you’ll be leaving, and do any spiritual work that you want to have completed by the time you leave here. When you surrender to the process of aging as simply part of the human condition, you come to peace with it. You become more loving and appreciative of other people’s love and care for you. The more loving you become, you see that everybody is trying to be helpful to you. And it is loving to allow them to be helpful to you. People think, “Oh, I’m being selfish if I allow somebody to be helpful to my life.” Actually, it’s being generous. Generosity is the willingness to share your life with others. It’s a gift to people to allow them to help/love you.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Letting Go*, pp. 326-327, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.)*

But, still, the final decisions you make must be the will and grace of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer- as there may be no other options. It seems that all creatures on earth do

what they are destined to do moment by moment, each playing out the role they are given by Most-High GOD, the Prime Force in the universe – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Randomness is overcome with essential causality, i.e., assuming there are no accidents or mistakes, there are only predestined choices with inevitable consequences. All decisions are learning growth experiences, including negative ones. C. G. Jung declared, “Knowledge rests not upon truth alone but upon error also.” 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, painful as they are. All in GOD’s will of course.

You cannot change the past, you cannot fix the present, and you cannot control the future, which thought can be very depressing unless it is countered with belief in the illusion of free will. Things change, but theofatalism says that Most-High GOD caused it and GOD – generator, operator, destroyer - 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, 2019. 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. How it all works together without any of your conscious control from birth until death is most amazing, by GOD’s will of course. Moreover, all the cells in our bodies are replaced every few years so the body “you” occupy now is not the same as before. Since your physical body changes, the “you” that is “you” must be something nonmaterial that does not change. The body changes during aging but the spirit/soul appears to stay the same in a form of energy that can neither be created nor destroyed. Perhaps Buddhism addresses this concept in going from an “unconscious somebody to a conscious nobody” through intensive meditation.

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, I am not my heart, my thoughts, my brain, my emotions, my thoughts, 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. 2019, Kindle Edition.*) “I am not the mind either, but that which witnesses and experiences the mind, emotions, and body. Through inner observation, there is the realization of something that remains constant and the same, no matter what goes on in the external world or with the body, emotions, or mind. With this awareness comes a state of total freedom. The inner Self has been discovered. (*But who or what is the discoverer?*) The silent state of Awareness that underlies all movement, activity, sound, feeling, and thought is discovered to be a timeless dimension of peace. Once identified with this Awareness, we are no longer at the effect of the world, the body, or the mind, and with this Awareness come an inner calmness, stillness, and a profound sense of inner peace. We realize that this is what we were always seeking but didn’t know it.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p. 254, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) The “Self” apparently cannot know itself, it cannot experience its

own existence whether this is vested in mind, brain, or body or even pure energy. The seeker apparently cannot know the seeker. This leads into the mystery of consciousness which also cannot be explained with words, only experienced by something greater than itself. That mystery is beyond the scope of this book and, apparently, it is beyond human understanding at this stage of our evolution.

Decisions, decisions. “We all did what we thought was best in the moment. It seemed like a good idea at the time, is what we can say about our past actions and those of others. We’ve all been unwittingly programmed without our consent.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go* (p. 67). *Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) Sometimes we can be fooled. “There is a way that appears to be right but in the end it leads to death/destruction.” (Proverbs 14:12)

Where we are here and now is the culmination of all the decisions preceding the most recent one in an unchangeable chain of links that make the present inevitable. If any link in the chain were different the present would be different. The causes of much human suffering appear to be beyond their control; some of the suffering among humans is caused by consequences of the personal decisions of others. One example is when people decide to go to work and are shot by a murderous criminal, an increasing occurrence in America. The lives of the victims, their survivors, and the criminal are beyond change. History is driven by decisions made by leaders who changed the world, for better and worse. Considering there are nearly eight billion people on earth in some 200 hundred different countries, the number of decisions being made is impossible to estimate. No one really knows how many other species of life on earth also live by making decisions or what forces, or force, drives their behaviors. We cannot avoid making decisions because no decision is a “no” decision by default. There may be no “right” decisions outside of mathematics, or even “best” decisions when looking back at the alternatives. People must make decisions under conditions of indefinite uncertainty, under stress, risk, scams, and pressure, joy and sorrow, in conflicts and under many other complications – some conscious and some subconscious. Contents in the subconscious mind can drive decisions that appear fateful. Many insignificant decisions are made automatically with little to no regard for the consequences. The more significant ones may engage conscious awareness, but some are made without due processing of both reason and emotions, and those can cause problems, some of which can take time to evolve. You may easily recall many past decisions and actions you wish you had done differently, some serious and some not so bad. Temporary lapses in normal judgment can be very troublesome, costly, and even fatal sometime.

All decisions come with both perceived benefits and burdens, and sometimes it is difficult to choose among uncertain options, considering the infinite possible combinations of who, what, why, when and where involved. A single benefit spike or a single burden spike can so outweigh all the others to make them moot. Use of rational reasoning must be balanced with use of feelings and emotions involved, which comes more naturally to some people than to others depending on their innate personality and experience. Good decisions may produce bad results and bad decisions may produce good results; there are no guarantees. The future is indefinitely uncertain. Results come from using sensing, intuition, thinking and feeling in decision making, a combination of skills that are not taught, so we do the best we can under the circumstances. We all may compile a long list of decisions we wish we could do over differently, but the counter thought may be if they could have been different they would have been different. So many things are beyond personal control that regrets and remorse may be misplaced in taking responsibility for what you do not cause and cannot control. The number of unconscious

variables involved in even simple decisions is beyond imagination. What are called mistakes may be recast as learning experiences, painful though they may be to self and others – maybe our destiny. Some people appear to be slower learners than others, repeatedly making the same mistakes. We may have made the only choices that made sense to us at the time. As a result, we all have regrets, all of us. Now, with more information, a wider frame of reference and perfect hindsight, we might choose differently. But there are no “do-overs,” so we must live with the consequences of decisions that we do not control consciously, for better or worse. The antidote offered by experts is forgiveness, forgiving self and others. But, this forgivingness, this letting go of self-blame is hard to do.

Our assumption of personal responsibility may be misplaced, even concerning criminal behavior. That is not a happy thought. Recall that St. Clement said God rules with two hands, Christ in one and Satan in the other, and you do not get to choose. The story of Job in the Old Testament will attest to that. Recall that God gave Satan the power to ruin his life just to test Job’s loyalty and obedience. After losing everything including his family, servants, and his health, recall at the end, he was recompensed, but none of his servants or children were resurrected. The lesson there, if there is one, is that Job decided to trust/hope in God’s will no matter what happened, even unto his own death. (Job 13:15) In his perception, the benefits overruled the burdens of trusting in God, including the loss of his family and his own health. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not lean/rely/depend/ on your own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5)

However, everyone with a normal conscience has an inner critic developed from childhood and throughout life experiences that may judge and ridicule oneself. Many people also have a powerful model of victim, of worrier, and of perfectionist driving their assumptions and behavior. When they cause one to assume responsibility for actions outside their control, these role models can trigger reactions that need attention. Conscience can be a motivator for self-improvement if it is harnessed for personal growth, but it also can deplete your energy and keep you in a state of regret for not being good enough and need to be punished. Serious consequences which are costly to self and others may cast doubts about your reasoning skills, which in turn makes you fearful and critical of your decision-making ability. Desires may not seem so good after they actually are realized if they forfeit your conscience. If not countered, the stress of a gap between reality and desire can be disturbing, even disabling. There may be no inner peace or self-forgiveness for someone with a guilty conscience, unless they can find a way forgive, if not forget. The ancient Stoics observed that events do not disturb your mind, but your thinking does - they did not explain the owner of “your thinking.” “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 by the will of Most-High GOD and just let the inner critic, the worrier, the victim and the perfectionist have their day then move on, even threw the pit of despair, walking through misery to get out of hell. Theofatalism claims if the past could have been different it would have been different because every decision is the present culmination of all the decisions made before it in a continuous link. Feeling guilt, regret and remorse for past decisions and actions may be caused by resisting the will of GOD for your life, but if you must, you must. What you resist, persists.

For peace of mind, losses of all kinds and personal remorse for regretted actions and decisions can be grieved by acknowledging the event, feeling the feelings, finding substitutes for the loss, detaching from the investment in the past, and moving forward through reconstruction as your life goes on even when you wish it would end, as it will. Jesus told a would-be disciple

who wanted leave to bury his father. “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God. Let the dead bury their dead.” (Luke 9:61-62) Humans all are fallible and, even in areas of their expertise, “to err is to be human.” It is as certain as death and taxes. Aristotle reportedly said there is a foolish corner in the brain of the wisest man – there is no fool like an old fool. Jungian analyst, Dr. James Hollis said, “One does the best with what one has, and what one has is pretty limited.” 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*. Since there are no “do-overs” in life, merely trying to think yourself into a different mood may be difficult if there is a real basis for your disorder, like criminal, unethical, incompetent, or immoral behavior. “Innocent mistakes” may be just as difficult to live with as the most egregious behavior. Anger and remorse turned inward cause depression and anxiety which may be disabling if not mediated in some way. If needed, certain medications may be indicated so a mental health professional may be consulted if the symptoms are chronic and threaten normal living. However, medications may stifle the symptoms without modifying the root cause of disorder which may involve a difficult change in the way of thinking. Let go and let GOD.

Letting go and going on may be dependent upon mental agility not easy to develop and to use for normal people with a normal conscience. “There are only two ways in which it is possible to get rid of anger, worry, fear, panic, despair, or other undesirable affections. One is that an opposite affection should overpoweringly break over us, (www.powerthesaurus.com lists 878 words opposite to anger and 1,203 words opposite to fear as antonyms) and the other is by getting so exhausted with the struggle that we have to stop—so we drop down, give up, and DON'T CARE any longer. It is into this void that healing often comes. But often there seems little doubt that both conditions—subconscious ripening of the one affection and exhaustion of the other—must simultaneously have conspired to produce the result.” (*James, William. The Varieties of Religious Experience: Complete and Unabridged (Illustrated)*, pp. 60,61, CrossReach Publications. 1905 Kindle Edition.) Hence the need to accept what is as being necessary and detaching from what one wishes were different, giving up the desire for control and surrendering to the will of Most-High GOD. Easier said than done in a culture that honors self-control and personal achievement based on the illusion of free will.

“If we can wrap our head around determinism; that any free agent could not have done otherwise, it provides a secular road toward forgiveness. While some non-theists assert that they don't have to love their enemy as Jesus advises, there is a psychological benefit from freeing ourselves from negative self-talk and regret from perceived wrongs. This is a profound, scientific and reasoned explanation for something religion has been teaching for thousands of years.” (*Probulos, I. M. The Illusion of Free Will (Book of Lists)* (p. 41). I. M. Probulos. 2016, Kindle Edition.) Perhaps self-forgiveness or compassion and acceptance of things as they are by necessity make the best antidotes for guilt, regrets and remorse, even though guilt, regrets, and remorse also must be accepted as necessary reactions to a guilty conscience. Recall Apostle Paul said he had learned the secret of being content in all circumstances. (Philippians 4: 11-12) But this man of God also lamented what a “wretched man” he was for doing things he opposed and not doing what he should. His solution was reliance on the saving grace of Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 7:23-25) Biblical scripture also says that all sins can be forgiven, except for blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 12:31)

Decisions all may be given as learning experiences that are necessary in this life. Living with the results may require courage and active submission, i.e., accepting what is while endeavoring to make things better while surrendering to the will of Most-High GOD, generator, operator, destroyer. Again, easier said than done for anyone with a normal conscience, especially when your behavior causes harm to another person, especially to a loved one. Living with a guilty conscience may be the greatest punishment of all even if the decision to accept Christ as Lord and Savior – the ultimate forgiveness - is given to replace the old with a new creation. (2 Corinthians: 5:17) Dr. James Hollis wrote, “You can be responsible both for choices and consequences, that is what makes us moral beings, but you must also forgive yourself because you also are in need of the alms of kindness, as we all are. Life is a gamble.” Everyone must live in this world as it is until each labyrinth walk of life is finished.

Note: The Old Testament scriptures describe many faulty decisions by the Chosen People which were punished by the most just little God of the Bible through invasions, disasters and other calamities that destroyed many human lives. It seems he had two purposes; one was to punish disobedience and the other was to show that he was the supreme Lord of life. He really showed them. (Jeremiah 18:17) The ancient Jews seemed to be slow learners because they repeatedly made faulty decisions and received just punishment. The ultimate blow was their total dispersion after they refused to accept Jesus as Messiah and were defeated by Rome in their final revolt in 135CE after the defeat in their preceding revolt in 69CE which included sacking the temple by Rome in Jerusalem. (The New Testament does not mention these revolts by the Jews, but they are described in historical accounts.) As a result, Jesus sent the Gospel with Apostle Paul to the Gentiles, and the rest is history. But biblical scripture says that was their destiny, so it seems that a power superior to human reason was controlling their decisions to prepare the way for Christianity to be spread to all nations. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course. (Matthew 13:11-16, Isaiah 6:9-10, 12:40, 29:10, Romans 11:8, 1Peter 2:8) One may wonder what role God had in the genocide of Jews in the German Nazi holocaust of WWII.

Belief in theofatalism offers to balance the need for remorse and regret for actions in the past because you may assume if they could have been different, they would have been different; the little things as well as the big things, moral and immoral, legal and illegal - because GOD does whatever it wants with whoever it wants whenever it wants. 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, personal conscience, and family traditions or “rules of the game,” but we may not be responsible under GOD for any behavior or thoughts if IT is in control of everything from atoms to galaxies – including the civil laws and their enforcement or lack thereof.

