



Martin Buber

Carl G. Jung (above)

Man now draws back the projection of his self on a God outside of him without wishing to deify himself...Man does not deny a transcendent God : he simply dispenses with Him. He no longer knows the Unrecognizable: he no longer needs to pretend to know Him. In his place he knows the soul or rather the self. It is indeed not a God, that "modern consciousness" abhors the important thing for the man of modern consciousness is to stand in no further relation of faith to Him.

Buber "The Eclipse of God" 1988

*When I die, I will see the lining of the world.
The other side, beyond bird, nation, sunset.
The true meaning, ready to be decoded.
What never added up, will add up,
What was incomprehensible will be comprehended.
And if there is no lining to the world?*

*If a thrush on a branch is not a sign,
But just a thrush on the branch? If night and day
Make no sense following each other?
And on this earth there is nothing except this earth?
Even if that is so, there will remain
A word wakened by lips that perish,
A tireless messenger who runs and runs
Through inter stellar fields, through the revolving galaxies,*

And calls out, protests, screams.

Czeslaw Milosz, "Meaning"

As certain as Job is of the evil Yahweh he is equally certain of the good... Yahweh is not split but is an antinomy – a totality of inner opposites – and this is the indispensable condition for his tremendous dynamism, his omniscience and omnipotence.

C,G, Jung, Answer To Job

It is not our intention to justify God's ways with Israel. Our concern is with the questions of whether the affirmations of faith may be made meaningfully notwithstanding Gods terrible silence during the Holocaust

Eliezer Berkovits, Faith After The Holocaust



The Reconciliation of David and Absalom.

Rembrandt

ANSWERING TO ANSWER TO JOB:

JUNG JOB AND BUBER

My flirtation with Jung is over. Having been infatuated with his writing in the 90's and fully acknowledging the importance of archetypal theory and its comfort for me, steeped as I was, in rational theology. In a time when I was fighting hidebound orthodoxy and robotic Halachic Judaism, Jung came as an exciting and comprehensive psychological theory that allowed me theological breathing room, all the while maintaining my ritual praxis. His comfort lay in lifting the burden of my own inner darkness, by placing it in the context of "being constellated by this or that archetype" rather than shouldering the burden of my character defects, at times too heavy to bear alone. In the individuation process I fully admit the value of this approach in making conscious the undesirable dark side of the personality and bringing into the sunlight.

Having ignored the swirl of rumors as to his Nazi past, over a number of years I have found that the historical and theological implications of his work, are now too great for me to ignore. Historically, whether his flirtation with Nazi ideology was real or implied is less of interest, despite the apologetics of his Jewish disciples, than the more important fact that he was drinking from the same intellectual/mythical fountain as did the Nazi/Aryan ideologists. Thus it became almost irrelevant whether or not he actually subscribed to the party or carried a Nazi card, or even whether he wrote a paper here or there for the party, (in Belgium around 1940) or even made some antisemitic comments (documented). More important is the very implications of the gnostic thought that allowed for the ideology of Wotan and its very ugly Nazi manifeste divination.

Of similar importance for me was that I could no longer theologically ignore the very blurring of his god-image hermeneutic, professing not to talk about God yet slipping into theological discourse eventually. His greatest challenge to theology comes in his last work on human suffering, "Answer to Job". The letters to Father White as well as to Martin Buber exposed differences in the theological/philosophical essentialist versus psychological approach, as well as the vertical versus horizontal axis of faith. However this still left a gap in the argument for faith for those weary of language games and semantics. For those who see this debate as a form of immanent versus transcendent view of the divine or as another modernist/philosophical/rationalist splitting of the divine into human projection, how would they respond to Jung's claims in Answer to Job? How could Buber help in articulating the problem especially in the face of such radical evil as the Holocaust? Buber's help is providing us a critique of the one sided Christian emphasis of Jung's God-Image but is that sufficient? Is it sufficient to provide Jewish counterpart to his Christ development of God's incarnation in a single human being?

Both Buber and Jung made use of the character of Job and his disputation with God as a model, albeit in very different ways. The book of Job is aptly characterized—to borrow a phrase from Umberto Eco—as a "machine for generating interpretations." It has never ceased to fire the imaginations of interpreters, and has generated countless conflicting

readings.¹ Many modern interpreters have grappled with the character and theological implications of the Job-divine dialogues. Nahum Glatzer has collected many modern thinkers on the subject of Job most of whom I found to have positivistic readings. In contrast, in his last theologically provocative essay C.G. Jung moved the discourse to a darker key by examining the text from the point of view of god's exposure. He was able to do so, philosophically, by distinguishing between the notion of God in theology and the God-image in man's psyche. This gave him the license to then analyze religious texts from an archetypal psychological point of view, with God as a projection of the psyche. He then painted a picture of God as amoral in his "Answer to Job".

As certain as Job is of the evil Yahweh he is equally certain of the good... Yahweh is not split but is an antinomy – a totality of inner opposites – and this is the indispensable condition for his tremendous dynamism, his omniscience and omnipotence.²

This psycho-analysis of God's personality/character is the central theme of the work. His central reliance for his thesis is the text of Job and Psalm 89. Jung relies on Psalm 89 for his accusations that God is an oath-breaker and goes on to speculate that Yahweh was about to loosen his matrimonial ties with Israel but was unwilling to admit this to himself and so sought out Job as an unfaithful-scapegoat. Psalm 89 asks questions about present judgement on Israel and the house of David, but in the end is steadfast in its trust in God. The typology of the Psalm clearly points to the reign of the Messiah, just as the House of David in history was a type of the Messianic throne. And the covenant itself contained provision for disobedience, as the Psalm makes clear (verses 30-32), so a temporary interruption to Davidic continuity should not be much of a surprise, and can be accommodated in a sensible reading of the covenant. Job continues along this trajectory of questioning however exposes a darker side to divine rage and jealousy:

"The book of Job is a landmark in the long historical development of a divine drama. At the time the book was written, there were already many testimonies which had given a contradictory picture of a God who knew no moderation in his emotions and suffered precisely from this lack of moderation. He himself admitted that he was eaten up with rage and jealousy and that this knowledge was painful to him. Insight existed along with cruelty, creative power along with destructiveness. Everything was there, and none of these qualities was an obstacle to the other. Such a condition is only conceivable either when no reflecting consciousness is present at all, or when the capacity for reflection is very feeble and a more or less adventitious phenomenon. A condition of this sort can only be described as amoral. (para. 560)

Of course, since a central theme of Jung's overall argument is that Yahweh is essentially pre-personal, lacking in self-reflection and without consciousness (despite his tremendous power), this begs the philosophical question of how there is a 'he' to hide anything from 'himself'. Jung is more concerned with psyche than logos however. He splits between god's omniscience which he seems not to consult often and his

¹ U. Eco, *Postscript to The Name of the Rose* (San Diego: HBJ Publishers, 1983), p. 3. Eco's use of the phrase is in reference to the genre of the novel.

