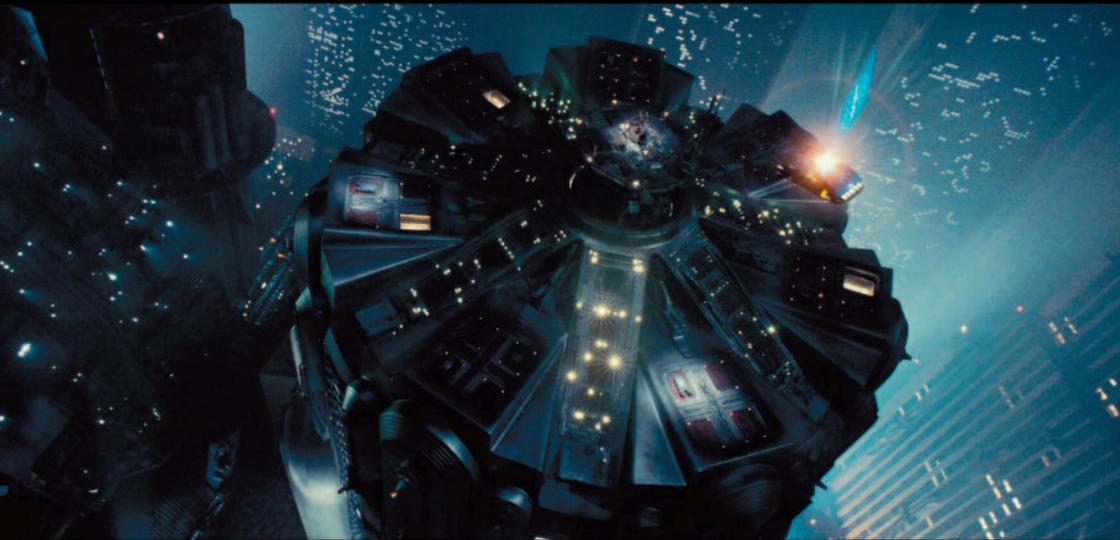


God Bless You



“Let us build  
ourselves a city and  
a tower...” Genesis 11: 4

...means that they fabricated a form of doctrine...such that when charity towards the neighbour departs and self-love takes its place, the doctrine of faith is of no account at all except in so far as it can be converted into worship of self. (AC 1304)



In the Bible, ‘city’ never means a city but something doctrinal or something heretical. (AC402)

It may seem trite to make this statement, but most people, secular and non-secular, recognise that the Bible is purported to be a spiritual document. Atheism may reject that spirituality is an integral part of reality, but nonetheless it is held in that regard. But assuming that it is a spiritual document, it follows that its concerns are spiritual.

But even such a simple statement poses problems, for what exactly is it that is meant by the word 'spiritual'? What is it that makes what are, after all, only words on a page written long ago significant in terms of spirituality? Is it enough to think this because the word 'God' is used so much?

Most people do not ask such questions, and it is enough for them that it is called spiritual, 'the utterances of Almighty God', to accept it as such at face value, and like the advert for varnish, declare that it means 'exactly what it says on the tin'.

But this can hardly be the case, and the fact that such a view is so extant in modern times is cause for wonder. The fact is that the biblical use of words and the meanings attached to them has become somewhat obscured by the dominance of the literalist view, and these meanings are largely based on the use of words whose meanings are to be found in any decent secular dictionary. This is what has led to difficulties with understanding what is meant by 'spiritual', as if its meaning retained something to do with being purely 'otherworldly', certainly not this-worldly, and since it is a this-world we inhabit, knowledge about any other kind is beyond our ken and must therefore be accepted as a kind of blind faith.

Yet this is not the case. Much of the meaning of the Bible, its spiritual meaning specifically, can be gleaned from an understanding of its terms of operation. Many people would, naturally, shy away from this kind

of assertion since it appears to be over-intellectual and hardly spiritual, so perhaps an example can serve to illustrate this.