Albert Einstein reportedly said, “Everything is determined, the beginning as well as the end, by forces over which we have no control. It is determined for the insect as well as for the star. Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, (*from atoms to galaxies*) we all dance to a mysterious tune, intoned in the distance by an invisible player.” (*Wikipedia*) You can believe either that everything is determined, or nothing is determined, everything is random or nothing is random. He apparently believed everything is determined from atoms to galaxies. You cannot be responsible for what you do not control, including your human nature with its critic, worrier, perfectionist, and victim mentality which was created by Most-High GOD, whether saint or sinner, and your own personal drummer. Of course, the necessary opposite thought lays

responsibility on individuals for their decisions through the assumption of free will. So, guilt and remorse, like all emotions, must be necessary at this stage of human evolution or they would not exist. All in GOD's will of course.

Christians are told to believe Jesus paid the price on the cross 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 1:6-7, 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) "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession," (1 Peter 2:9) "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (2 Corinthians 4:4) Where is the free will here?

As quoted elsewhere, Saint Paul also 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 may cause depression, fear, and anger naturally in the process of spiritual growth, like breaking through the sound barrier in aircraft flight to emerge into guiltless surrender, inner peace, and eventual serenity. "The pace of spiritual evolution is not under personal control and may take sudden, surprising leaps." (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God, p. 74. Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) Such a giant leap in your personal spiritual evolution might even be dangerous to your mental health. It might require of you something you could not have expected. It was so for Apostle Paul when Jesus called him posthumously. "I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." (Matthew 15:24, Acts 9:15-16) Paul was not rewarded with health, wealth, and happiness, at least not in this life. Jesus resurrected Lazarus, but he did not protect John the Baptist from beheading for condemning the sin of adultery by King Herod. (Matthew 14:7-9) Tradition claims that all twelve of his specially chosen apostles suffered martyrdom.

When Pontius Pilate asked him rhetorically, "What is truth?" Jesus made no reply. A wide range of bizarre and contradictory belief systems claims a basis for authority based on a supposed "true by faith." This faith-based truth may diminish the power of what is true and can create a confusing array of myths based on fantasies and imaginations. It plunges the world into indefinite uncertainty. Truth is truth whether you believe it or not, but truth may be hidden under false beliefs and subjective interpretations. "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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.236. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) But the necessary opposite view in theofatalism says the ultimate truth cannot be known because all we have are beliefs, the only exception possibly being mathematics or classical logic

reasoning. 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. Obviously, if the premise is false, the conclusion will be faulty as well. However, all other forms of human perceptions, including interpretations of biblical scriptures, are filtered through personality, training, experience, and social influence that makes it impossible to determine absolute “truth by faith” among beliefs in human affairs. Moreover, the opposing ideas of predestination and free will in human decisions seem to be mutually exclusive, one negates the other although they both must exist or it would be different. Thus, we must live with indefinite uncertainty. That is 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. Theofatalism is the only belief that accommodates all other beliefs – including atheism - and everything that happens from atoms to galaxies, including false prophets. 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.” *A Course in Miracles* declared, “Disobeying God’s will is meaningful only to the insane, in truth it is impossible.” As a generality, this conclusion covers everything from atoms to galaxies in the universe. Despite this irrefutable conclusion, many people are given the illusion of free will by GOD 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 who presumably either had free will or not. “You have made my Father’s house a den of thieves. 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 throughout the world – plus all individuals among all the forms of life on planet earth. 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 living 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 creatures of GOD 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 of THEOFATALISM

“Man cannot make or invent or contrive principles. He can only discover them; and he ought to look through the discovery to the author.”

From his Biblical research and analysis of the human condition world-wide, Tagliaferre sees the emergence of a common thread leading to five principles of theofatalism. The principles of theofatalism are summarized here to stimulate readers to complete their personal full development by reading the books referenced, to learn them and to make them a part of living every day. Like the force of gravity and the laws of physics, they do not need your permission so whether you concur or believe them or not is irrelevant. This list of principles is a complete set and must be taken together to be valid. However, they can be discussed and applied separately to specific situations, just like gravity. 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 including all the sentient beings on earth, is happening as it must, or it would be different. The divine will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - cannot be disobeyed. Free will merely is the necessity of doing the will of GOD. We have no free will so we must believe in free will. 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. As it is declared in *A Course in Miracles*, (ACIM), “Disobeying GOD’s will is meaningful only to the insane; in truth it is impossible.” (T-7.IX.6)

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, large and small, birth and death. Like a battery with two poles, stored energy is impotent until the two opposing poles are deployed. We live in a world of such polarity. Every individual in all living species is both insignificant and indispensable. The possible necessary opposite to theofatalism may be humanism or atheism. 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. No exceptions.

3. Unconscious Decisions: All thoughts begin in the subconscious mind 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 that are predestined for each sentient being from its conception in the womb.

4. Indefinite Uncertainty: Life does not grant us certainty, only options and probabilities. The search for security merely is a discomfiting passtime. Nothing about the future in human affairs can be forecast with accuracy, especially those things that we think we know for sure. The late 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 – even though we are creating it moment by moment? Things change instant by instant, driven by the will of the unseen Most-High GOD. The holy instant here and now is all we have. That awareness makes humankind feel anxious necessarily. To be anxious with apprehension about the future 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. The Creator and the Created are One inseparable. Life in all its forms is like assembling a jigsaw puzzle without the picture on the box. By themselves, the various pieces make no sense until they are assembled into the whole. Each individual sentient being may be only one small insignificant piece, but a necessary indispensable piece or we would not be here. Each decision and each event in our lives forms a chain of events leading to the inevitable NOW on the labyrinth pathway of life each sentient being is given. 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. All in GOD’s will of course. No, this is not the same little god as the one in any holy books. It is the creator of all those holy books and everything from atoms to galaxies. It is the Supreme Power in the universe: Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Whether you believe it or not, because Most-High GOD makes atheists also.

Theofatalism accommodates the opposites of both acceptance and rejection of this reasoning and adoption or rejection of all other belief systems as being necessary opposites, or they would not exist. Possibly the earliest mention of opposites is this biblical scripture by King Solomon, who may have reigned over Israel around 970-930 BCE. “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

Everything in the universe is represented by its equal and opposite, depicted by words called antonyms, i.e., theofatalism and atheism, up and down, in and out, sweet and sour, good and evil, beautiful and ugly, male and female, anima and animus, cold and hot, heaven and hell, faith and reason, good and evil, 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.” Khalil Gibran wrote, “When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart, and you shall

see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight. Necessary opposites. (1 John 2:18, 22, 4:3) Many churches seem to avoid this necessary dichotomy in life but they present their dogma in a dual-sided package of eternal happiness with the Lord or forever suffering in hell, in the life to come if not in this one. But if GOD is one, there is no division. “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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.255. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*)

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. The hope of eternal happiness must be balanced by the threat of eternal suffering because 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*)

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 of THEOFATALISM

C.G. Jung in *Man and His Symbols* (1961-68) 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, from insects to elephants, from plankton to whales, from atoms to galaxies.

The labyrinth symbolizes how we emerge from the source in the center when spirits incarnate in the body and traverse into the world through four stages of infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood and then after midlife we return to the source in the center through four stages of maturity, seniority, contemplation and mortality. There is nothing more awesome than returning back to our source. This symbol also embodies the four functions of personality that we bring to life and all relationships: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

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 must take the steps laid down before them. Each person must walk the labyrinth of life they are given alone and unaided by anyone else. It cannot be taught because it comes from within. We may stumble along the way and encounter dangers

and stress, sun and shadow, storms and calms, walk with a partner and walk alone, but the pathway ahead always beckons; begin and continue.

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.” Perhaps you do not choose it, but it is given to you by Most-High GOD from the instant of conception. “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” (Psalm 139:15-16, Jeremiah 1:5) Parents who can only watch their children and descendants walk the pathways they are given may understand and agree that biblical scripture giving instructions to children often is ignored. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother—which is the first commandment with a promise— so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” (Ephesians 6:1-3, Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 5:15) Scripture also says if you raise up children in the way they should go they will not depart from it, but that obviously does not work all the time. (Proverbs 22:6) 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 and the will of Most-High GOD directing their lives. Setting boundaries around helping your adult children and giving them freedom to be whomever GOD created is difficult for many conscientious parents, especially when their children suffer. After providing a stable home and the basic necessities in a safe environment, the rest is up to GOD – generator, operator, destroyer - guiding them along their labyrinth walk of life. It may be difficult and emotional to let go and let people live their own destiny as they must because that seems to be their purpose and path in both light and darkness, peace and war, love and fear, for richer and poorer, in health and sickness, etc.

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, including finger walking, at www.bwatsonstudies.com.

The labyrinth symbolizes how we emerge from the source in the center when spirits incarnate in the body and traverse into the world through four stages of infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood and then after midlife we return to the source in the center 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 of sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic, and choleric, 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 may 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, which is expressed in this work.*) 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, confirming more ancient assumptions. 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, depression and fear because they feel contagious. Perhaps it is useful here to invoke a paraphrase of President John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your relationship can do for you but ask what you can do for your relationship." Knowing your personality and how different personalities interact under stress can help to create more cooperation and peace in human relationships.

*Note: The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a self-reporting questionnaire that helps sort people into sixteen different type modes. After primarily sorting introverts and extraverts, further, it subdivides these two personalities each into eight more classifications using the letters E-I, S-N, T-F, and J-P. This popular model of personality is based on a theory of Swiss psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung (1875-1961) which was published in 1925. It is used widely in several different versions as a powerful tool for better understanding of relationships among people in work, family, education, and social situations. 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, and www.mbtionline.com. Also, refer to the book titled *Better Living, Better Dying* by this author. To explore this model for yourself, please visit the several online resources available. (www.personalitypage.com, www.16personalities.com.)*

In this symbol of the labyrinth, during the second half of life, we walk the pathway 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. “Life is an expression of eternal consciousness, and therefore, actual, real death is not a possibility, which is a corollary to the more familiar laws of the conservation of energy and matter. Everyone already has a calibratable level of consciousness at birth that is reflective of karmic inheritance. Earthly life can be seen as a staging platform to higher/other dimensional levels of consciousness.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God, p. 24, Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) With aging comes many challenges leading to life-threatening declines, changes in perspective, and a growing awareness of indefinite uncertainty. But biblical 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) C. G. Jung said of death, “It would seem to be more in accord with the collective psyche of humanity to regard death as the fulfillment of life’s meaning and as its goal in the truest sense, instead of a mere meaningless cessation.” This process may be likened to the anticipation of new life through pregnancy and birth, this being the transition from mortal to immortal, from material to spiritual. It is painful and traumatic on physical terms, but it is followed by renewal and growth on spiritual terms.

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. Obviously, death happens to everyone but very few people are prepared for it – perhaps that is impossible. The terror of the unknown is more than most people can endure unless they are empowered by the spirit of GOD, and that is not of themselves. 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. This drama plays out continually without public awareness until it comes into our families and homes and newsrooms Then it may come as a shock we are not prepared to endure. But somehow the human species survives and continues making babies who are destined to suffer and die, walking the labyrinth of life they are given.

The Covid-19 pandemic, sad to say, is adding more deaths to the already surging loss of loved ones from many causes. The “new-normal” seems to include increasing threats to survival as the human population of the world continually increases. Perhaps this trend is an example of the pruning that Jesus said is necessary, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” (John 15:1-3) This possibility is a new awareness of what it really means to live with indefinite uncertainty. Prof. Yalom wrote, “Life is a spark between two mysterious voids, the darkness before birth and the one after death.” If people really thought about it, the futility of life might lead them into depression and suicide. 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? 2013, p.123.*

Crossway. Kindle Edition.) The wish for immortality, if not the reality, seems to be built into human nature. 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. The human ego has difficulty accepting the possibility of its own death. A special effort is needed to envision our own death and plan to accept it. Many people who cannot accommodate the thought of their own death 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 (1955-2011) 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. C.G. Jung wrote, "The question of the meaning and worth of life never becomes more urgent or more agonizing than when we see the final breath leave a body which a moment before was living." (*Bierle, Dr. Don. Surprised by Faith: A Skeptic Discovers More to Life than What We Can See, Touch, and Measure. Aneko Press. 2017, Kindle Edition.*) 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 seems to come 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*) "A state of peace about the situation is reached when all three aspects of illness—physical, mental, and spiritual—have been addressed and the final outcome or wished-for recovery has been surrendered. Peace comes with total inner surrender to what is." (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p.222, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) The problem is that our culture is programmed to fight off death like it is a battle to be won, which we always lose. All beginnings come with endings, so the only way to avoid endings is to avoid beginnings which, of course, is impossible. People are born with a death sentence. 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. Sages say embrace your mortality because you cannot escape it. 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 may learn to follow the late actor, Charlton Heston (1923-2008) 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 (the ability to do something that frightens one, strength in the face of pain or grief.) "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.2019, Kindle Edition.) This outlook may be difficult if you are homeless living under a highway overpass or suffering a long-term disability or chronic illness. Happiness in such conditions probably has a different meaning from its everyday usage. For a modern approach to happiness, please visit www.actionforhappiness.org.

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. Healing the body may be temporary because it must die, but healing the spirit may resolve from courage and surrender. Fear and anger 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., M.D., PH.D., *The Eye of the I*, p.219. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.) Stress, pain, depression and suffering seem to come from trying to resist the irresistible. But this reaction seems to be the price we must pay for being humans in our culture at this stage of our evolution towards spiritual progress. This, too, must be necessary or it would be different.