² C G Jung 'Answer to Job Bollingen Series

power. Further, Jung accuses God of being psychologically dependent on human praise and human consciousness, which is certainly not seen in the text of the Bible, and relates this dependence to a deeper psychological question:

“The character thus revealed fits a person who can only convince himself that he exists through his relation to an object. Such dependence on the object is absolute when the subject is totally lacking in self-reflection and therefore has no insight into himself .

“Why, then, does God need man? He needs humankind, says Jung, in order to achieve a greater consciousness, a more precise rendering of himself to himself. Yet he is ambivalent about this, abandoning his faithful servant, Job, to evil. This poor victim of a divine plot is thereby secretly lifted up to a superior knowledge which God himself does not possess, namely of his own conflicting inner self or antinomy. We then discover that Job is an outward occasion for an inward dialectic in God himself (para. 587).

It is as if God projects his skepticism on Job and the latter is challenged as though he, himself, were a god! Theologians like Martin Buber and Abraham Joshua Heschel have also reflected as to why God is in need of man and posits a midrashic/mystical model that I will return to, and to which Jung hinted at albeit obliquely. Heschel's contribution to contemporary thought is well-reflected in the titles of his theological works: *Man Is Not Alone*, *God In Search of Man*, and *Who Is Man?* Underlying much of his theological perspective is what Edward Kaplan has called "the displacement of subjectivity." The Bible, Heschel helped us to see, frequently presents matters from a divine perspective. It thus reflects more divine anthropology than human theology. It is not so much that God is a symbol of human thought as that man is a symbol (*tselem*) of divine thought. Similarly, God is not so much a need of man as man is a need of God, for religion is as much a result of God's search for man as man's search for God.

In this manner, the Book of Job and Abraham's argument with God over Sodom are understood not so much as man's attempt at theodicy as God's attempt at "anthropodicy". It is not God's commitment to justice which is at stake as much as Job's integrity and Abraham's commitment to justice. Indeed, the Bible can be seen as a tragedy wherein God fails to find a righteous man.

Another writer, Robert Gordis³ notes that there are “two radically different Jobs in the biblical masterpiece. One is the hero of the prose tale, whose righteousness is matched by his piety and who retains his faith and patience under the gravest of provocations. The other is the Job of the dialogue, a passionate rebel against the injustice of undeserved suffering, who challenges God Himself.” This bipartite narrative is characteristic of biblical prose and biblical irony, formerly dissected into source critical origins. Nevertheless the psychodynamic approach that examines character and development is compelling and requires a response.

³ Robert Gordis, *The Book of God and Man: A Study of Job* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), 219.

Jack Miles, in contrast, reads into the text of the bible a possible reflection on the emerging character of God. Both Miles and Jung see the necessity of sending the traditional God-image through character analysis in order to cleanse it of its violence, arrogance, and God's inability to keep his word. Miles shows how love develops in the unfolding image of the deity. He maintains that love is not indicated as such in the Bible until Isaiah 40, when:

"The Lord begins suddenly to show an intense, intimate and prior awareness of Israel's fears and sorrows, doubts and assumptions, the novelty is . . . that the Lord has become mysterious.

"He has been wrathful, vengeful and remorseful. But he has not been loving. It was not for love that he made man. It was not for love that he made the covenant with Abraham. It was not for love that he brought the Israelites out of Egypt or drove out the Canaanites before them. The 'steadfast love' of the Mosaic covenant was . . . rather a fierce mutual loyalty binding liege and vassal than any gentler emotion. (pp. 236–237)

"He has been purposeful and faithful to the covenant, but not moved by the long-term suffering of the Israelites. But then the face changes in Second Isaiah:

Your maker is your husband. . . .the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer. . . .The Lord has called you like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God.

For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In overflowing wrath for a moment, I hid my face from you; but with everlasting love I will have compassion for you, says the Lord, your Redeemer.

(Isaiah 54:4–8)

Miles continues: "What has happened to God that he is speaking this way? His life has surprised him. When he punished Israel, he did not anticipate that her sorrow would lead him toward love" (p. 249, referring to Isaiah 52:13–53:12).⁴

At the end of God's already extraordinary career, for both Jung and Miles, God becomes a human being-Jesus. "The Lamb Triumphant arrives at long last at his wedding day, taking to himself his eternal intended, the human race itself." Miles sees this transformation taking place at Jesus' birth. Miles sees Jesus as ontologically (which is to say, literarily) divine.

On discussing Job Miles states:

"In the Book of Job, God, Himself succumbs to a temptation by Satan. He agrees to allow Satan to torture an innocent man. The torturer is a pretty severe symbol of evil, after all, and He allows this to go on, not anticipating that, that Job will ask Him for an explanation, but Job does again and again. Some of Job's friends rebuke Job and say

⁴ Miles, Jack. (1995). *God: A biography*. London: Simon and Schuster.

that he shouldn't ask for an explanation. In the end, God, Himself, rebukes Job and says that no one should challenge someone as powerful as, as God knows Himself to be. But as I read Job's final speech, he doesn't back down, and after that, God says that Job's friends have spoken wrongly of God, and Job, himself, has spoken correctly. This means, I believe, that Job has shown God who He is. He has shown God that He is a mixture of destruction and creation. And having discovered that about Himself, we might say God got what He was after when He created the human being in his own image. He now has, has found a human being who, who shows him perfectly who He really is."⁵

"It is necessary to think somewhat less about Job and his plight and somewhat more about God and what we might call His embarrassment.

"Job refuses to accept mere physical power as the criterion of moral integrity... Job changes the subject by bringing God's righteousness into question. As a result, God must now find a new understanding of Himself. If God occasionally becomes a demon mankind must disobey him. If God is capable of testing mankind by masquerading as a demon, then paradoxically mankind can only please God and pass the test by defying God.

Job is the supreme image of God's desire to know God, for he accepts his suffering, but he does not accept it silently; he is not resigned to having no explanation for it.

In the end Miles diverts from Jung's articulation of an antinomy, rather an identity in perpetual crisis until it was incarnated in man-Jesus.

"The intellect of man is forced to choose/Perfection of the life, or of the work," W.B. Yeats wrote. In its poignancy, the line seems quintessentially modern, but it has everything to do with an ancient buried memory of a God who needed to choose (his identity), but could not. That God is the divided original whose divided image we remain. His is the restless breathing we still hear in our sleep.

To the extent that writers such as Jung and Jack Miles write of a progressive consciousness of the divine, how does the Jewish tradition respond in ways that parallel the notion of supercession of the New Testament they see as god's development in the christ child? And in what ways do the rabbis and the mystical tradition answer the critique posed by Jung? In a response to my asking him about Jung's Job, Miles answered me as follows:

"I have your reservation about "Answer to Job" and another as well. The notion that God must learn from his human creature is a powerful one, which Jung links to Jesus, but on my first reading of that book I found it offensive for the way it leaps from Adam (not Jewish, of course) to Job (also not Jewish) to Jesus (Jewish but engaged without reference to Jewish history). In other words, Jung had managed to state the message of the Tanakh while leaving Israel and Torah out! I am a Christian, but for me this just wouldn't do."