Because the Bible makes a number of statements from which we surmise that the world was created in seven days, the retention of this statement as fact is determined by the sense we have of what is meant by 'created' and the 'earth'. Dictionaries concerned to define these words might do so with expressions like 'form from nothing', or 'make or form' on the side of the word 'create' and 'soil' or 'planet' where 'earth' is the subject. Where the word 'create' is concerned, however, what will not be found is the verb 'to prepare'. And yet, this is an integral feature of the meaning of the original Hebrew word. 'Earth' too, has overtones of a receptiveness which is hardly what we think when we read this word. These are examples of how a meaning becomes overlaid by the appearance of others that are stipulated at a later time, and then applied backwards as interpretation so that the original meanings are effectively wiped out.

Given the primacy of this word 'preparation', from a biblical and spiritual perspective, its meaning is then never disconnected from the words that surround it, whatever these may be. So, for instance, the word 'earth' has the same root as 'Adam' which spills over into the meaning of 'ground', 'soil', 'field', 'land' and so on, so that the distinction between the person and all these others becomes blurred, and Adam becomes a perception of man as an embodiment and archetypal representation of all that is meant by earth, which is effectively that which is prepared for reception. Furthermore, the root meaning of Adam is 'red', as is the word for 'ruby' and Edom, and red is associated with depth of feeling, so already the notion of ground is one that has a heart stem.

A similar form of treatment is also to be found in the word 'heaven', so that what is found spiritually in the opening line of the Bible is the

preparation of 'man' as a creature (i.e. a living thing in an external sense) for a union of 'man' as an internal living creature (i.e. a reflection of heaven).

None of this is available to sight, and therefore to understanding, when the meanings of words are taken to be those that have passed into common usage through dictionary definitions that are stripped of any kind of spiritual connotations. As a result, we are left with a purely physical view, in which what is spiritual, or the nature of God, is seen to be little better than a glorified manufacturing of physical reality. The great tragedy is that this latter view is now the widespread and common view. This is, in fact, a straw man view, set up by those whose aim is to knock it down, and this is a view that contributes absolutely nothing to a spiritual view concerned entirely with salvation.

A person who is taken to court for whatever offence is always offered legal representation. The reason for this is obvious; due process of law is extremely precise and defined by terms of operation that are not to be found in the common vernacular. Persons attempting to present their own defence are foolhardy if these terms of operation are unknown to them. The same principles of specialisation apply across the board to all forms and categories of knowledge; each particular category has a very well-defined field of operation which is facilitated by specific language uses, representing a specialised concept structure. Yet when it comes to matters of spirituality, and to religion as an expression of it, it is imagined that ordinary language will suffice. The example given of 'creation' as preparation clearly shows that this is not the case, and that ignorance of this has led to disastrous consequences. To add a little more to this subject, we should note that besides the word 'creation', the words 'form' and 'made' are also used, and in some places all at the same time. This cannot be simply for the sake of variety as if they all meant the same thing, otherwise we should translate the Hebrew into nonsensical

English, such as ‘Jehovah has created you, and also he has created you and created you’. Once something is prepared, however, it can be acted on, altered and brought to more receptive states. This is what such technical words mean, and cannot be surmised from the meanings usually attached to them. In fact, the very ambiguity inherent in such language is deliberate, because the perception of man as an embodiment of many things, spiritual and physical, is an essential requirement. Considered in this way, every mention of seeds, harvests, famines in the land and so on, which are mentioned constantly, have a direct bearing on the spiritual state of man as the embodiment or mirror of everything.

When this notion of man encapsulating the whole as an individual reflection is lost, it is at that point that what is spiritual is lost, and this applies across the board to virtually all religions. Consider merely the parable of the wheat and tares (Matthew 13: 25-40) as an example of this. On the surface, it seems to be saying that at some future point, maybe after death, there will be a separation made between good people and bad people, that the bad people will go to hell and the good people will go to heaven. This is easy to interpret, one might think. But consider this: Jesus spoke in parables so that those who could hear him would understand them, while those who refused to listen to him would not understand them. Is it not the case that both camps could easily understand this reading of the parable? Is it not obvious what it means? Or is there something else here, enfolded in these words, that requires more thought. What is the inner meaning if not that which is plainly visible? It is the fact that the wheat and tares are those things which are planted in the ground of Adam, or all men, which means both sexes, for ground is man. Man, therefore, is also a spiritually technical term and implies that which is almost entirely a mode of reception. Man is a receiver, just as the ground is also a receiver of heat, light, water, trace elements and above all, seeds. But the state of man, especially the unprepared ground of man, is such that the inclination within is to

Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

Then the Philistines said, 'Who hath done this?' And they answered, 'Samson, the son in law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion'.

