

D0093

Jung, Answers to Job

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Preface: Jung begs us not to overlook it.

1. The nature of religious statements: they are psychic confessions based on processes not accessible to physical perception, unconscious processes which demonstrate their existence through the confessions of the psyche. The statements resulting from these processes consist of images that point to something ineffable. We do not know how accurately these images, metaphors, and concepts correspond to their transcendental object.

2. The most important religious notion is that of God.

As an image or verbal concept it has undergone many changes in the course of time. We cannot say with any degree of certainty whether these changes affect only the images and concepts, or the Unspeakable Itself.

reflect a change in

i.e., we can imagine God as an eternally flowing current of vital energy that endlessly changes shape just as easily as we can imagine him as an eternally unmoved, unchangeable essence. We know only that reason deals with images and ideas which are dependent on human imagination and its temporal & local conditions, & wh. have therefore changed innumerable times in the course of their long history.

3. Jung is "quite conscious that [in A. to J.] he is moving in a world of images & that none of his reflections touches the essence of the unknowable. But our religious ideas ~~do~~ are based on numinous archetypes, on psychic facts, on the testimony of the soul. As such, they cannot be snarers and deluders, lies, or arbitrary opinions. They are never invented, but enter the field of inner perception as finished products, as in dreams. We are compelled to treat them as subjects, not objects, as possessing a spontaneity and purposiveness, or a kind of consciousness and free will. But we can also treat them as objects, describe and

by es,

Answer to Job, 2

even explain them. We take a dual standpoint in their regard, and it has a dual result. I find what I do to the object, and what it does to me. This dualism will be unavoidable in the treatment of the archetype of Beauty.

Nov. 25

Announcements:

- 1) Class today. Once I begin w. A. J., no notes. I'll have material typed.
- 2) Next week depends on what I come to understand this week. Either further conceptual clarif'n re: evil, or post-Jungian material.
- 3) Final: 2 questions, one on Johnston, & one on spiritual classic.
- 4) Preliminary mat'l today:
 - a) Last pg. of dittoed notes from last week
 - b) One clarification on complexio oppositorum approp. also for this week
see I Ching, hx 30.

{ Thus it has not been allowed by
amoris & tians
to illuminate the darkness.

Nov. 25

When we get to A.I., Jung leaves me. I cannot ~~not~~
claim to ^{to} follow him or ^{to} offer much by way of development
of his thought at this point. Nonetheless, what I
propose to do is to present my present interpretation
of what he is doing here, and my present under-
standing of how I may deal with what I so
interpret. ⁴ We must take quite seriously both the
original preface to the book, as well as the prefatory
note written for the journal Pastoral Psychology in
1956. In the latter Jung tells us that the most
immediate cause of his writing the book is precisely
the material we have been treating for the past
two weeks, the problems of the Christ-image, ~~and~~ its
function in ~~the~~ the Christian psyche of Western man,
viewing the astrological age of Pisces,
and its opposition in that same psyche to the
image of Antichrist. He tells us too that he has
been unable to accept the doctrine of evil as privatio boni,
because this doctrine does not agree with the psychological

Nov. 25, 2

findings and creates a dualistic Christianity, splitting
of the opposites into two irreconcilable halves. <sup>The understand-
ing of the</sup>

Christian doctrine of Redemption is at stake ~~here~~ in his passing of the problem of totality.

Redemption that is not a reconciliation beyond the
opposites is no Redemption at all. ^{Thus} Jung is

challenging the Christian theologian in a most radical way by the questions he poses in Answers to

Job. And let us remember that he does nothing more here than pose questions. "The book does not

pretend to be anything but the voice or question of a single individual who hopes or expects to meet with

thoughtfulness in the public." Ironically enough, ^{with few exceptions} Marie-Louise von Franz points out, theologians were

the least willing of all to try to understand Jung's question. At times Jung despaired of historical Christianity

because of its imperviousness to the problem it was creating by continuing to foster the moral conflict

involved in the splitting of the opposites. Thus in a

While I would agree that Jung calls evil is something other than what is defined as evil in Christian tradition, one can agree with Jung that

7
A short talk to friends in 1938, Jung said, "Nov. 25, 3
"Life [by which he meant archetypal meaningfulness] has gone
out of the church, and it will never go back. The gods
will not reinvest dwellings that once they have left."

At other times he is not so pessimistic. Thus, in
"Psychotherapists or the Clergy?" (1932), ^{and in a number of his letters,} he expresses at
least the hope that the clergyman can join with the
psychotherapist in his aspirations and endeavors -- but
only by coming fully to terms with the spiritual ~~outlook~~
problem of ^{those} modernism ~~men~~ who for honest and decent
reasons and not from wickedness of heart or eccentric
restlessness have repudiated Christian tradition. "People
no longer feel redeemed by the death of Christ." ^{This is simply a fact.} "The
task of the Christian theologian in the light of Jung's
challenge is fraught with difficulty and risk. I happen
myself to be one of those theologians whom David Tracy in
his recent book Blessed Rage for Order, ^{describes as} revisionist and describes as
^{calls} follows: "When all is said and done, one finds

Nov. 25, 4

that he can authentically abandon neither his
faith in the modern experiment nor his faith
in the God of Jesus Christ. . . . [but] only a basic
revision of traditional Christianity and traditional
modernity alike would seem to suffice." (4)

Moreover, I find the source of this twofold revision
potentially present in Jung's discoveries more than
anywhere else. For Tracy as for me, the correct under-
standing of the Christian fact is ^{also} the best articulation of
precisely the basic faiths of the modern experiment: the
faith in the final worthwhileness of our lives here and now.
My own ~~work~~ ^{wager} is that Jung contributes significantly to an
understanding of that secular faith by laying bare the
dynamics of the process of individuation, and that these
dynamics themselves ^{will} provide me with something approaching
the correct understanding of the Christian fact, and
especially of the doctrine of redemption.