⁵ Interview PBS April 1996 http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/entertainment/pulitzer_biography_4-16.html

Whereas Miles follows the character analysis outlined above, he differs with Jung as to the faith traditions that got ignored in Jung's globalizing theorizing approach. The tendency to "leave out Israel" betrays a darker side to Jung that only surfaced after reading Richard Noll's "The Jung Cult"⁶. I found more evidence to support Peter Gay's inklings about the deeper connections and fascination of Jung for Aryan mythology, the pagan Germanic tribes, and the spirit of German Volkstumbewegung. The essay on Wotan (1936) represents a reframing of these metaphors in a negative light he apparently was compelled to write. But as Noll suggests:

"while he warns against the possible excesses and dangers of the return of Wotan in this essay, he seems nonetheless to hold to the view that Wotan (and by implication not the Judaeo-Christian god) is indeed the true god of the Germanic peoples who therefore must make this knowledge conscious or risk "possession" by this Aryan deity" .

If Jung and the Nazis were drinking from the same cultural mythic fountain, then the whole literature as to his flirtation with Nazism and his infamous articles around 1940 become almost irrelevant as evidence pointing to whether he was acting merely expediently or otherwise. Putting aside his claim to have helped Jewish psychologists and his famous remark/apology (which seems to have satisfied Leo Baeck and Gershom Scholem,) these facts pale in contrast to the very basis of his psychology buying into a product of a new version of the ancient Hellenistic cult of Mithras and Aryan mysticism. Seen in this light we must return to his Answer to Job, not, as he claims, as a psychological treatise on the personality of Job or even God, rather a hidden agenda to critique the New Testament Christian reading of the Christ image and replace it with the Aryan Christ image. This is what bothered both Father White as well as Buber.

In his essay Jung also makes use of King David's lament and protest in Psalm 89 as if David too had exposed the darker side of the divine and its failure. This biblical text becomes the key text from which Jung makes his psychological claims as to the unfolding self-image of God and his becoming conscious of his darker side through Job. However one of Jung's key points in his developing argument regarding the Old Testament as a proof-text, is that of Psalm 89 as a precursor to Job's suffering, i.e. that of King David's protest. Jung speaks of the covenant between God and certain individuals and how the 89th Psalm reflects the fracture of that covenant.⁷ This idea of fracture is key and critical to his argument for a new paradigm and a new relationship in Job, so it behooves us to examine his reading closely.

The JPS translation for Psalm 89's critical verses reads as follows:

מְשִׁיחַ-עַם, הִתְעַבְרָתָּ; וַתִּמְאַסְ, זִנְחָתָּ וְאַתָּה לֹל.

⁶ Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult*, Princeton University Press 1994

⁷ Jung notes how the Ibn Ezra was unable to recite this psalm because of its sadness see *Aion* CW 9:ii, para 169

39 But Thou hast cast off and rejected, Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed.
נָזַרוּ עֲלֶיךָ חֲלֵלִים; עֲבָדְךָ בְּרִית, נִאֲרָתָה מִ

40 Thou hast abhorred the covenant of Thy servant; Thou hast profaned his crown even to the ground.
מִחֲתָה מִבְּצֻרֵי שְׁמֶת; גְּדַרְתִּי-כָּל פְּרֻצָּת מֵא

41 Thou hast broken down all his fences; Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin.
לְשִׁכְנֵי, חֲרָפָה הָיָה; דְּרָךְ עֲבָרֵי-כָּל, שְׁטָהוּ מִב

42 All that pass by the way spoil him; he is become a taunt to his neighbours.
אוֹיְבָיו-כָּל, הַשְׂמִחָת; צָרִיו יָמִין, הִרְיִמוּת מִג

43 Thou hast exalted the right hand of his adversaries; Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.
בְּמִלְחָמָה, הִקְיַמְתּוֹ וְלֹא; חָרְבוּ צוּר, תְּשִׁיב-אֶף מִד

44 Yea, Thou turnest back the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.
מִגְרָתָה לְאָרֶץ, וְכִסְאוֹ; מִטְהָרוּ הַשְּׁבֵת מֵה

45 Thou hast made his brightness to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.
סָלָה בּוֹשָׁה עָלָיו הָעֵטִית; עֲלוּמָיו יָמִי, הִקְצַרְתָּ מו

46 The days of his youth hast Thou shortened; Thou hast covered him with shame.

Selah

חֲמַתְךָ אֶש-כִּמוֹ תִּבְעֵר; לִנְצַח תִּסְתֵּר, יְהוָה מֶה-עַד מַז

47 How long, O LORD, wilt Thou hide Thyself for ever? How long shall Thy wrath burn like fire?
אָדָם-יִבְנֶה-כָּל בְּרִאת, שׂוֹא-מֶה-עַל; חֲלַד-מֶה אֲנִי-זָכַר מִח

48 O remember how short my time is; for what vanity hast Thou created all the children of men!
סָלָה שְׂאוֹל-מִיֵּד נִפְשׁוֹ יִמְלֵט; מוֹת-יִרְאָה וְלֹא, יִחְיֶה גֶבֶר מִי מֵט

49 What man is he that liveth and shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the power of the grave?

Selah

בְּאֲמוֹנֹתֶךָ, לְדוֹד נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ: אֲדֹנָי הָרֵאשִׁימִים חֲסָדֶיךָ, אֵיךָ נִ

50 Where are Thy former mercies, O Lord, which Thou didst swear unto David in Thy faithfulness?

עַמִּים רַבִּים-כָּל, בְּחִיקֵי שְׂאֵתִי ; עֲבַדֶּיךָ חֲרַפְתָּ, דְּנִיָּא זָכַר נֹא

51 Remember, Lord, the taunt of Thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom [the taunt of] so many peoples;

מְשִׁיחֶךָ עֲקֻבוֹת, חֲרַפּוֹ אֲשֶׁר : יְהוָה אוֹיְבֶיךָ חֲרַפּוֹ אֲשֶׁר נֹב

52 Wherewith Thine enemies have taunted, O LORD, wherewith they have taunted the footsteps of Thine anointed.

וְאָמֵן אָמֵן : לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה בְּרוּךְ נֹב

53 Blessed be the LORD for evermore.

Amen, and Amen. {P}

Jung focuses on verses 47-50 where the psalmist protests the divine hiding and anger demanding His lovingkindness. Many other places in the bible we find such protests and in fact these become amplified in the writings of the rabbis in midrash, especially those texts of tragedy after the Hurban in Midrash Eicha Rabba and Pesikta deRav Kahana. Yet Jung focuses precisely on these verses as a the paradigm shift whereby David sees the covenant as broken. The psalmist prefigures the greatest challenger of all, Job. On the other hand biblical scholars have treated psalm 89 in its literary context as part of a group of psalms that cannot be neatly extricated for theological or even psychological purposes.⁸ Jung cherry picks this particular Psalm and reads it literally and out of context.

In fact this psalm has found its way into the Hebrew liturgy⁹ and remains central to the core themes of the psalmist. Psalms 88 and 89, standing as they are at the conclusion of the third and central collection of the five Books of Psalms, and just past midway through the whole collection of 150, function canonically as the rhetorical peak of Israel's lament to God. Psalm 88 is an individual lament, the speech of one "overwhelmed with troubles [. . .] near to death" (v. 3), "set apart with the dead, like the slain" (v. 5), whose "eyes are dim with grief" (v. 9). A powerful verse expressing Israel's laments comes in verse 14: "Why, Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me?"