Judges 15: 4-6

bend in two directions, both up and down at the same time, directions that are variously considered as good and bad, or positive and negative, or earthly and spiritual. (These states, too, are highly technical in their implications and beyond the scope of the current subject.) For the sake of brevity, what is bad or downward tending is threatening to overwhelm that which is upward tending. But more significantly, when they are growing, a tare is virtually indistinguishable from wheat and comes to fruition because it is capable of feigning 'wheatness'. Nor can these be removed without damage to the whole person, and so the parable, its deeper sense, shows something of the necessity of some higher spiritual ability or propensity that is able to effect such a separation without damaging the essential integrity of the person. Without it, the danger is that meanings become inverted and much that is bad will be regarded as good and vice versa. One hardly need spell out the implications of this in our modern context. For the time being, notice how much more significant this 'reading' is of that parable, when the meanings of words are allowed to carry their own connotations, once the secular notion of tares and wheat are removed. The latter are positivistic and appeal merely to the rational mind concerned with physicality, while the former 'reading' (as opposed to interpretation) requires a more holistic frame of mind in which reason serves the spirit, and is not commandeered into merely public service.

Already, the major words of ground, heaven, seed, man, harvest and creation are showing how a deeper level of meaning becomes apparent when these words carry spiritual embodiments. These all reflect a relationship that exists, or can exist, between those elements of a deeper life and the life as it is experienced – often called the ordinary life – which is transformed by them.

Yet this relationship of elements is anything but ordinary. Even in the terms of the language in which such meanings may be obscure initially,

readers of the Bible are struck by the epic scale at which it is pitched. Can it be that the individual is possessed of such enormous scope? Yet the denial of such meaning has an effect, and it is one that leaves the scale unaltered, but shifted to the surface. In the absence of spiritual meaning, we find the tares of our lives to be the dominant force striving to make themselves appear to be possessed of this scale. We find it in the tree of knowledge, attempting to supplant the tree of Life; or Babel, striving to reach up to and supplant heaven itself in its attempt for total mastery. Yet all the great vision and scope of the spiritual is brushed aside in the secular world as it re-enacts the incident in the Garden of Eden daily, and insisting that its own tares of meaning are the real truth, and exclusive at that.

We should be mindful of the fact that most people in the Christian world have been raised in a religious tradition that is struggling with meaning, given the way that the terms of reference have become etiolated through the surreptitious and largely unconscious processes of language change. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the use of the words ‘blessed’ and ‘blessing’. It is quite clear in our own time that these have a specific connotation, but like any system of knowledge, can it be that they have a lost meaning that is not at all part of that connotation? If so, the implications are quite significant.

Going back to the very beginning of the Bible, we find it fully intended from the opening line that a preparation is being undertaken to establish a relationship between heaven and earth as representative of every single person at an individual level in which the drama of a ‘new creation’ is enacted. That relationship is actually a search for a way of joining those elements together, and the technical word used in the Bible to represent that joining together is ‘covenant’. When we consider the nature of the Bible, pregnant with such intention, the customary terms that define the two parts are ‘Old Testament’ and ‘New Testament’. In actuality, since