Approaching pending death of self or loved ones 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. 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. “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. (Psalm 139:15-16, Jeremiah 1:5)

“When we go with (whatever needs attention), like in the Tao where the willow tree bends with the wind but does not break, there is no resistance. Instead of being the oak tree that resists the sensation, tries to fight it with will power and then breaks or topples, we can be like the willow tree, going with the sensation and letting go of resisting it. In fact, we welcome it. It is like we are saying, “More.” We want more wind, more of this inner experience. As we call forth more of this, sitting with the inner feeling, and just being with it, it will run out...There tends to be more reliance on intuition and feelings than on thinking, reason, and logic (encouraging more right-brain than left-brain behavior.)” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Healing and Recovery*. Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.) Dr. Hawkins says if you stop resisting and focus on what you want, the thing you seek may be found. Of course, he was a wealthy psychiatrist. Just sitting quietly, whatever is being experienced, just allow it and let it be. Some situations cannot be improved with thinking and reason, so it is better to practice just being there in the feelings of the moment here and now, sometimes in silent meditation and sometimes in awe of the sensations in our surroundings, from atoms to galaxies.

When we try to prevent what is inevitably happening or to hold on to what is changing, we volunteer for a losing battle. Unfortunately, our culture stifles the normal venting of emotions as they are expressed freely by infants, so they pile up in the subconscious minds of adults which prevents one from feeling the inner peace that releasing and letting them go would

provide. Babies are born with a natural expression of feelings that soon get repressed and build up over a lifetime stored in the mind to cause untold harm to self and others. Perhaps, some physical diseases could be caused by repressed emotions as they are in certain dysfunctional relationships. If the cause of most suffering is resisting the inevitable walk of life our labyrinth requires, the solution is courage and submission to find inner peace. “With continual surrender, we begin to experience the state of peace with ever-increasing frequency. Surrender is the mechanism that uncovers the true nature of our existence. There is no longer identification with the body as the Self. The person who has found inner peace can no longer be intimidated, controlled, manipulated, or programmed. When the state of peace has become established, ordinary human suffering is no longer possible because its basis of desire (for things to be different) has been relinquished.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p.188, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) But, Dr. Hawkins did not instruct on how to achieve that goal. Is it an act of will or a gift of grace? If you are in acute pain and fear of life, this goal may be far from reachable for many people.

To repeat from above: “There are only two ways in which it is possible to get rid of anger, worry, fear, despair, or other undesirable affections. One is that an opposite affection should overpoweringly break over us, and the other is by getting so exhausted with the struggle that we have to stop—so we drop down, give up, and DON'T CARE any longer.” (*James, William. The Varieties of Religious Experience: Complete and Unabridged, p. 60, 1905. CrossReach Publications. Kindle Edition.*)

We may be made to fight for immortality, but mortality always wins, and what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. Benjamin Franklin noted there is nothing certain in life but death and taxes. Very few people live to reach 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. “Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.” (Psalm 90:10) As quoted elsewhere, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63) We have a body but we are not the body, so leaving it when the time is right should not be difficult if we accept this truth. Whatever is happening to your body is not happening to “you.” “A benefit of a life-threatening illness is that it breaks down the denial of mortality that is necessary to initiate serious spiritual work in most people who are otherwise too busy with the affairs of daily life to embark upon the inner quest.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.*) This inner quest may be easier for some intuitive people than for others. For some personality types, i.e., those with undeveloped intuition who may prefer sensing perception, this quest for inner work may be much more challenging.

When fight or flight no longer are options, it is easy to slip into depression; in fact, it may be normal to do so temporarily 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.114. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*)

Normally, the benefits of dying eventually overcome the burdens of living when the final exit is an open door beckoning one to enter. Perhaps the lyrics of a traditional hymn illustrate this attitude:

“Oh, Lord, you know I have no friend like you. If heaven’s not my home then, Lord, what will I do? The angels beckon me from heaven’s open door, and I can’t feel at home in this world anymore.”

The last phase of life, mortality, for most people is not a walk on the beach. Many old people suffer several life-threatening conditions simultaneously. Perhaps the infirmities of old age serve the useful purpose of preparing one to leave the world when the time comes, if we can accept them as such. 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. Women outnumber men in the small minority who live past age ninety and most of them are more or less disabled and live in poverty – many alone or in nursing homes without families or friends. There are about 3.2 million deaths per year in America or about 365 per hour, one about every ten seconds. 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 is adding additional numbers to these statistics. With more and more people crowded into more and more cities the future risk of even more lethal outbreaks is probable. Death from the Ebola virus is about fifty percent among those who are infected. The HIV virus has killed about thirty million gay men. You might ask yourself what it would be OK to die from, but we do not control that. 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 always 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. If there is such a thing as a good death, it is not attained without planning and discussing with loved ones the way out that is desired before the final crisis comes.

A group of family doctors organized an online service to help people discuss their last wishes for terminal care. “We can use this time to examine our values, go through possessions to decide what to keep and what to get rid of, and spend time with the people we love, at home, having conversations about what we want our end of life to look like. Getting clear on your values in death makes your values in life more apparent.” For help with that highly emotional challenge, visit www.theconversationproject.org.

It is difficult for doctors, patients, and families to decide how much suffering is enough because we do not have a traditional ritual to mark the beginning of dying. Medical treatment options increasingly are determined by financial considerations, insurance coverage, and government assistance. Many people are uninsured or poor, so their treatment options are limited. 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. All illnesses have physical, mental, emotional and spiritual components, and the highest levels of treatment require addressing all four levels and seeing them as being of equal importance. One may be healed emotionally and spiritually through palliative care when physical recovery is impossible. “Surrender at great depth is complete when a person has let go of needing or wanting a physical healing to occur. A state of peace about the situation is reached when all four aspects of illness—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual—have been addressed and the final outcome or wished-for recovery has been surrendered. Peace comes with total inner

surrender to what is.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Letting Go*, p.222, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.) All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

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. (Tagliaferre, Harbaugh, *Recovery from Loss*, CAPT 2001) Someone said grief is love without an object. Survivors must discover themselves anew after asking, “Who am I without my loved one?” If you cannot be near the one you love, love the one you are near as Jesus declared, love your neighbor as yourself. The length and intensity of mourning is proportional to the value survivors have invested in the lost relationship. It takes as long as it takes. When someone enters your heart, they may never actually leave. It is helpful to share grief with someone who can listen without judging, possibly a grief therapist, practicing praise, empathy, attention, and approval. Shakespeare wrote, “Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak knits up the oer’wrought heart and bids it break.” (*Macbeth*) When someone enters your heart, they never really leave. But, some things that are broken cannot be fixed, so we have cemeteries and junk yards. 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?* 2013, 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 at his age of sixty-five, less than three years after his insurmountable loss.

Our society has developed deep prejudices against aging as something to be ignored, denied, and avoided, possibly even defeated, rather than honored and entered into with rituals and initiations. C. G. Jung said shrinking away from aging is something unhealthy and abnormal which robs the second half of life of its purpose, i.e., individuation of the personality and fulfillment of the whole person we are born to be. Some cultures around the world practice the stages of life in various rituals. We need a ritual for dying as a rite of passage, transcending the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of life to the spiritual, not as an ending, but as a passage from here to what nobody knows because no one who has died has revived to describe 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 palliative comfort care, and refusing food and drink are reasonable choices to limit suffering for some terminal patients. California, Oregon, Montana, Colorado, Vermont, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey and District of Columbia have legalized physician prescribed medical aid in dying (MAID) for the terminally ill with less than six months to live, but some people cannot seem to choose this option, and some religious and medicals oppose it. If you are given to disagree, seek not to condemn but to understand. For more information about this trend visit, www.finalexit.org. In dying, as in living, people will walk the pathway of the labyrinth they have been given through physical, mental, emotional and spiritual quadrants, and survivors will live with the results walking their own pathway. Normally, the process of dying is like birthing, it happens as it is supposed to. Fighting this reality is

exhausting and traumatic, but if you must, you must. In the end, everyone must let go and go on – or not. All in the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. (For a descriptive, realistic explanation of the normal process of dying, please read the book, *Learning How to Let Go* by Marybeth Willi, 2003, 2018, NeoMediaWorks.)

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 biblical scriptures to support their skepticism. They may have difficulty imagining the Most-High GOD above all other gods – the Prime Force in the universe that controls everything from atoms to galaxies as generator, operator, destroyer. It does require a radical shift in beliefs from the normal traditional religions. This section anticipates some possible claims of skeptics and provides some responses that may help you to accept this new idea while living in the dark night of your soul.

One 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.

The state often is ascribed a special sort of authority, one that requires citizens to obey its commands and entitles the state to enforce those commands through legal means. The Bible says, “God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes.” (Daniel 5:21) If true, that would include selection of the good, bad, and ugly, kings, dictators, presidents, legislators, governors, mayors, etc. 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. Also, it seems to be overruled by this declaration of Apostle Peter in preaching the gospel, "We must obey God rather than human beings." (Acts 5:29) This attitude apparently motivated many incipient Christians to defy Rome and volunteer for martyrdom in conflict with the command of Paul to the church at Rome. Perhaps Jesus provided the needed guidance here by commanding, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Matthew 21:21) We can be glad the founders of America provided separation of church and state and religious freedom in the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However, that separation is being eroded rapidly as politicians, Catholics, and Evangelicals team up for campaign strategies plus appointments as Federal judges to support their respective interpretations of biblical scriptures.

These instructions to honor government leaders 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? Jesus told his disciples, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." (John 15:22) This insert seems to be totally out of context with the surrounding words and a way out for people who do not get the Word if it is generalized and used for proof-texting. Ignorance seems to be a sufficient defense because where there is no sin there is no need of a savior. Now our courts say ignorance of the law is no excuse. If that rule were applied to biblical scriptures, most of the Christian churches would be in a lot of trouble.

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 after they break the law, and then not all. The posted speed limit on the Capital Beltway is 55mph but average speeds are much higher, and no effort is made to arrest all those drivers breaking the law because it would be impossible. Many of the first Christians refused to deny Christ and worship Caesar. Some of them 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 380CE in the Edict of Thessalonica, 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, Romans 10:9. 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. And so, it may not be today either. Neither is any other belief system because all of them must be the will of Most-High GOD or they would not exist.

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 first fruits/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 secular research. Just because two events are related does not mean they are causative. For example, some things called 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 quantum particles regardless how far away they are from one another – what Einstein called “spooky things at a distance.” This phenomenon is being researched by government labs towards future network communications. 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 in some way not yet understood.

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 that help illustrate the relationship between cause and effect. 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 he 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*)

Another life 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 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*)

Finally: Compare the life of rich and famous radio commentator, Rush Limbaugh (1951-2021) with that of relatively obscure consumer advocate and failed presidential candidate, Ralph Nader (1934 -). Limbaugh came from a family of lawyers and judges but never attended college himself. He became interested in a broadcasting career during high school and worked in sports radio for several years before getting started in radio journalism. He built up a syndicated nationwide network of daily radio coverage he called the Excellence in Broadcasting (EIB) system from his elegant mansion in Florida. Limbaugh had four wives but no children. He died of lung cancer at age seventy, having received many honors for his promotion of conservative politics and compiling a massive fortune. In contrast, Nader was born of immigrant parents from Lebanon, but he graduated from Harvard and Princeton as a lawyer. Nader declined marriage to concentrate on his career. He lived frugally alone in Washington, DC without owning a car, and wrote several books and organized several non-profit efforts to educate consumers on product safety issues and corporate greed. Nader does not use a computer and wrote his books on a mechanical typewriter. The very different careers of these two men illustrate the power of Most-High GOD as generator, operator, destroyer in the lives of its creation. (*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. There is no way to explain the causes of such tragedies unless one believes in the will of a super power in the universe driving all things. 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 non-physical reality exists independent of our ability to observe it, driven by an unknown source. 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 merely is 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 among animals, fish, and birds as well as humans. After

you select a comment on social media, the system automatically sends more similar thoughts, thus reinforcing ideas regardless of their merit, designed to sell advertising. The fact that thoughts and electro-magnetic fields are interactive among living things is accepted science. The ancient Asian practice of acupuncture that treats energetic pathways through chakras seems to heal, but how it works still is a mystery.

Note: There is a wide variety of sacred traditions and spiritual rituals among the various human cultures around the world. Common among them all is a feeling that transcends senses and reason. Perhaps they are driven by a common form of energy expressed in many different ways, one that seeks inner peace, safety and serenity where there is pain and suffering balanced with love and forgiveness. Indeed, all human beliefs are manifested in actions that require various forms of energy for existence and implementation. ("Earth's Sacred Wonders, DVD." ©BBC, ©PBS, 2020)

UK biologist, Dr. Rupert Sheldrake proposed the existence of non-material morphic energy fields to explain this phenomenon. (*A New Science of Life, 1995*) At any moment we are transmitting and receiving energy as thoughts and emotions unconsciously, whether good or bad, positive or negative. If you are sensitive enough, you may feel this energy with loved ones or a pet. Animal carnivores appear to be more sensitive to it than are humans. Pet dogs seem to know when their masters are returning before they arrive. Acceptance and possibly even love are seen rarely between wild species, but it does happen, as between divers and sharks, lions and zoo keepers. His theory might help to explain how people seem to be attracted to others and repulsed by others through what he calls morphic resonance. Long-lasting marriages between couples who feel connected as soul mates could be a good example of morphic resonance. Morphic energy 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, religious worship, and political rallies when people of like minds gather together. 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. But, positive energy is balanced with negative energy as displayed in criminal human behavior and in the carnivorous food chain, in wars and ubiquitous divorces. There are no one-sided coins.

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 to realign the twelve energy fields called meridians in the human body. The Hindu concept of Kundalini energy may be another manifestation of this theory through the various chakras or levels in the human nervous system. 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 may explain some new theories being developed about electromagnetic activity in the mind and spirit among sentient beings and the earth and beyond to the whole universe covering frequencies assumed to exist but currently undetectable, which may explain a feeling of total connectedness among all things.