⁸ Psalm 89⁸ (Greek numbering Psalm 88) begins with words of praise for God's goodness and covenant faithfulness. It recounts the promises made to King David, and the covenant which God had established with him, for the first 37 verses; from verse 38 to 51, the Psalmist laments what seemed like God's lack of remembrance of his covenant promises. But finally, in the 52nd and closing verse of the Psalm, the Psalmist's tone changes once again, when he proclaims, "Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and Amen" (ESV). With these formulaic words, the third book of the Psalter is closed with the same refrain as all other books of the psalter.

⁹ for instance it is recited during Selichot in some traditions, and verse 53 is the first verse of Baruch Hashem L'Olam in Pesukei D'zimra and Baruch Hashem L'Olam after the Shema in weekday Maariv. More poignantly verses 16-18 are recited following the Shofar blowing on Rosh Hashanah.

In the end, there is no help, no answer to prayer, no hope or promise to wait upon: "You have taken from me friend and neighbor -- darkness is my closest friend" (v. 18).

"In proper pairing with this individual lament, Psalm 89 echoes and expands its cry onto the broad canvas of Israel's history with the Lord, but pressures and reinterprets it crucially as the Lord's abandonment of his covenant with David in the ultimate disaster of exile. Verses 1-4 have nothing but praise for God, whose "love stands firm forever" (v. 2), and who made a covenant with David to last for all time (v. 4). The heavens and the earth, the gods and the monsters of myth only attest further to the glory of Israel's God (vv. 5-13), for "Righteousness and justice- love and faithfulness" define the reign of this King of kings over Israel (vv. 14-18).

"The evidence of this love and faithfulness is, as thematically stated in verse 4, the Lord's covenant with David and all his line (vv. 20-37), who will succeed in battle and be exalted in all things -- indeed, "He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior' " (v. 26), the "firstborn" of the Lord (v. 27). And even when his sons falter, sin, or stray, and are rightly disciplined by divine justice, even then the Lord "will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered" (vv. 33-34). Like the moon each night which shines in the sky as a "faithful witness," so David's line "will be established forever" (v. 37).

The next verses (vv. 38-39) come, then, with profound shock and bewilderment:

"But you have rejected, you have spurned,
you have been very angry with your anointed one.

You have renounced the covenant with your servant
and have defiled his crown in the dust."

Everything promised to David and his descendants has instead been granted to his enemies, to the plunderers razing Jerusalem down to ruins (vv. 40-45). What else could this be except divine abrogation of the covenant?¹⁰

Verses 46-51 shift from third person to first person: "How long, Lord? Will you hide yourself forever? How long will your wrath burn like fire?" (v. 46). But it is more personal than that: "Lord, where is your former great love, which in your faithfulness you swore to David?" (v. 49). And so we end in the darkness of exile, of the day of Jerusalem, of

¹⁰ for further discussion see Brad at: <http://resident-theology.blogspot.com/>

landlessness and promises broken; this Israel personified sits like Job in the dust and ashes of death-scarred memories: "I bear in my heart the taunts of all the nation, the taunts with which your enemies, Lord, have mocked, with which they have mocked every step of your anointed one" (v. 51). This represents true biblical lament and protest which is certainly not unique to this text alone. Why Jung chose this above many others remains a mystery.

Death and complete isolation, covenant rent and communal exile: together Psalms 88 and 89 speak out of the highest pitch and the lowest depth of Israel's lament to the Lord. There can be in these moments nothing more to say, but only waiting for the Lord to act. Did he? Did Israel's God answer these cries from the abyss? In reading Jewish history, the answer can only be yes: Israel came up out of exile and re-settled in the land, rebuilt the temple, re-constituted itself anew in light of the prophets' extraordinary work and words.¹¹ But this can only be provisional -- problems remained, occupiers only changed hands, glory tarried. Did God, would God act once and for all? This kind of ambivalence regarding character can also be seen by careful philological analysis such as done by Tod Linafelt without recourse to psychological or mystical abstraction:

In his treatment of the Platonic dialogue, the Phaedrus, Jacques Derrida teases out the striking way in which the dialogue pivots around the undecidability of the word Pharmakon, which can (and does) simultaneously carry the two antithetical meanings of "poison" and "cure." In the book of Job, we find a similarly curious phenomenon with the Hebrew root baruch. The accepted primary meaning of baruch is "to bless." Four occurrences of baruch in the prologue to Job (1:5, 11; 2:5, 9), however, are commonly taken as euphemisms and rendered in the antithetical sense of "to curse." The assured rhetoric and virtual unanimity of interpreters indicates that they have experienced little difficulty in determining its euphemistic sense in these cases. On closer examination we find that the apparent ease with which the meaning of baruch is settled in these instances is illusory.

To begin with, the control group of "euphemistic" uses of baruch outside the book of Job consists only of two occurrences in 1 Kings 21, which prove to be as much a result of narrative artistry as scribal piety. Likewise, in reconsidering the four occurrences in Job, we discover that each may indeed be translated in the primary sense of "to bless" and make sense in the narrative. The point of this exercise in counter-reading is not to prove that baruch always means "to bless" in the prologue to Job, but rather that it is the site of conflicted meaning in each occurrence. Too hastily resorting to "euphemisms"—thereby settling the semantic undecidability—results in an under-reading of the prologue and of the book as a whole. Instead, we find that the fault line within baruch

¹¹ One might be permitted to see the same divine response in our own traumatic recent past

*runs much deeper than a single word, extending throughout the book and evincing a fundamental ambivalence about the character of God.*¹²

Linafelt sees the same paradox and conflicted character of God within the textual substrate itself. Biblical narrative lends itself from the literary perspective to character analysis or at least to allowing the reader to imagine character. Indeed, biblical narrative itself tends to avoid overt character description of any sort, metaphorical or otherwise. Characterization in biblical narrative is rarely explicit, but rather must be teased out of the narrative based on what characters do and what they say. In Job we the readers make judgements based on expectations as well as previous encounters with the character of man and God in the bible. As part of Wisdom Literature the book is part of a canon of literature with a particular perspective on man and God. One cannot divorce the book from this canonical matrix.

The Jewish Rabbinic as well as the mystical tradition have not ignored this notion of split in the divine character. The midrash is replete with references to divine pathos in which God is conflicted between His sense of justice and mercy, the *midas ha-din* and *midas ha-rachamim*. The rabbis however were careful to couch their sense of conflict within the divine in metaphors allegories and, above all, in parables (*meshalim*). In the parable of the king of which there over a thousand, the character of the king is fully fleshed out, including his rage, his ambivalence to the queen and his son and daughter. The explication is hardly opaque. The rabbis were quick to point out his foibles, his uncontrollable rage, his ability to be persuaded and calmed down by such characters as the the queen's matchmaker, his beloved vizir, angels, and other characters. Yet in all this the rhetoric was buried in the parable itself allowing for sensitive readers to see through to the implication but never exposing the general reader to a literal reading.