the joining of heaven and earth within us is a timeless process, and never-ending, running from generation to generation, we could more accurately replace the word 'Testament' with 'Covenant'. The problem is that this sense of a joining together in a dynamic way that is implied by covenant has been reduced to a more passive sense in words like 'agreement' in which the urgency of a true covenant is lost. The word is now steeped with a way of thinking determined by secularism and by a conditional spirit. When applied backwards to the spiritual context, it retains this sense which is bolstered further by the manner in which the Bible has been written. That is to say, it reads like a list of conditions: if we obey God, and if we follow all his commandments, and if we undertake to follow all His precepts and decrees, then we will be rewarded. This is a very secular way of thinking, and when religion is seen this way, it is little better than rule-following. However, in the spiritual context, a covenant is a participative activity, a two way process, much like the vision of angels ascending and descending Jacob's ladder in his dream (Genesis 28: 12). Jacob, being the last of the patriarchs, also represents the one closest to our own nature as physical beings, and one sees this reflected in his initial understanding of this event, in which he agrees in that early stage to a joining to something higher, but only if he gets what he desires. Genesis (28: 20). But is this not how all life journeys begin? In fact, that desire for some kind of reward exists at that lowest level of entry in the process of preparation, and is an integral part of it. The participative spirit is one that does not have built-in guarantees, but in the process of radical changes, one begins to notice those elements in that process that balk further progress, and these are, generally speaking, those elements of tare-thinking that fake the genuine spiritual element in one's self that prevents a joining together. These are linked to our own intentions and desires that do no more than serve our own interests, while the desire for a union with a deeper life promotes simultaneously the pursuit for seeking for ways of weakening their grip on our lives. As this weakening

occurs, over a period of a lifetime, so there then begins a new kind of life that is meant by angels descending. Our part in the covenant is the not-doings of things that prevent conjunction, while the part in the contract on the deeper side is the instilling of more significant intentions which is meant by the Lord making his abode in us. It is this joining together that is heralded by preparation at the beginning of the Bible, and which is meant by being 'born again' or more accurately 'born from above'. So one should see that the notion of a Bible expressing a creationist account of the universe, or this particular planet, as something insignificant in contrast to the evolution of the human spirit as the true creation story of incredibly epic proportions.

Unfortunately, because we are steeped so long in our own traditions, lost meanings have an unfortunate side effect. For instance, there is a sense in which a certain word immediately springs to mind on hearing the phrase, 'joined together' with respect to the Bible, and that is 'marriage'. We think of this phrase in particular: 'What God has put together, let no man put asunder'. Consequently, whether thinking from a secular perspective, or a spiritual one, most people tend to think that this infers nothing more than a union between a man and a woman. There is a certain coincidence, and hence a similarity, on a literal level, but it comes at great cost. This sense of mere commitment is unable to represent what is meant by that joining together at the deepest level, except in this superficial manner. After all, what are we to understand when we find this word 'marriage' used in reference to land as in this passage from Isaiah 62: 4:

*You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and you shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight is in Her, and your land married; for the Lord delights in you and your land shall be married.* At this point, Zion and Jerusalem are the subject, and their joining to the Lord (Jehovah). It is for this reason that they are described as

‘married’, for at this point these two levels of the spiritual make one, and it is this that facilitates a subsequent joining to the Lord. It is this joining that is meant by ‘married’. What follows on from this passage is that which represents something of the intensity of this union on a human level to the Lord (Isaiah 62: 5):

*For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*

Notice the subtlety of the use of such a representation. On the literal level, it appears as if the human marriage is the real subject while the ‘married land’ is the metaphor. But as one moves away from the literal view, polarities invert, and the subject is always the Lord, and how all things are joined to Him. Bearing in mind that it has already been said that ‘earth’ is the receptive that is man in physical or external form, ‘land’ is generally speaking the state prior to receptivity and therefore incapable of conjunction. For this reason, it is in this form that it is often referred to as barren, or infertile. The two levels of spirituality already referred to are those where love dominates in one while wisdom dominates in the other, and the uniting of these are represented in us as the union of reciprocal intentions of the heart and the mind acting in unison. When they do so, real things start to happen. When they do not, the dominance of one becomes tare-like, creating the appearance of a union only, something like a marriage, but which is in fact a sham.

This last line is a good place to pause, for what these joinings imply for us today not only depends on how we understand the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets in the person of Jesus Christ, but that He Himself is the exemplar and archetype of the true marriage. Given the current political pressures on the traditional Christian church to

recognise same sex marriages, it is important that a more coherent understanding of Christ and His mission be presented in order to prevent the tare-like form overlaying the genuine article.