Morphic energy also could help to understand the boomerang effect 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. Some interpreters claim it refers to giving money to the church, but that is not obvious. Obviously, it does not work all the time or even most of the time. And it does not define what is to be given or received. Elsewhere, Jesus said more will be required of those who are given more. 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 biblical 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. A leaking faucet will not repair itself. Expectations might become a self-fulfilling prophecy if you can make the needed investment in time and work to develop the prophesized results, as the Lord wills of course. You may reap what you sow in human relations as well as in gardening and farming, but note that weeds usually grow with the crops also. However, as noted elsewhere, the body manifests behaviors seemingly driven by contents of the subconscious mind, stuff that was planted there by family, teachers, friends, churches, society, and events in life possibly going back several generations. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Note: It appears that brain science may be on the cusp of new discoveries in artificial intelligence that factors in the energy fields to help explain human behavior. Johnjoe McFadden, Professor of Molecular Genetics and Director of the Quantum Biology Doctoral Training Centre at the University of Surrey, said: "How brain matter becomes aware and manages to think is a mystery that has been pondered by philosophers, theologians, mystics and ordinary people for millennia. I believe this mystery has now been solved, and that consciousness is the experience of nerves plugging into the brain's self-generated electromagnetic field to drive what we call 'free will' and our voluntary actions." Something apparently conceived of and designed those neural networks. Perhaps it is the Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer.

ACIM says to transmit only love, to ask Holy Spirit to convert our “special relationships” to “holy relationships” through unconditional acceptance and forgiveness where each one looks inward and sees no lack in themselves, so they don’t need anything from others. If we regard ourselves as incomplete, the apparent completion to be found in another is very appealing, but it is delusional. Such relationships are bound to fail. When you have no needs, you do not need to seek anything from another person. Real love is inevitably attracted to real love, fear to fear because all emotions are contagious. 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 soon it becomes contaminated by interventions from the world. Thus, humans develop a dark side of negative behavior 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 biblical scriptures appear to say the soul/spirit separates from the body at death and returns to its source to await a day of judgment and 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 energy in molecules and atoms of the body cannot be destroyed, only transformed whether by decay or cremation. Thus, life can neither be created nor destroyed. Neither can the nonmaterial energy in thoughts be extinguished.

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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.162. Hay House. 2001 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

“Give a person a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.”

Maimonides

So what, now what? This new approach for resilience and serenity is only as valuable as it can be useful in times of suffering, which is caused by wanting things to be different. We have demonstrated that Most-High GOD generates and operates and destroys all the material and nonmaterial functions of the universe, from atoms to galaxies, which includes suffering and your reaction to it. The role of GOD as destroyer is described 448 times in thirty-five books of the Old

Testament and fifty-six times in nineteen books of the New Testament. Therefore, it is folly to ignore the destroyer role of Most-High GOD in the Bible in personal human lives and all throughout the earth and universe from atoms to galaxies. And do not forget that GOD makes atheists too. How can one deal with the destruction and suffering that GOD 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. Many people 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 you need it 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. We must do many things we did not plan, and many things we plan do not happen. 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 Accommodating Reality Therapy© in five ADTDA steps. There are only two rules to follow in their application to life: begin and continue.

(Disclaimer: This instruction is not a substitute for qualified mental health care by a professional provider. Please seek help if you are facing a mental health challenge.)

1) *Accept* everything as it is moment by moment here and now – thoughts, feelings, behaviors, events, actions - 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 yourself and 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 the brain has a mind of its own, and the body must go where the mind takes it. All in the will of Most-High GOD will of course.

4) *Don’t fight* with GOD because you cannot win, surrender in courage and submission to your destiny and let go – 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 linked in an infinite chain given by GOD as everyone walks the pathway within. Every decision may be a necessary learning experience in preparation for the life to come.

Note: Acceptance does not mean liking or approving of what is happening or being happy about it. 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. “It is important to differentiate detachment from nonattachment. Detachment can result in avoidance or withdrawal, whereas nonattachment allows for participation without taking a stake in the outcome. The pleasures of life can be accepted as a gift without becoming attached to them

(and let them go when needed.)” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Discovery of the Presence of God*, pp. 75,159, Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.) *Transcending control does not mean descending into apathy or futility. It means reconciling surrender and courage to change in GOD’s will. Don’t fight with GOD does not mean giving up. It means letting go and acknowledging GOD’s will in all things, including our reactions to them. Assuming predestination does not mean avoiding decisions. It means making decisions and accepting the inevitable consequences and returning to Step 1. This practice completes the circle of Accommodating Reality 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, although insignificant, to the universe.*** Memorize it to be available for contemplation and application to your life continually as you need to accommodate the will of Most-High GOD in your labyrinth walk of life moment by moment.

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, and changes by the will of GOD, then there is nothing to do differently than you are doing – apparently a paradox. After predicting his disciples would be imperiled and even killed, Jesus declared, “I have told you these things so you will have peace. 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 mortally 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. Meeting 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. It may be the fundamental essence of all forms of therapy in the relationship between client and counselor. But if you do the opposite of PEAA 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. Socrates said, “When the debate is lost, slander is the tool of losers.” Remember, introverts must think before they talk, while extraverts must talk to energize their thinking. 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.” As it was written by Melville in *Moby Dick*, “And if we obey God, we must disobey ourselves; and it is in this disobeying ourselves, wherein the hardness of obeying God consists.” (Melville, Herman. *Moby Dick*. Location 1145. *Pandora's Box*. 1851 Kindle Edition.) 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. “A broken and contrite heart you will not despise/reject.” (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, as it was with Jesus until he accepted his fate. “My God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 26:39-42, 27:45) This conversion 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 and universal forgiveness but very few people reach that level of development. The Bible contains conflicting scriptures that present confusion about family love. Jesus said there is no greater love than to give your life for your friends. (John 15:13) Apparently, Jesus preferred friends who obeyed his commands to family. Except possibly for his brother, James the Just, 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 rebuked a disciple who wanted to go home and say goodbye to his family saying, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9: 61-62) 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 Jesus 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. The spirit may be excited and eager to return home, although it may leave loved ones on earth grieving their passing. There may be nothing more awesome than arriving back home again to one’s Source, Most-High GOD.

As you mature, in old age you may become progressively more of a witness to life rather than the actor during the drama by relinquishing the illusion of control and accepting the many different beliefs among Homo sapiens on earth as the will of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p. 91, Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) This still begs the question, who is the witness to the witness, etc.? The curiosity of the ego is boundless and insatiable. 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 and your fellow humans.

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. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but he has given us a spirit of power and of love and a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7,12, 2 Corinthians 4: 16-17) Thus, one may be able to feel good inside no matter what happens outside. However, “Most of the fears of death are the result of the failure to understand and know that life comes from life and is indestructible. Like matter or energy which can neither be created or destroyed, life can only change the form of expression.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Healing and Recovery*. Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.)

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, disability and demise. In this life there will be trouble and suffering. Theofatalism says it is all the will of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. If we identify only with the body, all our animal instincts take over, and the world becomes a jungle – as it has and continues to be so in human relations. So, death of the body may not be death of the real you – no big deal. 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?* 2013, p. 260. *Crossway*. Kindle Edition.) “Very little is taught about taking up your cross, what ‘taking up your cross’ really means in the real world, and why it brings you closer to God. Very little is taught about spending time communing with the Holy Spirit or taking moral stands against the world. And very little about true worship. Our modern era churches think that worship requires two guitars, a drum-set, a string of singers, plenty of lights, two cameras, and a stage. Oh, how we have fallen.” Lolli, William. *Why God Wills You to Suffer* (Kindle Locations 1306-1311). *eBookIt.com*. 2014, Kindle Edition. Jesus did not promise anyone health, wealth, and happiness in this world. In fact, he declared the rich cannot enter the Kingdom of God unless they sell everything, give it to the poor and follow him. (Matthew 19:16-24. Mark 10:17-25, Luke 6:24-26, 18:18-25) Saint Vincent de Paul said, “If you love the poor, (and care for them) your life will be filled with sunlight, and you will not be frightened at the hour of death.”

This instruction may sound foolish or impossible and is avoided by many modern churches and New Thought prosperity 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) It seems 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 resist, and one must be “born again” into a different spiritual paradigm shift. “...no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.” (John 3:5) Some interpreters suggest this biblical passage refers to human birth

and death. But Apostle Paul instructed, “If you declare with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from death you will be saved...for everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Romans 9:10-13) But wait, he also wrote, “No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3) Necessary opposites. All in GOD’s will of course.

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. God must have a purpose for suffering, and it seems to be punishing or correcting sinners and proving that he is the Lord, plus possibly providing the motivation and opportunity for practicing unconditional charity to those in need. That such a God would be all loving seems to be an oxymoron by the principle of indefinite uncertainty. “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 on theodicy, i.e. why people suffer and why a supposedly loving god permits evil deeds on earth, have been debated recently, with no clear agreement and very little comfort for anyone suffering acute physical, mental, emotional or spiritual distress. 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 in a necessary progression. 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. He chose to grant humans free will with all the suffering that it brings. 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 any 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 of course because there can be no other. Ergo theofatalism.

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 because their theologians say so. 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, or chooses not to. 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, with Hinduism being the third largest religion, plus there are thousands of other religious belief systems among the additional four billion people around the world from the most primitive to the most advanced. They have been expressed through architecture, art, literature, music, rituals and more. Even though it obviously is flawed, the Bible has survived and found growing numbers of advocates for more than two millennia through wars, pandemics, natural disasters, multiple translations, various interpretations, and political upheavals. 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 as generator, operator, destroyer, 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, although they must live with the results. We can only see and experience our perceived parts of its creation, of which each sentient being is an indispensable but insignificant part. This discovery and its 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.

COMMENTARY ON LIFE

“Don’t judge the day by the harvest you reap, rather by the seeds that you sow”.

Robert Louis Stevenson

“The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth -- that God governs in the affairs of men.”

Benjamin Franklin

“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

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.*) For more on this outlook please read, *The Gifts of Acceptance by Daniel Miller, JD, 2018*)

While hanging on the cross in agony, Jesus cried out, “My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:45) 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. Perhaps we all must live the life we are given just as Jesus did, walking the pathway ahead. Several different topics and thoughts in this section may help to further relate the concept of theofatalism to many issues that are usually not discussed in traditional social settings, in conventional therapy, or in churches. Perhaps, reading them will help you to accommodate human reality and life on planet earth in some new ways. You may find that reading sections of interest separately may be more helpful than all at once, and several readings may be needed to internalize these discussions.

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 but certainly from Most-High GOD so we may need to accommodate it as being necessary, or it would not exist. Much as *A Course in Miracles* (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) However, Freidrich Nietzsche reportedly voiced the necessary opposite, “Hope is the worst of all evils for it prolongs the torments of man.” But, suffering also may stimulate creative solutions as it is said, “Necessity is the mother of invention.” 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, no one can do it for us, and we cannot do it for anyone else, including a spouse and children, regardless how much we may love them.

The Psalmist wrote, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil...” (Psalm 23:4) For there to be mountains it seems 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 human interactions are either a call for love or an expression of love.” (W.135.18) Apostle Paul wrote, “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 God who works in you to will and to act

in order to fulfill his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13) That idea written for its time and place may not make sense to many people who are suffering and who feel abandoned by God in the modern world. What if you are not called according to his purpose? Only 2.4 billion people on earth are Christians out of nearly eight billion total and growing.

Many suffering people seem to be forsaken by GOD, but actually they may be living in its will if there can be no other. What may seem to be tragic random events possibly could be merely the completion of life as it was intended to be, according to biblical scripture. (Psalm 139:16)

Here are some traumatic examples from the daily news: The mother whose infant son died of a brain tumor, a man who watched his wife swept away and lost his house in hurricane Dorian, the desperate immigrant woman who watched her husband and infant daughter drown in the Rio Grande, a high school potential Olympic swimmer student and her father killed in a car accident while visiting potential colleges, a teenage killed by lightning while swimming in the ocean, the young mother and four children consumed in a house fire, the single mother of a special needs son who drove them both into a lake to drown, two homeless men run over and killed by a thirteen year old girl driving the family car she stole from her mother, the fifteen migrant farm workers killed when a truck slammed into the grossly overloaded transport vehicle, families of police officers killed on duty, the single grandmother stabbed to death by her teenage granddaughter whom she was raising, a young man enrolled in the police academy gunned down by a carjacker, the grieving father who had a fatal heart attack while visiting is teen daughter dying in hospital from a sledding accident, a senior policeman with seven kids who was shot and killed by a raging gunman who killed ten people during his rampage, a woman who cared for hundreds of foster kids and died of the Covid19 virus, a teenager who died of the virus only two days after diagnosis, warriors who see their buddies killed and disabled in battle and return with post trauma shock and missing limbs, the college women’s soccer star who fell into a lake and drowned, the homeless grandmother who froze to death under an overpass during a winter storm, the family caring for a totally disabled adult child, families who were burned out by violent wildfires, parents who lose their kids to illegal drugs and street gangs, people who are driven into bankruptcy by medical bills, survivors of millions who are killed by raging pandemics, survivors of sleeping residents killed in the collapse of their condo building in Miami, neighbors who lose neighbors from drive-by shootings, other millions who lose their jobs with no replacements, the youths in acute mental illness who committed suicide, and homeless refugees who are driven from their demolished countries by civil war all might find the idea of divine protection by a loving God difficult to accept. For many suffering people, life seems to be a cruel joke by a demonic god who is laughing at the gates of hell. And it seems there are no appropriate biblical scriptures that can justify such personal human suffering. Meantime, the news reported that Senator Mitt Romney (R-MI) sold his ocean-front mansion in California for \$23.5 million. Are daily news stories such as these merely random events or are they the necessary and inevitable final links in the infinite chain of links of causal determinism? You can choose to believe either one or neither, but the only reasonable explanation offered by theofatalism for such tragic life situations is the will of Most-High GOD – generator, operator, destroyer – the Prime Force in the Universe, unless you are given to believe something else. Perhaps you may find some courage and resilience in this thought. Or not.