The indeterminacy of midrash allowed for many opinions and in the protest meshalim one can see the rabbinic anxiety hidden in the literary form of the mashal where God's character is not spared critique as if within the mashal the rabbinic imagination was able to find a forum closed enough from heretical and sectarian readers and clothed enough in ambiguity to *allow* for an equality of discourse with the divine itself as to its conflicted nature.¹³

Spiegelman is correct in positing a rabbinic and kabbalistic perspective¹⁴ of a conflicted divine. He notes that Jung only became aware of this tradition late in life, and that it provided an alternative to the linear and somewhat naive view Jung seemed to buy into, of christianity as supercession to the old testament. In this Jung was outdated by the work of his peers in theology of say, Scholem as well as the Bultmann school in Germany. Jung nevertheless refused to relinquish his well hidden Aryan mythical views

¹² Todd Linafelt, The undecidability of "baruch" in the Prologue to Job and beyond, :E.J. Brill, Biblical Interpretation 4, 2, Leiden Brill 1996

¹³ see my Thesis "Imaging/Imagining the divine in rabbinic Literature Brandeis University 2000

¹⁴ In the Kabbalah this conflicted nature takes on a cosmic dimension. The sparks that could not be held by the vessels causing their shattering allows for evil to be present in the world.¹⁴ For Rabbi Nachman the *chalal hapanui* is the very vacuum or void in which the apparent absence of God allows for evil to be present.¹⁵

that the old testament god and the christian tradition was woefully inadequate to hold the metaphor of the incarnated divine needed for his age.

Beyond Spiegelman's use of kabbalah, the hassidic masters made use of such metaphors all the while struggling with the immanent/transcendent as well as good vs. evil in God and man. Heschel's work was alluded to earlier and is in full line with this tradition. An unlikely contrast, is seen in the writings of another hassidic master, the great grandson of the founder of that movement, the Baal Shem Tov. Rabbi Nachman of Breslov speaks of knowledge and evil as aspects of the same coin. Yet he refuses to project this onto the character of the divine of which he claims we know nothing. He launches on a journey that makes use of kabbalah yet takes back any projections the original texts had made about the inner workings of the divine. Using kabbalistic metaphors based on the writings of the Ari of Safed, he begins with the first words that appeared out of the eternal silence, the infinite light contracted into vessels and definitions. This is *tzimtzum*, contraction, which in the world of kabbalah expresses the transition from the Ayin to the Yesh, from the sefira of keter, which is the highest sefira – the sefira of Ayin, void of limits and vessels – to the sefira of Chokhma, the second sefira, which begins to create a world of limits, definitions and contractions.¹⁵

The first creation – that of light – bears within it the multiplicity, separation, and distinction that immediately follow. From the moment that there is light, there is also darkness, and thus place is created for good and evil. The distinction between good and evil belongs to the world of knowledge – the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is the result of the embodiment of the Infinite in the vessels of Yesh, which contain Chokhma, Bina and Da'at.¹⁶

The world of knowledge, according to this, is both the world of distinction between good and evil and also the world of the contraction from the Ayin and the Infinite. Knowledge allows for distinction, but this distinction results from the sin of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, from contraction of the Infinite which is void of distinctions and limits.

R. Nachman, claims that from the world of Yesh and its vessels, we will not be able to reach the infinite and the essence itself. From the perspective of "good and evil," we will never be able to relate to anything but the world of phenomena. According to R. Nachman, however, the possibility exists, within the framework of this world, to climb up to the Ayin and touch the place where there is no knowledge: "The goal of knowledge is that we are not to know." Concealed within the layers of the world of knowledge, even for a moment, lies the possibility of crossing over the abyss between the Ayin and the Yesh and touching the infinite. By waiving definitions and buying prepared to devote ourselves to the "hindrance," we can reach the primeval "pursuer," which is the goal of knowledge.

¹⁵ R. Natan describes that moment of transition from Keter to Chokhma, from Ayin to Yesh, as a transition of "nirgan mafrid aluf," "a whisperer separates close friends" (Mishlei 16:18). In other words, when the alef, which expresses perfect and unified Infinity, descends from Keter to Chokhma, Bina and Da'at, its unity falls away and multiplicity is fashioned.

¹⁶ For this exposition I am grateful to VBM Torah and Itamar Eldar on Purim

This transition from the Ayin to the Yesh is characterized by the transition from a world that is entirely good to a world that distinguishes between good and evil. In this world, we possess knowledge, and this knowledge allows us to judge and categorize – this is good and this is evil. In the world of Ayin, where there is no knowledge, there is also no distinction between good and evil. This does not mean that in this supernal spiritual world the two are held in antimony. Rather there is a level of spirituality where good and evil are co-mingled and from our perspective alone we cannot discern difference. It is a place of ultimate paradox, the hallmark for Rabbi Nachman's theology. Forever refusing easy either/or answers he tends to find a spiritual space where the human can feel comfortable in holding the very paradox of a divine/human encounter, as well as good/evil tension.

Elsewhere, R. Natan his disciple writes as follows:

Therefore, one is obligated to drink on Purim until he no longer knows the difference between "cursed Haman" and "blessed Mordekhai." For there he is above knowledge, and there it is inappropriate to say, "cursed Haman," for there it is entirely good, above the middot, above days of good and days of evil, as stated above. This is the aspect of the secret of the red heifer, which is the aspect of statute (*chuka*), above knowledge: it defiles the ritually pure and purifies the ritually impure. This secret will remain incomprehensible until the future when the hidden Torah will be revealed, as stated above.

Likutei Halakhot, Hilchot Purim 4:5

The *chuka*, which is not given to understanding or definition, is the place where the boundaries between good and evil become blurred, where the ritually impure purifies and the ritually pure defiles. It is precisely in the absence of knowledge, argues R. Nachman, that we can touch the secret of the Infinite and eternity. This phenomenology of knowledge (unlike Kant) allows for the presence of evil in the classical Lurianic sense but moves the discourse into the realm of knowledge of evil as a second tier, the cognitive. The cognition of evil must be bypassed in order to access the source of *evil* which is beyond the cognitive.¹⁷

Clearly the focus here is on the split between the divine and the human in opposition rather the kabbalistic notion that what is occurring down here in this world is a mirror of the heavenly pleroma, with the separation between the divine and human realm as distant as the *chalal hapanui* as real and a chasm that is not bridgeable. The human response is either acceptance or dissolution with the merriment of Purim.