The Old Covenant comes to full flower in the New Covenant, especially so in John's gospel where the representative form of the old order is turned into a fact in the New Covenant when the redeemer of the old called Jehovah becomes the real person, Jesus Christ. Yet again, we find here a technical language that has become misused over time so that this reality is hardly visible. 'My glory', says Jehovah, 'I do not give to another' Isaiah: (48: 11). Yet we find Jesus Christ constantly asking the Father to glorify him. What does this word mean? The majority of Christians, even today, will think of this word as meaning 'make great' or 'worthy of praise', or something along those lines. This is an odd notion to some extent, since such meanings tend to perceive God in remote terms, where he is perceived from a distance, yet the whole purpose of Jesus Christ is for God to become adapted in order to be comprehensible at our own human level. Keeping in mind the emphasis on joining, what we find in the New Covenant is the culmination of all the different joinings together found in the Old Covenant becoming a real presence in a new order of the relations of the spiritual and the natural worlds that each person mirrors. It is this that is contained in the very word 'Word' in the first line of John's gospel, 'In the beginning was the Word'. The more accurate translation of the Greek word 'logos' is actually 'dialogue'. In this gospel, Jesus Christ is constantly referring to and speaking to the Father, in effect establishing a closer union with Him. This gradual uniting is what is meant by glorifying, and it is only when the two are joined that, as stated above, real things start to happen. That reality is what emanates from that union and which ultimately occurs in order to establish a means of having an effect within us, an effect that is referred to as the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, it is clear that this cannot occur before the

glorification of Jesus Christ as stated in the same gospel: The Holy Spirit was not yet because Jesus Christ was not yet glorified (John 7: 39). And as Jesus himself said, unless he goes away, the Advocate cannot come to his disciples (John 16: 7). The word ‘comforter’ or ‘Paraclete’ is used in other translations, and at each turn we see here something of what is meant by the real presence of the Christ within the person through the work of the Holy Spirit that only occurs because Jesus and the Father make one. He is, as One, the agent of action which comes through their expression of union in the Holy Spirit, and here we have something unique – a God that is One and is also triune in nature, a triune that is an absolute necessary form if there is to be redemption, or the taking back of his own to Himself.

What we should see as the heart of the Bible is this God, his triune nature, and the work of salvation that it exists for in terms of covenants. It is for this reason that the word ‘marriage’ appears so often, for it references the zeal of the Lord for the redemption of all, and this is only possible through that which emanates from Him which is the Holy



Spirit coming into being, facilitating a real presence within us, once the Father is united to the Son, and who in that form is able to make His home in us.

It is unfortunate that for the most part in the Christian tradition, this perspective on a triune God is largely unknown, even though the Trinity is a fundamental tenet of belief. It seems to be enough to consider it as a mystery, above all human understanding and almost unapproachable. What should strike us as far more awesome is the great Mercy which is Jehovah taking the triune form in order to make Himself approachable and receivers of the Holy Spirit, since clearly we are the objects of interest within the heart of heaven which seeks to make its home in us.

Virtually all spiritual traditions are aware of this triune in their own ways. Eastern philosophy, for instance, speaks of the One, and then the Second, and then the ten thousand things. There is the union of Yin and Yang elements producing a triad which is greater than the sum of its parts. There is the 'To Peras' and Apeiron' of Greek thought, which are an echo of the fixed and loose elements of all the above. All these active and passive elements ultimately come to be represented in a marriage, the highest and deepest form of which is the union of the Father as Love and the Son as Wisdom, which human marriages mirror.

All these different elements within us, operating through the natural mind, the senses that feed it, the rational enthusing it and the spiritual inclining these towards heaven, it is these things that need to be re-ordered in such a way that they reflect something of glorification in a human way that mirrors it, and this is what is meant by regeneration, or being born from above. In an age that bears witness to the popularisation of all things holistic, from diets to medicines to food production and planetary awareness, it is astounding that the most holistic of all images

is that of the regenerated person who becomes the ‘little heaven’ that then becomes an image of the whole (and that means heaven on earth) in human form. It is the sense of this essential meaning of marriage that the state of preparation augured at the very beginning of the Bible becomes a transformation of all into brides awaiting the groom which is the culmination point at the end of the Bible. In between, we find different levels of covenant – the natural mind transforming as an initial step represented by Jacob becoming Israel, then the rational mind learning to see through appearances represented by Isaac evolving out of Ishmael, and so on. And at each step, as different elements become joined together, so those joinings are the source of meaning for the word ‘blessed’ or ‘blessing’. This too, like marriage, is a much used word but with little awareness of its technical meaning.