Fear and anger appear to be appropriate responses to such human tragedies. *A Course in Miracles* claims that releasing fear is enhanced by infinite forgiving, including forgiving God, which leaves only love. But it seems that 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. 2019, Kindle Edition.*) It is very difficult to accept that life is beautiful and broken at the same time. One biblical scripture says Jesus declared that children are born complete, sinless and whole, (Matthew 18:3) and the necessary opposite thought by Apostle Paul says everyone is born fatally flawed with a wicked heart and need a savior to restore us. (Romans 3:9-12, 10:9) So, who are you going to believe? We may need a different outlook to make it through the walk of life we are given that accommodates both of such necessary opposites. Perhaps this is it, called theofatalism, GOD in three parts, generator, operator, destroyer, the Prime Force in the Universe.

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. Lord Chesterfield said of human reproduction, the position is unseemly, the pleasure is momentary, and the results are abominable. Bringing children into this world to struggle, suffer, and die seems to be insane, but God commanded Adam and Eve to reproduce, multiply and subdue the earth, so humans appear to have no choice, regardless of the pain, suffering, and death that come with birth. (Genesis 9:7) To ensure our obedience, God created the reproductive sexual anatomy and infused it with the ultimate pleasure that is almost impossible to resist. 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 hunter-gatherer 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, the richest and most modern of which may be Dubai in the UAE. Lifestyles vary from the regimented godless communism of North Korea and the Old Order Mennonites in Belize to the enlightened monks in Buddhist temples. All in GOD's will of course. Ergo theofatalism.

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, Viktor Frankl lost his pregnant wife and family in the German 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. He wrote, “When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” Millions of his fellow Jews were lost in the gas chambers, and more than fifty-million people were killed in WWII, but Dr. Frankl survived, 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 likely create suffering for yourself and others. The future is indefinitely uncertain. But if you can let go and let GOD, who knows? Whether you do or you don't does not seem to be yours to control.

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.” Gratefulness has been described as the mother of all other virtues, even being grateful for suffering as the will of GOD. Troubles and good times both come from the hands of the same GOD who rules with both Christ and Satan. “If you truly get in touch with a bite of carrot, you get in touch with the soil, the sun, the rain. You get in touch with Mother Earth and eating in such awareness you feel in touch with your own roots which is a form of meditation. If you chew every morsel in that way, we become grateful and when you are grateful you are happy.” (*Thich Nhat Hanh*) It is not joyful events that make us grateful, it is gratitude that makes us joyful. How might your life be different if you responded to hardship with quietness, courage, and gratefulness? Mindfulness experts say even when it seems like everything is out of our control, we can still control what we pay attention to moment to moment. As we read a book that we are enjoying, we can extend appreciation to the people who wrote it; the publisher who commissioned it and the large team that brought it to publication; the paper mill somewhere in the world that manufactured the paper; the printing factory that printed the book; the artists who created the cover illustration; the trees that were the raw materials for the paper; the sun, rain, and soil that enabled the trees to grow and the Creator of it all.

“This is a basic law of consciousness: We are subject only to what we hold in mind (as thoughts). The body will respond to what we believe.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p. 207, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) You can believe that God is love (1 John 4:8) or that God is a raging fire, (Hebrews 10:37) or both. Dr. Hawkins claimed to be self-healed from many illnesses, but he died in 2012 at his age of 84. We can turn off our cell phone alerts to keep the news or social media from hijacking our serenity with negative thinking. We can drop our ruminations and negative fantasies by attending to what actually is happening in our inner world, right now, here in the present, while letting go of the past and not worrying about the future. But “can” and “will” are two very different words. The human ego of some people seems more willful to anticipate the future and recall the past, than willing to let go of past and future to live in the present moment. This tendency appears to be the cause of much suffering when things are not going the way we would like, and we wish they were different. It is human nature to suffer in such circumstances. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Mindfulness therapy experts claim that living in the past invites depression, and living in the future invites apprehension and anxiety in fear of something painful to come, but if you must, you must, as many people do. Someone said that anxiety is imagining the future without Christ so there must be a lot of anxious people on planet earth. Living with apprehension is the natural consequence of negative intuition, which is the normal mode of some people through no will of their own. C.G. Jung said intuition is the ability to “see around corners,” whether the perceived view is pleasant or fearful.

Dr. David R. 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.59. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) ACIM says, “Truth lies only in the present, and you will find it if you seek it there.” (*Wells, Raymond. A Course in Miracles Clarified: A Quick and Easy Guide, p.53. Kindle Edition.*) “Seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened unto you.” (Matthew 7:7-8) Albert Einstein said the distinction between the past, present, and future is only a “stubbornly persistent illusion.” 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, or the breath is gone after it is exhaled, the experiences of life are fleeting and ephemeral. Each moment is already in the process of ceasing at the very instant it arises and merges into history. Everything comes to pass for every living creature in earth. Accepting the uncertainty of the future moment by moment seems to be the key to living in the reality of today. Possibly except for mathematics and formal logic, (plus death and taxes) uncertainty is the only certainty there is. This attitude seems to be more important as one gets older and faces the possibility of pain and disability that presages death in old age. It is self-evident, the young may die, and the old must die. Someone said learning to live with insecurity is the best security.

“Consider the works of physicist Schrodinger who proved that for every moment of your personal ‘experience’ within your personal reality, there have been a near infinite number of interactive variables of time, space and matter, all interacting to create for you a sense of a ‘perpetual now’.” (*Lolli, William. Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 1717-1719). eBookIt.com. 2014, Kindle Edition.*) 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 within 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. 2013 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 supposedly 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. We must take action and make decisions under conditions of indefinite uncertainty and risk. However, this awareness does not offset human anxiety when your life is threatened. 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 plant and a time to harvest, a time to be born and a 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, accommodating to reality.

Research in neurology indicates this practice can help to reduce stress and enhance awareness for better health and mental serenity by balancing the left brain thinking/doing with right brain feeling/being. This practice seems to come more naturally to women than to men. Men seem to be programmed to fix things, and women seem to be programmed to heal things, thus most nurses and therapists are women. Accepting things as they are does not mean agreeing with them or liking them or not attempting to resolve inner and external challenges. Does it solve all your problems? Of course not. We must take the prescribed medicine, 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. He said the concepts of past, present, and future are persistent illusions.

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, sometimes called rumination. In contrast, mindfulness living is consciously concentrating on one thing at a time to reduce stress and experience inner peace while suffering. It can be learned with motivation and practice. Make this a daily ritual; 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, saint and criminal alike. Mindfulness is like breaking life down into its smallest management pieces, taking things one at a time. The late Rev. Robert Schuller said, “Inch by inch anything’s a cinch; yard by yard everything is hard.” 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.

Note: As with everything, mindfulness practice comes with benefits and burdens. Mindfulness is an adjunct to, not a replacement for, professional treatment. Sometimes, when people have difficult or extensive histories of trauma or abuse, meditation practice may put them in touch with those memories and emotions, which can feel overwhelming, particularly at first. For this reason, if you have a history like this it’s wise to be working with a therapist while exploring the practice of mindfulness. Early research suggested that mindfulness meditation had a dramatic impact on our mental health. But as the number of studies has grown, so has scientific skepticism about these initial claims.

For example, a 2014 meta-analysis published in JAMA Internal Medicine examined 47 randomized controlled trials of mindfulness meditation programs, which included a total of 3,515 participants. They found that meditation programs resulted only in small to moderate reductions in anxiety and depression. “In essence, practicing mindfulness is a process of learning to trust and stay with feelings of discomfort rather than trying to escape from or analyze them,” says Bob Stahl, Ph.D., Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) teacher, founder of multiple MBSR programs, and co-author of multiple books on MBSR. “This often

leads to a remarkable shift; time and again your feelings will show you everything you need to know about them—and something you need to know for your own well-being.”

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. How might your life be different if you responded to hardship with acceptance, quietness, bravery, and gratefulness? This instruction is not very comforting to those suffering for no reason of their own, like someone imprisoned for an alleged crime that they did not commit. It may be even more difficult to practice by those who suffer from actions of their own they wish were different. According to the instant conversion of Saul/Paul when he was called posthumously by Jesus, one may be assured that whatever happens must be necessary or it would be different, possibly for a reason we cannot know. Perhaps Paul was aware that Greek philosopher Cicero said, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, it is the parent of all the others. Have you expressed gratitude, even in the privacy of your own mind, for the many advances in agriculture, engineering, medicine, or other areas of applied technology, without which your life would be immeasurably more difficult?” (*Ferraiolo, William. Meditations on Self-Discipline and Failure: Stoic Exercise for Mental Fitness, p. 164, 2017 John Hunt Publishing. Kindle Edition.*)

Perhaps the ultimate prospect of gratitude is found among those Christians who proclaim they had an instant of conversion into the family of God welling up from subconscious forces they neither can explain or consciously did not control after descending into a pit of despair. 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, for a divorce, for a murderer? 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 instruction was the beginning of what is now being called, “positive psychology” that is used in therapy for helping troubled people survive major disasters. However, putting a false positive spin on real disasters that cause real suffering has been called “toxic positivity.”

We are not self-sufficient. We did not create ourselves nor anything else. We may not even create our own thoughts and emotions as they seem to have a source and direction independent of desire. We depend on parents, friends, society, the earth, GOD, the universe and even the government to provide what we cannot provide for ourselves. Among all the species of life on earth, humans are the most dependent. But what if Most-High GOD gives and also takes away as described in the Old Testament story of Job? 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. Each time we depart from a loved one could be the last time, so it seems desirable to leave on a loving note instead of a contentious one. Recall that everyone needs praise, empathy, attention, and approval – PEAA.

This outlook of unlimited gratitude as personal transformation to accommodate the world as it is for every sentient being – plant, animal, and human – appears to transform the mind from mortal to immortal, from sentient to spiritual. If this is the world GOD has made, including making of the little God of the Bible, the Allah of the Quran and all other religious icons, 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.221. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) Theofatalism claims things are as they are and can be no other, regardless of the suffering involved – which is very difficult to reconcile with suffering wretches for no reason of their own. 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. This is a saying hard to accept among all the evil, crime, disabilities, and predators in the food chain that exist in the world made by GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. Also, forgiving GOD may or not help make you feel better if it just does not apply. The evolving individual and cultural changes world-wide causing enormous human misery must be unfolding as necessary, or they would be different. The mature aging of individuals comes with changes in this outlook and perceptions in some people and not in others. Some people continually grow in acceptance and understanding, and some reach a plateau and remain there repeating the same cycle over and over until it is their time to move on whether in this life or a future one, like reliving the same day in the movie, *Ground Hog Day*, (1993). Perhaps the fear of indefinite uncertainty blocks the potential for risky growth into the indefinite future. In contrast, after he was asked why he continued to practice in old age, world famous cellist, Pablo Casals said, “because I think I am still making progress.”

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 for this purpose. Perhaps it could be activity in the right lobe of the brain as opposed to the left lobe, i.e., the seat of intuition. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

What matters most in spiritual evolution appears to be the awakening of your own mind, whatever that is, through discovery of subconscious content with mature insight. A thought cannot experience its own thoughtness; a feeling cannot experience its own feelingness; memory cannot experience its own memoryness. They all have to be experienced consciously in something greater than the mind which is so powerful that what it contains tends to manifest in life, i.e., that which is called GOD. “The basic dictum to comprehend is that the body obeys the mind; therefore, the body tends to manifest what the mind believes. The belief may be held consciously or unconsciously. This dictum follows from the law of consciousness that states: We are only subject to what we hold in mind. The only power that anything has over us is the power of belief that we give it. Thus, the body will express the beliefs held in mind, consciously or

unconsciously. What we hold in mind manifests on the physical level; it is not the other way around. Eating the cholesterol did not give us the heart problem; it was the belief that eating a lot of cholesterol gives us heart trouble. That is a very critical point to grasp. The belief system elucidates the entire disease picture.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery. Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.*) This idea may be very difficult to accept if you are suffering a serious illness or have lost loved ones in the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Hawkins claimed that he healed his body of several chronic illnesses and allergies by thinking himself out of them before he died in 2012 at age 84. However, he never explained what controls the mind and where the content of the mind comes from. It appears to be some superconscious source that is above conscious awareness. All in the will of Most-High GOD will of course.

This reference says mind is so powerful that it creates the thought form which manifests on the physical plane, thus becoming a physical reality. But there must be some entity that is expressed here as “we,” “me,” “you,” or “I” that holds the mind which might be called spirit or soul. This phenomenon is seen in the great inventors and entrepreneurs who get an idea and convert it into personal wealth and fame. It also may explain the opposites in illness, criminals, addicts, and such. 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.*) 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. It also means walking the labyrinth of life you are given.