I am suggesting that Rabbi Nachman does not allow normal access to the divine the way Jung or even the kabbalists (or even the Hassidic Chabad masters). Spiegelman's idea that had Jung developed the kabbalistic ideas he was exposed to so late in life, he might have arrived at a theory that allowed for a uniquely Jewish approach to the

¹⁷ Which is why this discourse occurred around the custom of getting drunk on Purim "until one cannot distinguish between good and evil" Likutei Halachot Hilchot Purim: Rabbi Natan

unconscious and the divine is naive. The Breslov concept never allows for any human understanding of the divine **whether transcendent or immanent**. However where both Jung and the Rabbis agree we know nothing of the transcendent divine they differ as to whether there is any relationship with the immanent divine possible. Here Father White as well as Buber differed fundamentally. Others have pointed out the difference between the gnosticism Jung espouses and the mysticism of the kabbalah. Jung's taxonomic blurring of the distinction between gnosticism and mysticism allows Spiegelman to offer the generous kabbalistic way out. To be a gnostic is to have secret knowledge of the divine whereas mysticism is the belief in the possibility of connecting with the divine without any hope of cognitive knowledge. Jung never would agree to the mystical path.

In Jung we see a surrender to the character of the Self/God/unconsciousness, with the bible as a biography of God's unfolding self-consciousness, whereas in the mystical dimensions of Jewish theology we see the unbridgeable chasm between the known and the unknown, especially in the writings of Rabbi Nachman. The unknown, the mysterium, the unconscious, is not accessible and the only hope is to get behind it through the zaddik or the hassidic concept of joy and merriment of *simchah* and melody or *niggun*. In this space one perceives in a non-cognitive sense of the Presence and the numinous beyond good and evil.

For both Rabbi Nachman as well as Jung the notion of the Sacred is critical and its path leads to the experience of the numinous. However each proposes a psychodynamic theory based on opposing traditions that in the end must provide different ethical responses to evil. In the Buber-Jung disputes this vertical axis of the sacred is exposed best. This vertical axis includes the notion of transcendence, locating the human-divine relationship in the supra-human realm. Next is the horizontal axis of divine immanence located in the divine human relationship in intra-human connections. Both Buber and Jung held to the belief in the religious function of the psyche however for Jung it manifested itself exclusively through symbols, myths, archetypes, dreams and visions. He labelled them "God Images". For Buber "the radical subjectivism of modern thought has blocked access to the transcendent, resulting in spiritual blindness to the living presence of God".¹⁸

This consistent critique of Jung by both Father White as well as Buber centers around the distinction Jung made between God and God-image. But others have noted how slippery this distinction becomes even within Jung's own writings especially towards the end suggesting that his claim might have been polemical and in response to the harsh criticism from theologians. Moreover in light of Noll's work one might suggest that his pagan mysticism was directed all along against the Judeo-Christian god/god image. The subtext of Answer to Job is the need for god incarnated in the Aryan christ. This is neither vertical nor horizontal an axis, rather an uncovering of a deep layer of archaic unconscious material that Jung defines as godly. For Jung god is the spirit within, incarnated as divine, but the taxonomy gets weaker and weaker with time since he appropriates theologically charged technical terms for his archetypal psychology. This is

¹⁸ Seltzer in Buber Eclipse of God, 1988, Atlantic Highlands NJ, Humanities Press International

not new. Most of enlightenment literary terms were once theological however the split was defined and complete with the church. Jung cannot let go. His obfuscation with literary metaphors in biblical texts and his ignorance of rabbinic material and until late in life kabbalistic metaphors, point to an uneasy unacademic use of classical texts for his own purposes. This lack of rigor in reading classical texts carries over into his appropriation of theological terms that merely confused readers. His dressing the Aryan christ in theological garments was to hide the deeply pagan content and his agenda for correcting the last 2000 years of Judaeo-Christian evolution. Jung himself was irritated by these criticisms as well documented by Barbara Stephens¹⁹.

Stephens rightly discerns the essential difference between Buber and Jung in the assertion that “everything asserted about “God” is a human statement, in other words a psychological one”. However Buber’s assertion is a far cry from holding that God does not exist detached from man.²⁰ Buber in the end held that Jung’s psychology was a modern manifestation of Gnosis-” a doctrine which deals with mysteries without knowing the attitude of faith towards mystery”.²¹ Gnosis concerns Buber because it resumes ancient motifs which it teaches as psychotherapy namely “ of mystically deifying the instincts instead of hallowing them in faith”.

Is the final difference merely one of semantics? Between ontology and psychology? Is it one of subject vs object? I personally cannot allow myself the luxury of such academic distinction precisely because of the *ethical implications* that follow such theory. Looking to Buber for his Holocaust responses in his “Eclipse of God”- he must find a philosophical and religious theory to take into account the very same events that Jung describes. If we compare the two in their response to genocide and human suffering of the magnitude of the Holocaust, can we put to the test their very ideas and can they pass ethical muster?

In “Eclipse of God” (p24-5) Buber also points out that any statements we make come from the perspective of the observer. The sun is eclipsed from the point of view of man on earth and only from his subjective perspective. Nothing has happened to the sun outside the relational aspect of its being seen...

“Our time, Buber recognizes, is a time of an “eclipse of God.” This erosion in our ability to “see” and relate to God is the culmination of the process that the Western world underwent in modern times and the result of a “Copernican Revolution” led by religious and philosophical thought. Creator and created changed places. God the creator and man the created are no more; rather, there is a total reverse. It is we, the human beings, argued modern philosophers from Kant to Nietzsche, who created God in our image. Buber devotes his collection of essays Eclipse of God to offering an account of this process, which culminated with Nietzsche’s assertion that “God is dead.” Yet, if we give up

¹⁹ Barbara Stephens “The Martin Buber-Carl Jung Disputations” Journal of Analytical Psychology 2001, 46, 455-491

²⁰ op cit: p473

²¹ R.C.Smith The Wounded Jung, Evanston, IL NW University Press: 1995, 50 and 136-7

on God, argues Buber, we kill only the god of our creation. If an individual follows Nietzsche's assertion, he or she can kill only the "human God." "He who is denoted by the name lives in the light of His eternity," Buber concludes, "but we, 'the slayers,' remain dwellers in darkness, consigned to death." Buber continued to emphasize, reiterating the biblical view on that matter, that man invariably bore primary responsibility for the eclipse of God, yet he moved gradually to consider the role of God in the breakdown of communication. For that purpose he adopted the prophetic notion of the "hidden face."

David Forman-Barzilai contends that Buber, in *Eclipse of God* mentions, in reference to Whitehead's work, that the relation to God begins with fear and only later evolves into love. Whitehead attached the fear of God to Judaism and the love of God to Christianity. But Buber argues: "He who begins with the love of God without having previously experienced the fear of God, loves an idol which he himself has made, a god whom it is easy to love." Immediately after that, Buber uses Whitehead's attempt to capture the history of religion as a transformation from "God the Void" through "God the enemy" to "God the Companion."²² Obviously, Judaism emphasized the tensions between the fear of God and the love of God, but beyond that the notion of "God the companion" originated more than anywhere else from the prophetic teachings and dominated Jewish tradition from that time forward. No better illustration of this attitude can be found than in the famous words of the Psalm 23 that describe God as a trustworthy shepherd who provides humankind with everything it needs, provoking human beings to therefore attest "even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me." Continuing the tradition of the Psalmist and practically all of the Hebrew prophets, Buber calls on the Jewish people to continue to put their trust in God and his companionship, although these were put to test as never before by the Holocaust.²³