In essence, the use of the words ‘bless’ and ‘curse’ represents the direction of our inclinations. Those which tend upwards are called ‘blessings’ while those tending downwards are called ‘curses’. These tendencies are not essentially intellectual but stem from the heart. All feeling and emotion is heart-based. Spirituality is concerned ultimately with the state of those inclinations and puts in place a programme of doctrines in the mind that will act on it. These represent the beginnings of the regenerated person, and in the Old Covenant were referred to as commands, statutes, ordinances and precepts, each working at different levels of the mind. When any one of these begins to awaken a corresponding heartfelt state, it was referred to as a blessing, but if subsequently a rejection occurs, this was referred to as a curse, a sign of the person choosing the downward tending state which effectively looked to the natural mind in an exclusive form. Consequently, it is the upward tending state that is called ‘holy’, and it is this joining together that makes for a truly holistic view.

The number of places that refer to this in the Bible is literally thousands, since this ultimately is the whole purpose of this book.

These states of blessing consequently always refer to the Divine nature that the Lord put on while human, and why He is the archetype of the true marriage.

But now one should consider what must be in the minds of most people when they consider the words ‘marriage’ and ‘blessing’. Generally speaking, and as stated already, most people think of such a partnership as nothing more than a commitment made between two people, and that a ‘blessing’ is nothing more than an expression of approval. This is not the meaning of these words, as this essay has gone to some lengths to point out. Consequently, what we find in the church today is a softening of position that has bowed to the pressures of a secular view that has nothing in common with the spiritual, barring a superficial, tare-like resemblance. It also points to the need for the church to re-examine its own doctrines and terms or reference and to see how they must be applied if they are to be relevant to a modern world. Because of the slow, almost imperceptible deterioration of meaning, the spiritual context that vivifies the Bible is lost completely beneath the loud voices that talk up the creation myth; the loss of meaning has led to the need for a blind faith since there is no other way to understand religion. As a result of the loss of its own spiritual meanings, it can find no argument against the notion of a same sex marriage. The latter bears no resemblance whatever to the Divine Marriage as outlined here in brief, but it does possess all the characteristics of a fake passing itself off as real that has already been referred to as tare-thinking.

One must be careful here not to imply by this any kind of judgement. Not judging, after all, is one of the principle codes of practice of the Christian ethos. However, nor can one simply ignore the meanings of words in their spiritual context. A same sex relationship that is recognised in secular law is one that guarantees the benefits of such a partnership, without fear or favour, enjoyed by any committed couple

as symbolised in the expressions of a secular marriage. But it is not what can be construed as a marriage in a spiritual context, for it is effectively an imposition upon the Divine Will to reflect matters in terms of ours. The words of the Lord's Prayer indicate the more substantial directive, that the will of the Father be reflected on earth, not the other way round.

Church attendance figures are falling, and the world, it seems, is becoming more and more secular in its intentions. At the same time, we should note that this movement towards exclusive secularism is in tandem with a growing trend towards literalism which effectively allows the spiritual content of the meanings of words to dissolve away. It is a strange concept to imagine that the churches would be more attractive if they appeared more liberal and accepting of the diverse culture we live in. But this is a mistake. It is far more realistic to see that the church would become more attractive if it were able to present a much deeper conception of spirituality than is currently available which can throw its light upon the complexities of modern life, and show how the opening of the spiritual dimension of the mind relates to it in an informative and reformatory way. Christianity as a religion is in decline because it has been allowed to become simplistic. The re-attachment of true meaning to its terms of reference would go a long way to making religion a real presence in people's lives.



yes Im the great pretender  
saying that Im doing well  
is such I pretend too much  
nely but no one can tell  
yes Im the great pretender  
fit in a world of my own  
the game but to my real sha  
left me to grieve all alone  
this feeling of make-believ  
feel what my heart can't c  
Im the great pretender  
ighin and gay like a clown  
to be what Im not you see  
ring my heart like a crown  
ing that you're still around



Is it real or is it Memorex?  
If it walks and squawks like a duck...!

[samnico@hotmail.com](mailto:samnico@hotmail.com)