But what if the world rejects you as you are – including your own parents? Children put out for adoption often feel the need to find their origin of birth to uncover their genealogy when they get older. The world is composed mostly of special relationships where one person needs something from another, labeled as unhealthy mutual codependency. But, people also must live cooperatively in modern society to survive. Most of us no longer are self-sufficient like the native Americans and the early settlers were, or like the modern frontier pioneers are in Alaska. 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 forgiveness with acceptance or unattachment or personal investment in the outcome. It is a goal worth pursuing. “For no one in whom true forgiveness rests can suffer.” (*Wells, Raymond. A Course in Miracles Clarified: A Quick and Easy Guide p.78. Kindle Edition.*) Consider Jesus as the role model. He taught that one should forgive repentant sinners endlessly to avoid being unforgiven yourself. (Matthew 18:22-35) While hanging on the cross he prayed to the Father, “Forgive them for they don’t know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) His executioners were chosen agents required of God, because the crucifixion was necessary for the subsequent resurrection of Jesus to display his transformation into divinity. Perhaps, one also could say the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948 was necessary to unite the warring factions of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs in the rebirth of India after its liberation from Britain.

The transformation from special to holy relationships requires examination of the influence of your family, what you learned in church, 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. Although little God in the Old Testament claimed that “every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood,” (Genesis 8:21), 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. However, the innocence of a child created without sin, hence needing no punishment, comes with naivety and inability to discern truth from fiction. Spontaneous children are susceptible to fables taught by condescending adults, and they are good at assuming fantasy imaginations are reality like watching cartoon characters and invoking hand puppets with human traits.

Jesus warned false teachers to avoid misleading such children in the faith, “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. (Matthew 18:6, Mark 9:42, Luke 17:1-2) He also declared there would be false messiahs and false prophets capable of deceiving even “the elect.” (Matthew 24:24, Mark 13:22,) But Apostle Paul wrote, “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me... Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults.” (1 Corinthians 13:11,14:20) Does this mean Paul voided his status as a child in the terms of Jesus and instructed others to do likewise? Or was he talking about outgrowing the naivete of childhood in terms of adult discernment and reasoning? Are these mutually exclusive concepts? Must you choose one or the other? Act like a spontaneous child or think like an adult? Are these concepts necessary opposites?

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 labyrinth pathway of life into old age. This work also enables us to consider what we learned and to discard lessons that are not enabling with empowerment without judging while forgiving the sources with unconditional love. This might be done by writing a personal journal of memories and collecting family photos 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. It takes both being and doing to create the future. Shakespeare penned this instruction from 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 and lifelong, but Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living. Uncovering the Self within may be dangerous if it discloses personality disorders and guilt-ridden memories based in shame. The old saying, “Let sleeping dogs lie,” might apply. “But, we can choose to be different and to let go of the (dysfunctional) belief systems in our family. We can look back and begin to find where the belief systems about middle age and the aging process came from.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, 2405, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.*) Additionally, it may require the help of a qualified therapist or pastoral counselor, which most people never obtain, to sort out the benefits and burdens, guilt and shame, in our personal lives to forgive ourselves and let go of the past. Whether you

do the inner work in this life, or the possible next one, 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*) “To even decide on such a mission is already a sign of major spiritual evolution.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God p. 86*). *Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) Founder of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Dr. Marsha Linehan, a Zen Buddhist Master, wrote, “We must go through misery to get out of hell.” Many people are damaged and confused and grasping. Peace and serenity really does come from within but one has to do the hard work to get there. The gate is small and the road to it is very narrow, so few people ever find it. (Matthew 7:14) DBT concentrates inner work therapy in four areas: Mindfulness skills, Interpersonal skills, Emotions regulation, and Distress tolerance. If you look inward at yourself this way, you may look at others differently and enjoy life more. Or not.

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. He wrote, “That I feed the beggar, that I forgive an insult, that I love my enemy. All these are undoubtedly great virtues. But what if I should discover that the least amongst them all, the poorest of the beggars, the most impudent of all offenders, yea the very fiend himself—that these are within me, and that I, myself, stand in need of the alms of my own kindness, that I myself am the enemy who must be loved—what then?” (*Psychology and Religion – West and East*)

The shadow is all the repressed thoughts, feelings and concepts about ourselves projected onto others that we do not want to admit and face up to. Of the shadow, Dr. Jung wrote, “The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort.” (*Aion, par. 14*) 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. Contents of the shadow are difficult and painful to uncover and to integrate with the conscious behavior. 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) Unfortunately, many people do not enjoy this deliverance.

If the Apostle Paul still was driven by his demon after being chosen by Jesus to be his voice to Gentiles, how can we hope to avoid this dilemma? And how about those Catholic priests who cannot keep their hands to themselves? They seem to have lost touch with this promise from Paul. “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13) As described above, Apostle Paul failed to obtain this promise, so it appears to be conditional. Apparently, this is a false promise proven so by all the broken lives of loyal Christians – including priests and

ministers - that cannot be mended which end in gruesome outcomes after they fall into irresistible temptations. A recent example is the forced resignation of Jerry Falwell, Jr. as President of the largest Christian school, Liberty University, founded by his minister father, after his private sexual behavior became public.

Everyone does countless things daily that are driven by their shadow self, which can cause remorse and guilt until they are admitted and forgiven – repeatedly. (Matthew 18:22) If your feelings of remorse and regrets is acutely painful, consider this mantra: It was always the will of Most-High GOD or it would be different, including your present suffering. 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 and a priest to represent the Lord. 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 and themselves in particular. Necessary opposites. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

God’s servants in scriptures did not volunteer, and neither do we. 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 did not promise Paul health, wealth, and happiness for his service. Jesus declared, “This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” (Matthew 15:24, Acts 9:15- 16) Jesus himself was sent “only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” so it remained for Paul to carry the message forward, sometimes in opposition to the original apostles. (Matthew 15:24, Galatians 2:11-13) John the Baptist, who was born to herald the coming Messiah, was imprisoned and beheaded after criticizing King Herod for 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) “You cannot change what God created you to be. The Christ still lives in each of us, even if we blind ourselves to it. That you cannot change. (Some made for royal use and some made for common use.) It is the only reality. When you remember this Self, you will be happy, because that is what you were created to be. There is no real alternative.” (*Rosenthal MD, Robert. From Loving One to One Love, p.147. G&D Media, 2020 Kindle Edition.*) If such a blessing exists, why would anyone blind themselves to it unless there is a counter force repelling it – called Satan? But, relief from suffering in this life apparently is not the will of GOD for everyone, and some people suffer more than others. It is as it is.

The awareness of Most-High GOD - Generator, Operator, Destroyer - as immaculate immanence everywhere in everything can only be described as awesome, an “out of this world” experience. It is like staring at the Milky Way galaxy in a clear sky and realizing how small and insignificant, but indispensable each sentient being is to the whole. This awareness 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 R. 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., M.D., PH.D., *The Eye of the I*, pp.216-217. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.)

Jesus told the masses to seek the Kingdom of Heaven which is within you - which can be seen and entered, which is among you, is here now and is yet to come - 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 sentient 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 seems to return to us like a boomerang through reflections from others through the law of reciprocity. The *Course in Miracles* claims that the mind is the only reality. “What you see “out there” in the world is simply a very convincing projection of what’s in your mind.” (Rosenthal M.D., Robert. *From Loving One to One Love*, p.18, G&D Media, 2020 Kindle Edition.) What we project, we perceive, neither of which may be reality. Now, much of so-called reality merely is information distributed widely through social media on the Internet, regardless of its validity. Gullible people are being influenced to believe in fiction and opinions as reality, which they then act upon. 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) Seeing through the lens of theofatalism may open one’s vision to reality as it is. In reality, what we give we may receive in the measure that we use as Jesus said – give love, receive love, give fear, receive fear, give hate, receive hate. The measure that you use will be returned to you. (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, i.e., the Golden Rule. It may be better to follow the “Platinum Rule” and do unto others what they would have you do unto them – except when it would harm yourself or harm them to do so – called boundary management. 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. “Inner 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.194. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) This outlook is very difficult when you contemplate all the evils among mankind. However, he likened life – individual and collective - as being given a movie on DVD that contains the beginning and the ending and everything in between which must be played through. The body is programmed from conception to live and die as it must, and the spirit merely is the witness to it. Perhaps you cannot avoid the program you were born with; you can only live it as programmed. 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 with no beginning or ending. The late 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. Jesus from Nazareth certainly was one of them. It is said that their level of awareness is beyond language and resides wholly in the right brain. 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 and commander of which is Most-High GOD.

One such spiritually evolved person appears to have been the late psychiatrist, Dr. David R. Hawkins (1927-2012) who is quoted elsewhere in this book. After his Episcopal tradition could not account for all the human suffering he saw in his medical practice, he began a life-long investigation of reality by studying Asian beliefs and engaging intensely in mindful meditation. The essence of his discovery is found in letting go of the mortal body and moving into awareness of universal oneness with all things to effect healing of the physical and mental wounds caused by the ego’s inability to know truth from lie. “As each thought, feeling, desire, or deed is surrendered to God, the mind becomes progressively more silent. When the mind grows silent, the thought “I Am” also disappears, and Pure Awareness shines forth to illuminate what one is, was, and always will be, beyond all worlds and all universes, beyond time, and therefore without beginning or end.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, Hay House.2009 Kindle Edition.*) Christian apologetics may claim this is the work of Satan in opposition to Christ and, of course, its truth and validity are indefinitely uncertain. Some readers probably would find his work beyond comprehension like a foreign language. Only those with evolved egos ready to

be sacrificed likely would be interested in it. For anyone ready to receive it, you could begin the journey by reading his book titled, *Discovery of the Presence of God*, 2007.

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 floating 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. Try to imagine looking back at the earth from the moon, or even from planet Mars. 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 without the supreme force in the universe. 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 the will of Most-High GOD in their own circumstances, living the lives they are given walking their personal pathways, 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.” Hopelessness is a terrible feeling when the only alternative is surrender. 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, CrossReach Publications. 1901, 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.193. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) “External factors are vulnerable and have to be fearfully guarded; in contrast, inner values are

self-reinforcing and immune to turmoil or circumstances. This is a common realization among survivors of major catastrophes. Their surrender results in greater inner security and pleasure in life. Eventually, one feels ‘bulletproof’ and independent of external circumstances. Even the survival of the body itself eventually becomes irrelevant for its transitoriness is accepted.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Discovery of the Presence of God*, p. 166. Hay House. 2007 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. He wrote, “Life is just a dirty trick, a short journey from nothingness to nothingness.” (Bierle, Dr. Don. *Surprised by Faith: A Skeptic Discovers More to Life than What We Can See, Touch, and Measure*. Aneko Press. Kindle Edition.) 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.

Many people who helped to change the world were not recognized during their lifetimes and even suffered greatly for their contributions, including Martin Luther who initiated the Christian Reformation. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated at his age of thirty-nine before passage of voting rights legislation he gave his life to achieve. One also might mention the works of poet Emily Dickinson and novelist Jane Austen, in addition to painter Vincent van Gogh, and inventor Nicolo Tesla as examples of talents who were not fully recognized during their lifetimes. Susan B. Anthony was an original organizer of the womens’ suffragette movement but she did not live to see Amendment Nineteen of the U.S. Constitution ratified in 1920 giving women the right to vote. Galileo was excommunicated from the Church in 1609 for declaring the sun and not the earth was the center of the solar system. 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. The basics of binary mathematics that make modern computers and cell phones possible was developed by George Boole (1815-1864) long before there was any use for it. 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) All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

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.” Friedrich Nietzsche said truth always is on the side of the more difficult. But the necessary opposite of “Occam’s Razor” seeks the solution of

complex problems 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. Infants digest only milk until children consume soft food before adults tolerate solid nutrients, and so it is with the progression of spiritual enlightenment among individuals. (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. Much judgmentalism arises from posing the hypothetical, i.e., that people ‘should’ be different; (however, if they could be, they would be.) 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I*, p.199. *Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) “Creation moves from perfectly ‘this’ to perfectly ‘that’. There is no other possibility except in the imagination. Everything already is exactly as it is ‘supposed’ to be. A nice, old, dilapidated, dented trashcan is ‘supposed’ to look beat up or it would not be a nice, old, beat-up trashcan.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God*, pp. 77-78. *Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) This is a hard saying for many people to accept who think they should be in control of Self and others – the basis of all morality, criminality, and jurisprudence. If carried to its limit in human relations the conclusion can be shocking because it includes all the suffering of mankind as being necessary. However, *A Course in Miracles* provides another possible explanation from imagination: this world is not real and is made up by the human ego in opposition to the real world of only love. Why this is so cannot be explained or understood by mortal minds.

Dr. Hawkins concluded that war is a necessary part of human society which will continue until the end of this age according to Jesus. But, all burdens come with benefits. War is the driver of much scientific research and weapons development that convert to commercial use, e.g., computers, Internet, antibiotics, and GPS. Thus, 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 and rumors of 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 German Nazi genocide and families supporting disabled battle veterans. “So to be peaceful, it is necessary to accept that waging war is part of human nature and has been throughout all of recorded time.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go*, p. 331, *Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) It is worth repeating: Jesus said, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63) Baptist pastor, Dr. Jason Mitchell, PH.D., interpreted this scripture as follows: “John 6:63 is talking about flesh counting for nothing towards being in a right relationship with God.” The holocaust was not the first time that little God used their enemies to punish Jews for idolatry and disobedience, which occurs often throughout the Old Testament. He also caused suffering to test their loyalty and devotion, as in the life of Job. As of now, orthodox Jews are

assumed lost without accepting Christ as their savior. Christians also were expected to suffer for belief in Christ. (1Peter 4:12-19)

In all sentient beings, the flesh is composed of matter in the form of atoms and molecules which collectively live, 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 energy that converts the inanimate matter into the animated spirit. Life emerges from the infusion of matter with energy. We know from atomic reactions that matter can be turned into energy, but we are not able yet to turn energy into matter, as occurred theoretically at the creation of the universe. But inanimate elements and stellar objects throughout the universe move and interact so perhaps GOD used some unknown process to make it all out of nothing. The two opposing phenomena of construction and destruction must be caused by a common superior 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 kinesthetic spiritual theory of the late psychiatrist, Dr. David R. Hawkins suggests that human suffering may be caused by projecting negative energy in the form of feelings/emotions onto others and reflected back in like manner – in ascending order from most to least negative, from lowest to highest vibrations: chiefly shame, guilt, apathy, grief, fear, 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 continuing upward ascending through positive energies of courage, willingness, acceptance, joy, love, forgiveness and peace before “we” leave the body and let it return to the dust of its origin. This is a very short summary of a much much larger view of human potential. We just repeat the past if we do not evolve into operating at the higher levels of conscious energy. What we resist persists. “Let go clinging to what has just occurred. Let go trying to control what you think is about to occur. Then you live in an infinite space of non-time and non-event. There is an infinite peace beyond description. And you are home.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p. 335, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*)

The goal of elevating consciousness is enlightenment which offers to transcend the duality of the mind to see life as unity. As we climb up this ladder of consciousness, the lower rungs are not removed but become the basis for accumulated wisdom. “All that is needed to progress upward in levels of consciousness are patience, prayer, faith in the process, and the surrendering of resistances. Remove the resistance and the process will flow upwards naturally.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God, p. 180. Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) “What is occurring in your life is not a mistake or an error. It is exactly what needs to be brought up, looked at, understood, surrendered, recontextualized, healed, and forgiven.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, 1781, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.*) Think you can do that?