Maurice Friedman too has well documented Buber's response to the tremendum.²⁴

"The logical and dialectical God of the theologians -- the God who can be put into a system, enclosed in an idea, or thought about philosophically as 'a state of being in which all ideas are absorbed' -- is not the God who can be met in the lived concrete. The 'once for all' of dogma resists the unforeseeable moment and thereby becomes 'the most exalted form of invulnerability against revelation.' 'Centralization and codification, undertaken in the interests of religion, are a danger to the core of religion, unless there is the strongest life of faith, embodied in the whole existence of the community, and not relaxing in its renewing activity.'²⁵

I believe in the following quote Buber was referring to Jung:

²² Buber *Eclipse of God* p37

²³ David Forman-Barzilai : *Agonism in Faith*, *Modern Judaism* vol 23:2

²⁴ Martin Buber: *The Life of Dialogue* by Maurice S. Friedman

²⁵ Martin Buber: *Between Man and Man*, 'The Question to the Single One,' p. 57 f.; *Israel and the World*, op. cit., 'The Love of God and the Idea of Deity,' p. 53; *Kampf um Israel* op. cit., p. 203 f; *Between Man and Man*, 'Dialogue,' p. 18; *The Prophetic Faith* op. cit., p. 70.

“As a step in one direction leads from dogma to magic, a step in another leads to ‘gnosis,’ the attempt to raise the veil which divides the revealed from the hidden and to lead forth the divine mystery. Gnosis, like magic, stands as the great threat to dialogical life and to the turning to God. Gnosis attempts to see through the contradiction of existence and free itself from it, rather than endure the contradiction and redeem it. Buber illustrates this contrast through a comparison between Hasidism and the Kabbalah.

“The whole systematic structure of the Kabbalah is determined by a principle of certitude which hardly ever stops short, hardly ever cowers with terror, hardly ever prostrates itself. Hasidic piety, on the other hand, finds its real life just in stopping short, in letting itself be disconcerted, in its deep-seated knowledge of the impotence of all ready-made knowledge, of the incongruity of all acquired truth, in the ‘holy insecurity.’²⁶ This gnosis is not found in the modern world in theosophies and occult systems alone. ‘In many theologies also, unveiling gestures are to be discovered behind the interpreting ones.’ Gnosis has even found its way into modern psychotherapy through the teachings of Carl Jung:

The psychological doctrine which deals with mysteries without knowing the attitude of faith toward mystery is the modern manifestation of Gnosis. Gnosis is not to be understood as only historical category, but as a universal one. It -- and not atheism, which annihilates God because it must reject the hitherto existing images of God -- is the real antagonist of the reality of faith.²⁷

Buber held the gnostic image of the divine to be at odds with the mystical/hasidic view which maintains the divine insistence on the good and ethics.

“The apocalyptic element in religion also tends to lead to a dualism between the secular and the religious. The eschatological expectation of the imminent rule of God leads to a desire to do away with law in the name of the divine freedom which is or will be directly present in all creatures without need of law or representation. As soon as this expectation slackens, ‘it follows historically that God’s rule is restricted to the “religious” sphere, everything that is left over is rendered unto Caesar; and the rift which runs through the whole being of the human world receives its sanction.’ This dualism enters deeply into Paul’s essentially Gnostic view of the world. It is also found in Judaism, where the autochthonous prophetic belief is opposed by an apocalyptic one built up out of elements from Iranian dualism. The one ‘promises a consummation of creation,’ the other ‘its abrogation and suppression by another world completely different in nature.’

The prophetic allows ‘the evil’ to find the direction that leads toward God, and to enter into the good; **the apocalyptic sees good and evil severed forever at the end of days, the good redeemed, the evil unredeemable for all eternity;** the prophetic

²⁶ Martin Buber: Israel and the World, ‘The Faith of Judaism,’ pp. 21-24, ‘The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul,’ p. 31 f.; Eclipse of God, ‘God and the Spirit of Man,’ p. 162; Hasidism, ‘Symbolical Existence in Judaism,’ p. 141 f.

²⁷ Eclipse of God, ‘God and the Spirit of Man,’ p. 162, ‘Reply to C. G. Jung,’ p. 175 f.

believes that the earth shall be hallowed, the apocalyptic despairs of an earth which it considers to be hopelessly doomed....²⁸

Rather than include the evil within the godhead Buber held that forever it must be kept at a distance for the sake of an ethical just and moral universe. The split must be maintained.

“The prophetic and Hasidic belief in the hallowing of the earth also stands in contrast to the pagan world’s glorification of the elemental forces and the Christian world’s conquest of them. Christianity, through its ascetic emphasis, desanctified the elemental and created a world alien to spirit and a spirit alien to world. ‘Even when Christianity includes the natural life in its sacredness, as in the sacrament of marriage, the bodily life is not hallowed, but merely made subservient to holiness.’ The result has been a split between the actual and the ideal, between life as it is lived and life as it should be lived.

All historical religion must fight the tendency of metaphysics, gnosis, magic, and politics to become independent of the religious life of the person, and it must also fight the tendency of myth and cult to aid them in this attempt. What is threatened by these extra-religious elements is the lived concrete -- the moment ‘in its unforeseeable-ness and . . . irrecoverableness . . . its undivertible character of happening but once.’ The lived concrete is also threatened by those religious elements that destroy the concreteness of the memory of past moments of meeting with God that have been preserved in religious tradition -- theology, which makes temporal facts into timeless symbols, and mysticism, which dilutes and weakens the images of memory by proclaiming all experience accessible at once.²⁹

Friedman contends that Buber felt the use of evil for the sake of good not only produces inner division and dishonesty, it also betrays it, as Buber shows in his portrayal of the Seer in *For the Sake of Heaven*. If this divided motivation goes far enough, it may even lead to that Gnostic perversion which elevates evil into something holy in itself. The radical Sabbatians believed that they could redeem evil by performing it as if it were not evil, that is by preserving an inner intention of purity in contrast to the deed. ‘That is an illusion,’ writes Buber, ‘for all that man does reacts on his Soul, even when he fancies that his soul hovers over the deed.’ Buber speaks of this revolt against the distinction between good and evil as ‘the lust for overrunning reality.’ The fascination with the demonic in modern literature, the tendency of many to turn psychoanalysis or ‘psychodrama’ into a cult of self-realization, and the illusory belief that personal fulfillment can come through ‘release’ of one’s deep inward energies all show the peculiarly modern relevance of the ‘crisis of temptation and dishonesty’ which Buber describes. **In Carl Jung’s teaching, for example, the integrated soul ‘dispenses with the conscience as the court which distinguishes and decides between right and wrong. ‘The precondition for this integration is the “liberation from those desires, ambitions, and passions which imprison us in the visible world,” through**

²⁸ Martin Buber: *Moses*, p.188; *Israel and the World*, ‘The Power of the Spirit,’ pp. 176-179.

²⁹ *Eclipse of God*, ‘Religion and Philosophy,’ p. 48 f.; Martin Buber, ‘Religion und Philosophie,’ *Europäische Revue*, Berlin, V [August 1929], p. 330 f.

"intelligent fulfillment of instinctive demands." What this means becomes clear through Jung's statement that it is necessary to succumb 'in part' to evil in order that the unification of good and evil may take place. Jung thus resumes, under the guise of psychotherapy, the Gnostic motif 'of mystically deifying the instincts.'³⁰

"What lends especial impetus to the various psychological and theosophical cults through which the individual seeks to overrun reality in the modern world is the dualism in the soul of modern man.

'We experience this not only as an hour of the heaviest affliction,' Buber wrote in 1952, 'but also as one that appears to give no essentially different outlook for the future, no prospect of a time of radiant and full living.' ('Hope For this Hour') With each new crisis in man's image of the universe 'the original contract between the universe and man is dissolved and man finds himself a stranger and solitary in the world.' As a result of this insecurity, man questions not only the universe and his relation to it, but himself. Today, writes Buber, 'the question about man's being faces us as never before in all its grandeur and terror -- no longer in philosophical attire but in the nakedness of existence.'

'Eclipse of the light of heaven, eclipse of God,' this is, as Buber sees it, 'the character of the historical hour through which the world is passing.' This eclipse is not taking place in human subjectivity 'but in Being itself.' It is the human side of 'the silence of God,' of 'God's hiding His face.'

'He who refuses to submit himself to the effective reality of the transcendence,' writes Buber, '. . . contributes to the human responsibility for the eclipse.' This does not mean that man can effect 'the death of God.' Even if there is no longer 'a God of man,' He who is denoted by the name 'lives intact' in the light of His eternity. 'But we, "the slayers," remain dwellers in darkness, consigned to death.' Thus the real meaning of the proclamation that God is 'dead' is 'that man has become incapable of apprehending a reality absolutely independent of himself and of having a relation with it.' Heidegger is right in saying that we can no longer image God, but this is not a lack in man's imagination. 'The great images of God . . .: are born not of imagination but of real encounters with real divine power and glory.' Man's power to glimpse God with his being's eye yields no images since God eludes direct contemplation, but it is from it that all images and representations are born. When the I of the I-It relation comes in between man and God, this glance is no longer possible, and, as a result, the image-making power of the human heart declines. 'Man's capacity to apprehend the divine in images is lamed in the same measure as is his capacity to experience a reality absolutely independent of himself.'³¹

³⁰ Eclipse of God, 'Religion and Modern Thinking,' pp. 112-121, 'Reply to C. G. Jung,' p. 176.

³¹ Ibid, 'Religion and Reality,' pp. 34 f., 22, 'God and the Spirit of Man,' p. 164 f. 'On the Suspension of the Ethical,' p. 154 f.

“The most terrible consequence of the eclipse is the silence of God -- the loss of the sense of God’s nearness. ‘It seems senseless to turn to Him who, if He is here, will not trouble Himself about us; it seems hopeless to will to penetrate to Him who may . . . perhaps be the soul of the universe but not our Father.’ When history appears to be empty of God, ‘with nowhere a beckoning of His finger,’ it is difficult for an individual and even more for a people to understand themselves as addressed by God. ‘The experience of concrete answerability recedes more and more . . . man unlearns taking the relationship between God and himself seriously in the dialogic sense.’ During such times the world seems to be irretrievably abandoned to the forces of tyranny. In the image of Psalm 82, the world is given over by God to judges who ‘judge unjustly’ and ‘lift up the face of the wicked.’ This situation is nowhere more clearly described in modern literature than in the novels of Franz Kafka: ‘His unexpressed, ever-present theme,’ writes Buber, ‘is the remoteness of the judge, the remoteness of the lord of the castle, the hiddenness, the eclipse....’ Kafka describes the human world as given over to the meaningless government of a slovenly bureaucracy without possibility of appeal: ‘From the hopelessly strange Being who gave this world into their impure hands, no message of comfort or promise penetrates to us. He is, but he is not present.’³²

Not only Kafka, the unredeemed Jew, but even the redeemed Christian soul becomes aware in our day of the eclipse of the light of God, ‘of the still unredeemed concreteness of the human world in all its horror.’ Nothing in our time has so confirmed Kafka’s view or made the silence of God appear so terrifying as the concentration camps of Nazi Germany in which millions of human beings were systematically and scientifically exterminated as if they were insects. Never has the world appeared so forsaken, so engulfed in utter darkness.

How is a life with God still possible in a time in which there is an Oswiecim? The estrangement has become too cruel, the hiddenness too deep. One can still ‘believe in the God who allowed these things to happen,’ but can one still speak to Him? Can one still hear His word? . . . Dare we recommend to . . . the Job of the gas chambers: ‘Call to Him; for He is kind, for His mercy endureth forever’?³³

In a letter to Ernsz Szilagyi, June 29, 1950 cited by Barzilai, Buber admits to the need to hold the possibility that we just cannot understand the divine using Abraham and Job as examples:

“Otherwise Job: he protests. He said: then in my youth when the same well-known encouragement was spread over my tent, I accepted Him as “the Justice”; but now when I got to know that his ways in the world are not just, He must reveal Himself to me to restore the situation. And God revealed Himself from the storm. He doesn’t say to Job that the world is just, what Job and us will call just. He doesn’t make a confession and does not reveal his secret of mercy. He is just there, the One who calls Himself “I am who I am,”. And without anything further, Job said, “I am consoled.” And only when

³² For the Sake of Heaven, p. 116, At the Turning, p. 58 ff.; Right and Wrong, ‘Judgment on the Judges’ (Psalm 82), pp. 30-33; Two Types of Faith, pp. 165-168.

³³ Two Types of Faith, pp. 162 f., 166 f.; At the Turning, p. 61.

he is being proclaimed as the servant, the “friends,” the ones who were protecting God, ask him to speak for them.

“So it is also in our time after Auschwitz. We cannot expect God to make a confession and explain his secrets like an idol that we make with our own hand. And we who accepted Him as the truth and learned that his creation is frightening and his deeds barbarous (Isaiah 28:21), it is not for us to imagine a state when we will be able to say “I forgive”. Because He probably will not stop being the hidden God, when he reveals Himself anew. How will He reveal Himself? Like to Abraham when He showed him the way, like to Abraham when he demanded from him the cruelest of all demands? Like to the young, perfect, and happy Job or to the old broken Job? We don’t know. We know only Him and His coming and that He is indeed coming. (Cant. 2:9)

“How is a Jewish life after Auschwitz possible? Today I no longer know exactly what Jewish life is, and I am not sure it will be known to me in the future. But I know what it means to cling to Him. The ones who continue to cling to Him are pointing toward what could justly be called in the future Jewish life.”

We who follow Buber and the Jewish path, who only know that evil has manifested itself in our lives in an unprecedented manner and have experienced the demonic, can no longer drink from the well that Jung, for all his insights, imbibed. We can neither follow Buber’s dictum blindly. We have been disconnected from the divine I-Thou relationship and only know now in this post-Holocaust nightmarish world of genocide and technological killing fields, the need to pursue the eradication of evil as the single imperative in these times. This is the only legacy of our sanctified martyrs who went up in flames...”do not forget” is the only commandment, and “never again” for any people on this earth, the only apocalyptic claim we can countenance.