Dr. Hawkins taught that working your way up this scale of energies consciously from shame and guilt to universal love and forgiveness enables physical healing as well as mental and spiritual healing through the crises of life, as it did for him. It is not unlike the Judeo/Christian commandments to love God and to love your neighbor(s) as yourself. (Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 22:37-40) This must be an instantaneous process repeated endlessly until all “Isness” is replaced with nothing to achieve enlightened Self, similar to learning in

many lives through reincarnations to reach the level of Nirvana in Hinduism, where all suffering ceases and no further lives are needed. Very few people climb consciously very far up this ladder of spiritual development because it is something that cannot be taught. Thus, suffering is the common experience of most people – whether standing in line at the grocery store, maxing out your credit, getting evicted, waiting to see your doctor, having a disabling painful illness, or attending the funeral of a loved one. (Make your own personal list.) 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.208, Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

Things happen possibly perceived as positive and negative, thoughts and feelings result, and people react instinctively and automatically if they are driven by subconscious contents. Some driver cuts you off in traffic, you feel angry, blow your horn and display the middle finger, lose control and cause an accident that can ruin your life. Your 401K retirement investments rise in the stock market, you feel pleased and confident, so you invest more money. The stock market drops, you feel fear and sell at a loss. The only thing certain about the stock market is its history. Those who win may think they have it figured out, but those who lose know that they don't. A loved one dies, you are overcome with grief and withdraw from your social affairs in mourning to seek the meaning of life. Sometimes feelings are mixed. You rejoice at the birth of your baby, but cringe at the thought of two decades or more in child support. You get married and anticipate a lifelong honeymoon together, but you feel depressed realizing one of you must watch the other one die. You get divorced and feel a combination of relief and remorse or fear. Sometimes the same emotion works in opposite ways. You get a new job and are fearful of your ability to keep it, or you lose a job and are fearful of getting another one. You fear being infected with Covid19 virus and you fear getting the preventive vaccination. The bases for these reactions may be buried in your subconscious mind. Uncovering the contents of the subconscious is the work of psychotherapy, but most people must live with the lives they are given without such intervention. The results can be catastrophic when plans do not work out and people are disappointed in themselves and in others. Confronted with the loss of control, the less resilient person may be sunk into depression and mental illness.

C. G Jung wrote, “If you do not uncover the subconscious contents, it will drive your life and you will call it fate.” A useful uncovering technique is to presume that there is a repressed aspect in the unconscious which mirrors conscious contents, and that the unconscious is not only personal but also contains all the collective knowledge of humanity, described by Jung as the “collective unconscious.” “Thus, certain problems merely are the karmic inheritance of being human.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God, p.115, Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) Most therapies imply that you can access the subconscious mind to accept or to change thoughts to change feelings and change behavior, whatever “you” are. Ungrieved emotions which are stored in unconscious memory are the cause of much human suffering. “One is subject to what the mind believes. In other words, the body, being like a puppet, is controlled by mind, both consciously and unconsciously. Few people realize the power of mind over body.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and*

Recovery. Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.) “When peace is more valued than the entertainment of the insatiable ego, it will be discovered to be ever present and available. That one even has such an option is unknown by 99.7 percent of the population. Thus, there is an unknown freedom available: one can choose merely to refuse the ego investment in the world and one’s thoughts about it (i.e., surrender it to God).” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Discovery of the Presence of God, p. 184, Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.*) How this process may occur was not explained. When you face a future that threatens your version of contentment, the anxiety may become disabling and even life changing. When the change threatens your body with end-of-life issues and safety, the ego/mind apparently tries to defend itself from this reality with various compensations and defensive tactics to ward off the threat. Self-defense is legally recognized as a reaction for protecting the integrity of the self in times of attack.

Note: “The content of mind, and what is going on in mind, is known through consciousness; therefore, all experience is occurring in consciousness. One’s awareness of what is happening is occurring within one’s consciousness. Consciousness is then experienced in the greatest domain, which is the one without limit that includes awareness. It is the nature of awareness being itself to know what is going on in consciousness. It is the nature of consciousness to know what is going on in mind. It is the nature of mind to know what is going on with sensations, and it is the nature of sensations to know what is going on with the body. It is important to know that all ordinary experience is going on in consciousness alone. It is important to know that consciousness has no particular space, no physical area, and no limitation. The common fantasy is “I experience things in my head.” Actually, we do not experience them in the head. Where do we experience a thought? We experience a thought nowhere; there is no specific location or space in which we experience a thought. The nature of consciousness is that it has no particular form; it is without form. Its content is with form, but the field of consciousness itself is like space, having no particular locality.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.)

But what if “you” do not control your own thoughts and feelings (whatever they are)? Where do thoughts and feelings come from? The fact that mind controls the body can be seen in hypnosis, but the mechanism for this feat is a mystery. Under hypnosis, the body will express exactly what the mind believes. “It can be seen that through the hypnotic state, the body is reflecting exactly what the mind believes (consciously or unconsciously) - the way it stands, the way it holds itself, and its attitude toward the body.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Healing and Recovery, 2438, 2384, Hay House. 2009 Kindle Edition.* Here is something more to think about. “Our brains mathematically construct concrete reality by interpreting frequencies from another dimension, a realm of meaningful, patterned, primary reality that transcends time and space. The brain is, therefore, a hologram interpreting a holographic universe.” (*Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, p.195, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.*) “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. 2019, Kindle Edition*) If Self does not exist there is nothing to feel suffering. In some Eastern traditions, self is imagined as an illusory container containing nothing. The ACIM describes it thus, “Your true Self abides outside of time and space, independent of matter. It is pure spirit: eternal, changeless, peaceful, joyous,

and wholly loving.” (Rosenthal MD, Robert. *From Loving One to One Love*, p.21. G&D Media, 2020 Kindle Edition.) Note that all discussions of Self imply an owner of it as in saying “myself,” which cannot be defined. We must live with some things that just seem to be unknowable, i.e., unconscious.

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.) Of course, there are exceptions when some people abandon the faith of their youth and seek a different pathway of life – all in GOD’s will of course.

Time, place, and circumstance really do matter in forming religious beliefs and in changing them. 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 unless they become mature enough to question them. 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 California you may be influenced by Asian traditions, 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 raised in Utah, you probably are Mormon. 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.

Note: “For people brought up in traditional Western or Near-Eastern religions, the fear of an anthropomorphic, angry, vengeful, punitive God recurs and thus emerges as a fear of God instead of reverence and respect for GOD. Fallacious teachings about this little God derive from primitive myths or from lower astral levels, many of which commonly have gods and prophets that have many strange and bizarre characteristics. Do not go there. To know ‘about’ spiritual truth, however, is not the same thing as ‘knowing’ it, much less ‘becoming’ it. True spirituality is experiential and not intellectual. Because the process is not mental, emotional, or physical, it has been perceived as ‘mystical’, meaning mysterious or not within the province of the mind or intellect to comprehend via ordinary perception. The mind, on its own, is an unreliable guide. It

*is easily misled by glamour, reputation, charisma and popularity, with their associated enthusiasm and emotionality. The safeguards that protect one along the way from the deceptions that arise consist of forewarning plus humility, gratitude, and, importantly, respect for all sentient beings. Each level of spiritual consciousness does not denote 'better than' those that precede it but is merely a stage of evolution. Even the ego that 'should have known better' actually did not, or it would not have made an error. It is wise to respect even the ego itself, for without its efforts over great eons of time, humans would not have survived long enough to seek to transcend it. It is a mistake to set up the ego as one's enemy to be conquered. It is more profitable to merely adopt it as a pet and melt it with compassion and forgiveness. Whatever the ego did in the past was because, like a puppy, it just did not know better." (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., *Discovery of the Presence of God*, pp. 103- 105. Hay House. 2007 Kindle Edition.)*

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." As Jonathan Swift once observed, "It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into." In modern English, it is impossible to convince a person otherwise whose opinion is not based upon reason but emotion, which is called cognitive bias in psychology. In this way of thinking, the brain says, "My mind is made up so do not confuse me with the facts." Such people are very difficult members of juries in criminal trials and political campaigns and religious traditions because they are "closed minded." Ayn Rand wrote, "Reason is not automatic. Those who deny it cannot be conquered by it. Do not count on them. Leave them alone." Indeed, arguing with someone locked by emotion is ineffective at least and dangerous at worst. As Jesus prayed on the cross, "Father, forgive them because they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34) But, they could be forgiven for ignorantly doing the will of GOD, which required the crucifixion to achieve the subsequent resurrection of Jesus. Good Friday must exist to precede Easter Sunday.

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 24/7. Jesus told his disciples to go and teach all nations "to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:20) Many Christian teachers are virtual hypocrites because they actually avoid teaching the commandments of Jesus. Some of his 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) "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:8-10)

But there is a catch. We may not get what we want because we ask for the wrong reasons. "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) Be in the world but not of the world. (John 15:19, 17:14-16) Conservative and controversial Pastor of Grace Community Church, John MacArthur, Jr., who takes biblical scripture literally, says that if a church develops a gospel which is not offensive to worldly human values than its message isn't true, and it is not Christianity. That kind of gospel likely will not produce many converts, although it fills his megachurch in Sun Valley, CA. So, if you feel confused, consider that Apostle Paul apparently was confused also: "We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27) So it seems Paul thought the will of GOD determines life as it is for "God's people." Since everyone is a creation of GOD, theofatalism says their prayers and the results are acts of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer.

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) Why then should we ask him not to? So, which are you going to believe? It depends upon what you are given in church and the authority that you accept. All in GOD's will of course.

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." He never said what would shorten the torments of man. Possibly, it is giving up hope and accepting what is because it must be necessary, or it would be different. Either everyone has free will and we must live with consequences, or everything is predetermined and we must live with the consequences. Or belief in free will is predetermined, whether yes or no.

Faith – belief without proof - is the foundation of all religious systems which drive cultures and human behavior. People believe all kinds of different things by the power of faith. In theofatalism, faith is confidence in the Most-High GOD as generator, operator, destroyer. The Bible, and all holy books, can be accepted only by faith because their historicity cannot be proven. So it is with theofatalism. With faith no proof is necessary and without faith no proof is sufficient. Is faith a gift or a choice or both? It seems to be 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) Where does such faith come from? Faith is described as a gift of God, and he/it decides the measure of faith each one receives, which comes from hearing the story of Jesus. (Ephesians 2:8-9, 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 about theofatalism. How can it be explained unless it is driven by the Prime Force in the universe, and how can it be accepted unless by will of Most-High GOD, Generator, Operator, Destroyer?

Note: For centuries, theologians have discussed the apparent connection between hope and faith in the Bible. "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. Everyone lives by faith; the only variable is what that faith is based in. Biblically speaking, Faith says whatever you are hoping for is here now, as in reliance on the love of God prevailing in the suffering of tragedies. (Lamentations 3:19-33) 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. (John 3:16, Matthew 16:15-17, Ephesians 2:8) Faith is connected to actions because one cannot live on love alone, even if it is from God. "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds." (James 2:14-18) Faith, hope, and action, these three are not often connected in Christian churches. All in GOD's will of course.

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 we 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 peace and serenity in the sea of human suffering. It is no more than a grain of sand in a brick among all the bricks ever laid in all the buildings ever built.* 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 many 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) You may ask yourself, "What has that got to do with me?"

Note: Charity is translated as love in the New International Version and all other modern translations. Perhaps charity was used in the KJV because King James needed money. Recall Jesus told his disciples there is no greater love than to lay down their lives for their friends – not sinners or families or countries or the Lord - and his friends are those who obey his commands. (John 15:12- 14) Might this declaration include personal suicide to preserve your estate for your children instead of wasting it on futile medical expenses? This kind of love transcends gender, nationality, creed, and personality. Scholars have described some 320 commands of Jesus, depending on interpretations. From his pioneering work in kinesiology, Dr. David R. Hawkins, M.D., PH.D., estimated that only four percent of the world's population ever reaches the level of

biblical Love, and only 0.4 percent reaches the level of Unconditional Love. (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.42. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition. Scholars have described several forms of love: love of family, love of country, love of spouse, love of things, love of God, etc. But they all may be just counterfeits. “What often passes for love in common human understanding is primarily attachment, dependency, and possessiveness.” (Hawkins, David R., M.D., PH.D., Letting Go, pp. 256-257, Hay House. 2012 Kindle Edition.)

Jesus declared, “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” (Luke 6:27-36)

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. Possibly, the more one suffers in this life the less penance one must endure in purgatory to prepare for entrance into heaven – which has no basis in biblical scriptures – as taught in the Catholic catechism (210,211, 1030-1032, 1472,1473). 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 and felt abandoned by God. 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. “If the future appears dark, embrace the darkness. Come to know it, understand it, and internalize the darkness as much as is necessary to respond to events as they arise. The alternative is disingenuous self-deception, or willful ignorance. Neither you nor anyone else will benefit from fantasizing about a future that is clearly not to be. Hopes dashed are not, in fact, properly called “hopes” at all. They are manifestations of a stubborn refusal to see what one does not wish to see.” (*Ferraiolo, William. Meditations on Self-Discipline and Failure: Stoic Exercise for Mental Fitness, p. 163, 2017, John Hunt Publishing. Kindle Edition.*) 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 and everywhere on earth. Even in the White House and the halls of Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court. 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.” There are things that we think we know and things that we know we don’t know and things that we don’t know that we don’t know. “But as we’ve seen, we cannot shut out truth completely, because it is part of us. No single religion or spiritual system can lay claim to truth as its exclusive property. If it does, you can be sure that it serves the ego and not God. (The Most-High GOD may be beyond imagination and even comprehension, but its truth is seen in the creation, the operation, and the destruction of the universe from atoms to galaxies.) Truth cannot be confined or limited to a single set of beliefs. It will filter through in all languages and cultures, in every era and epoch, in countless forms, and to anyone who is ready to hear it.” (*Rosenthal MD, Robert. From Loving One to One Love, p.150. G&D Media, 2020 Kindle Edition.*) Dr. Rosenthal does not explain why some people are ready to receive “truth” and others are not. There is absolute universal truth, as in “the ambient temperature is warmer in summer than winter,” and there is perceived truth based on thoughts and opinions as in “honey tastes sweeter than mustard.” Some truth is derived from empirical observation and some is derived from intuition – “the ability to see around corners.” Scientists often begin with an assumption and conduct experiments to prove or disprove its validity. But, some intuitions apparently cannot be proven by physical experiments, although some are.

This intuitive knowing was the power 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. Albert 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.*)

Of his seminal career in human psychology, 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. Every creative person is a duality or a synthesis of contradictory qualities. On the one side he is a human being with a personal life while on the other he is an impersonal creative process. 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. He recanted, but he never changed his belief because he knew it was true. 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., M.D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, pp.216-217, Hay House. 2001 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, may be the only thing for you if 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 may be the right choice for you also. As with the law of gravity, you can ignore it, but apparently you cannot avoid your destiny. All in the will of Most-High GOD of course.

ACIM says a universal theology is not possible, but a universal spiritual experience is. If such a thing is possible, Dr. David R. 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., M. D., PH.D., The Eye of the I, p.74. Hay House. 2001 Kindle Edition.*) This attitude requires judgment to evaluate the different beliefs about life and death in terms of the benefits and burdens in each situation. For example, consider the necessary side effects that come with all medical drugs. We can choose only which combination of benefits and burdens we want to live with, but the choices we make may be the will of Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - of course. This is the conclusion of theofatalism.

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) But it comes with benefits and burdens. Stoic philosopher, 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."

(Ferraiolo, William. *Meditations on Self-Discipline and Failure: Stoic Exercise for Mental Fitness* 2017, p. 163, John Hunt Publishing. Kindle Edition.) Think you can handle that?

But recall that biblical scripture says with more knowledge comes more grief and with more wisdom comes more sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 1:17-18, Romans 7:23-25) GOD did not make any one-sided coins. Sometimes, the burdens of living overwhelm the benefits, and the benefits of dying prevail. 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. “Life is an experiment we did not set up and it does not seem to be ours to terminate prematurely.” Although several suicides are described in the Bible and the sixth commandment is you shall not murder, some theologians have concluded a Christian who commits suicide will be forgiven because the only sin not forgivable is “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 12:31-32) This is because Holy Spirit is the pathway to spiritual enlightenment, the ultimate goal of life.

Summary

In summary, after watching his wife die untimely after a decade of breast cancer, Lewis Tagliaferre was thrust into a depressing religious and spiritual crisis when his traditional church could not provide any comfort. To survive, 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, creator and controller of everything from atoms to galaxies. It is derived from biblical scriptures, Hindu and Buddhist 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. GOD makes atheists too.

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.” But theofatalism claims 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 belief in theofatalism challenges the assumption of human free will, which is presented as a necessary illusion in the will of Most-High GOD 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; everyone is born doomed to hell unless they accept Christ as Savior. 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. If you must imagine the future,

try imagining it all must be the will of Most-High GOD and every decision from the smallest to the largest is predestined with inevitable consequences – from atoms to galaxies.

Tagliaferre discovered the Chartres Labyrinth as the symbol of theofatalism, which is different from a maze that is meant to confuse and frustrate. The labyrinth presents a compulsory preordained 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 at conception by the will of Most-High GOD. Everyone makes many decisions through life linking up to their present situation. If any link in the chain of causal determinism were different the present would be different, and there are no do-overs. 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 can thus be replaced with acceptance of what is as being necessary, from atoms to galaxies, or it would be different.

The belief in theofatalism comes with five general principles of reality and five steps of response for people who are suffering from events they did not create that they cannot fix when they feel abandoned by God and man. Together, they comprise a new form of treatment for religious and spiritual problems called Accommodating Reality 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. Accommodating to reality requires seeking information from a wide range of sources and considering options outside of learned boundaries. However, decisions large and small must be made under conditions of risk and uncertainty with unpredictable outcomes which may have been predetermined at conception, leading to the needs for courage and surrender to the will of GOD – generator, operator, destroyer. 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

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. 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 the holy books or what they contain, but about how they are created, accepted or rejected, and promoted. It is about the One source behind them, all of them: Most-High GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. Theofatalism may presently be as unimaginable as was the discovery in 1609 CE by Galileo Galilei that planet 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. There is nothing really new of course as the creation of all things is complete, although much is yet to be discovered. 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 (ego) 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.” Humans appear to be elements of nature no more or less than any other forms of life on earth, and possibly not the most evolved of their species. As such, we must be and act as we are created. Also, beware of getting stuck in endless seeking of truth that is beyond knowing. Sometime, every spiritual searcher will come to their personal consciousness summit and need to let go of the rest. 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.”

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.

Appendix A – Inventory of Complicated Grief Therapy

(<https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/7/6/67/htm>)

Historically, researchers have measured spiritual struggle by accessing negative emotions, behaviors, and attitudes that an individual experiences in relation to God and, in some cases, to his/her spiritual network of believers. Specifically, studies have been conducted that examine spiritual distress using a single item, others use factor analysis to derive subscales, and still others investigate this construct using event-specific scales. Although useful, these instruments assess spiritual struggle using only a few items. Some researchers support the parsing of such subscales into specific items, finding that this informs their exploration of aspects of spiritual struggle, such as anger and disappointment with God.

The development and validation of a psychometrically sound measure designed specifically to capture signs of spiritual distress in bereavement can advance grief research in new ways. Specifically, a more nuanced understanding of spiritual aspects of bereavement processes is now possible with the development of a measure of distinctive aspects of spiritual struggle, such as doubt and resentment toward God, dissatisfaction with religious activities and fellowship, and substantial changes in the griever's spiritual beliefs and behaviors following the loved one's death. When believers, who view life events as being mediated by the hand of God, sense that the death of their cherished loved one came as a direct result of that same hand, this scenario can destabilize the griever's spiritual sense-making, as all of life's well-established assumptions are now likewise called into question.

The Inventory of Complicated Spiritual Grief (ICSG) is clinically useful in evaluating the spiritually inclined griever's faith journey during bereavement. Additionally, it can help determine specifically which religious/spiritual issues might come up for a given believer while engaged in therapy. Because both mental health professionals and their spiritually distressed clients often feel unsure about how to broach the topic of spiritual discord following a death, use of an additional tool such as the ICSG is sometimes warranted. For example, in some cases, it may be that a therapist approaches discussions of a spiritual kind with hesitation and cautiousness. In other cases, it may be that a bereaved client feels a sense of self-disappointment and shame in expressing his/her honest sentiments toward God. Whatever the scenario, introducing conversations centered on such things as the survivor's confusion about how to make spiritual sense of the death, feelings of abandonment by fellow congregants, disappointment with God, or other complicated and emotive topics, thoughts, and responses can be challenging for many mourners.

ICSG is not primarily about disgruntled, disillusioned believers walking away from God. Rather, it appears to be primarily about spiritually hurting individuals who are desperately searching and seeking to make spiritual sense of their loss and are coming up short. Experience confirms the surprising finding that a spiritual crisis does not necessarily indicate immature or weak faith. Rather, when facing life without a treasured attachment figure, even people with a firm faith in God can unexpectedly falter under the burden of grief. Even when grievers walk away from God and/or their faith network, it does not rule out their return to either at a later date, especially once their grief symptoms subside.

Thus, by simply asking clients to complete the ICSG between or before sessions, counselors could find the scale useful as a therapeutic conversational catalyst for healing. The therapist might

suggest that the patient, “Start anywhere...Which of these items that you marked are important for you today? Are there one or two that really set you off when you think about God or your church?” As the clinician invites deep probing of the client’s pain in order to craft and utilize treatment techniques precisely suited for the situation, discussions can ensue in which the spiritually distressed griever can finally speak the unspeakable.

Inventory of Complicated Spiritual Grief (ICSG)

Original 28-Item Version by Dr. Laurie A. Burke, PH.D. and Robert A. Neimeyer

(www.burkepsychological.com)

1. I don’t understand why God has made it so hard for me.
2. I no longer feel safe and protected by God.
3. I struggle with accepting how a good God allows bad things to happen.
4. I can’t help feeling angry with God.
5. I’m confused as to why God would let this happen.
6. My trust in God has been shaken.
7. I have withdrawn from my fellowship with other believers.
8. I go out of my way to avoid spiritual/religious activities (e.g., prayer, worship, Bible reading).
9. I find that spiritual/religious activities are not very fulfilling (e.g., prayer, worship, Bible reading).
10. I have lost my desire to pray.
11. I find it impossible to pray.
12. I feel God is not listening when I pray.
13. I feel my loss is unfair.
14. I feel others who have not lost someone close are especially blessed.
15. I feel others who have not lost someone close cannot understand me.
16. I find it difficult to surrender my life to God.
17. I feel like God has forsaken me, or like He has forgotten or passed over me.
18. I don’t feel as comforted by church fellowship as I used to.
19. I don’t feel very much like joining in fellowship to praise God or to glorify Him.
20. The strong guiding light of my faith has grown dim and I feel lost.
21. My faith has been shaken.
22. I am a faithful believer, so I don’t understand why God did not protect me.
23. My focus is more on my loss than on the will of God.
24. I have lost my desire to worship.
25. I find it impossible to worship.
26. I sense the absence of God more than I do the presence of God.
27. The tragedy of my loss has made me question whether God truly exists.
28. I have concerns about my loved one’s eternal welfare.

References:

Note: All quotations in this work are included under the “fair use” provision of U.S. Copyright law for educational use only.

(Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.)

Books by Lewis Tagliaferre

Recovery from Loss. 1990, 2001, CAPT: ISBN 0-935652-56-6

Kisses aren't Contracts. 1997, CEC Group: SBN 0- 9659584-1-8

Voices of Sedona. 1997, 2006, iUniverse: ISBN 13: 978-0-595-39367-1

Lessons from Sedona. 2010, iUniverse: ISBN 978-1-4502-1563-3

Baby Boomer Lamentations. 2011, iUniverse: ISBN 978-1-4620-1034-9

Theofatalism. 2011, iUniverse: ISBN 978-1-4620-2247-2

A Labyrinth Walk of Life. 2018, Christian Faith Publishing: ISBN 978-1-64140-776-2

Creating Serenity in Chaos. 2018, Christian Faith Publishing: ISBN 978-1-64349-102-8

Better Living, Better Dying. 2018, Christian Faith Publishing: ISBN 978-1-64349-839-3

The Bible You Don't Get in Church. 2019, Christian Faith Publishing: ISBN 978-1-64492-020-6

My Resurrection from Hell. 2019, Christian Faith Publishing: ISBN 978-1-0980-0067-7

Email: lewtag@aol.com

www.schoolofthefatalism.org

www.facebook.com/theofatalism

Author Biography

Lewis Tagliaferre was born on January 31, 1933 in Ridgeley, WV. His parents were immigrants, his mother from Germany and his father from Italy. He had one younger brother while his parents fostered another son. After graduating from Fort Hill High School in Cumberland, MD he enlisted in the USAF, serving on the crew of a RB-36 Bomber from 1951 until 1955. He married Rosalene M. Dettra on August 14, 1954 with whom he had a daughter and a son. He graduated from the Capitol Radio Engineering Institute in Washington, DC, now Capitol Technology University. After several positions in defense department contracting, Tagliaferre completed his degree in business administration from Southeastern University, magna cum laude. As a project manager for the National Electrical Contractors Association, he published a technical journal, wrote many industry magazine articles and conducted training seminars across the country. He and his wife served faithfully in their church home, but after her untimely death in 1985, Tagliaferre found it impossible to continue on that pathway, so he set out to find a new faith that he could live with through his unspeakable grief. Through

reading widely and researching many world resources, Lewis Tagliaferre wrote a dozen books on his discoveries, leading to his capstone work in this final volume. As a nobody, without fan club or national platform, he offers this work to anyone and all those who are called/chosen to receive it, if not now, then possibly at some time and place in the indefinitely uncertain future.