Answers to Job

①

The problems of the opposites take a further development in Jung's thought when he writes Answers to Job. For here he deals with what would seem to be opposites in the God-image itself, especially in that God-image presented in the Old and New Testaments. The being of God himself is ^{imagined as} paradoxical and is ~~perceived as such~~. The totality of the God-image emerging out of the Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity finds light and darkness together, creative power beside destructive will, goodness and love beside anger and injustice, love joined with arbitrary capriciousness. What are we to make of this, asks Jung?

Answers to Job is Jung's ^{emotion-laden} statement of his ^{understanding of} problems which had vexed him over a number of years, problems originating both in his own psychic experience and in the revelations of

many of his patients. How can we speak any longer of an all-loving and good God, in the face of the terrible suffering of mankind, in the face of a Job, of Nazi and Soviet concentration camps, of ^{of atomic warfare,} starvation, oppression, poverty, disease, ^{and insanity}. What is the meaning of an assertion like the metaphysical assertion, God is the Summum Bonum? How can we confess to this statement and still pay allegiance and commitment to our suffering brothers and sisters? What does it ~~mean~~

mean to confess the love of God in the face of such monstrous suffering?

It is the God-image in the human psyche that bears this original polarity, a polarity reflected in the Jewish Scriptures' emphasis on the power of a ^{seemingly arbitrarily} demanding God on the one hand, and in the New Testament's compensatory treatment of God as a loving Father; a polarity reflected,

③
however, in many other religious phenomena,
~~these~~ ^{philosophico-religious} giving rise to Rudolf Otto's characterization
of the holy as a mysterium tremendum et
fascinans: literally, a mystery to be feared
yet exerting an attractive, beckoning force at
the same time. Who is this God? What
kind of God is he? What is his relation to
man, to the human psyche, and to the
psychology that is the science of ^{the depths far that reaches} that psyche?

Jung tells us in the Preface to Answer
to Job -- and he begs us not to overlook
this preface -- that he is dealing here with
religious statements, with God-images, with
psychic confessions based on processes welling
up from the unconscious and demonstrating
their existence through the ^{religious} confessions and symbols
of the psyche. The statements resulting from
these processes consist of images pointing to

(4)

something ineffable. We do not know more than this about their referent. We do not know how accurately these images, metaphors, and concepts correspond to the object they point to and intend. That they intend is obvious from the experiences giving rise to them. What they intend remains unknown.

Beyond this, Jung is interested in one such image in particular, the God-image, which is of course the ^{source of the} most important religious notion of all.

Every image of God, like any other image referring to ~~the~~ the infinitely ungraspable, ^{to limits} -- the good life, freedom, ^{immortality,} etc. -- ~~is~~ has undergone many changes in the course of time. We cannot say whether these changes affect only the images or whether they reflect changes in the Unspeakable itself. We do not know, says Jung, whether God himself is an eternally changing current of vital energy or an eternally unmoved, unchangeable essence. We

know only that reason deals with images and ideas⁽⁵⁾ which are dependent on human imagination and its temporal and local conditions, and which have therefore changed innumerable times in the course of their long history.

Nonetheless, these religious ideas, and especially our idea of God, are based on numerous archetypes, on psychic facts, on the testimony of the soul, and as such do not lie. We do not invent them, but they happen to us, with a kind of spontaneity, purposiveness, consciousness, and free will of their own. They are subjects, happening to us. They only become objects when we describe or even try to explain them. Then and only then do we do something to them. But first they have done something to us.

So much for the epistemology of Answers to Job. Beyond this there is the substantive question of what

④
then archetypal God-images have done to us, to men
and women in history; how they have happened
to us, and how they are happening to us today.

This is the principal issue at stake in Answer to
Job, as I understand it, and it is a major
and very difficult issue that needs much
more and, I submit, ^{much} better exegetical and
historical analysis than Jung has given to it.

Nonetheless, the issues raised by Jung in his
treatment of the evolution of the God-image are
of such importance that they raise fundamental
questions concerning the nature of our own time, the
tradition out of which we come, the genuineness ^{& honesty} of
our own religious response, and the power of the
images functioning in our time to renew ^{& transform} the God-
image and restore man to his humanity.

Answer to Job can be considered ^{as a} the sketch of a
genetic religious anthropology of the West from the

time of the writing of the book of Job to the present time, ^⑦ a sketch obviously influenced by Jung's own personal psychology and religious questions, and above all by his attempt to deal with the data of the archetypal psyche in the light of historical Christianity and vice versa -- in fact, especially vice versa. The results, ^{for Jung completely} are not favorable to the maintenance of the God-image as this has come down to us from the mainline tradition of Christianity.

First, the image itself is contradictory, in that the Jewish scriptural image as disengaged by Jung from the book of Job portrays an arbitrary and capricious God betting with Satan over the perseverance of a

just man whom he chooses to ~~lead~~ ^{lead} into infidelity who also contains a counterpart of benevolent omniscience to whom Job

and yet
maintains an
appealing;

by the imposition of great suffering, while the Christian scriptural image presents a God who has consulted his feminine counterpart, his psyche, Sophia, his omniscience; ^{who} has been ~~led~~ ^{led} by her into repentance over his deeds to Job; ^{who} has

chose ~~himself~~ to become man, and ^{himself to} suffer at man's ⁽⁸⁾
hands just as man had suffered from his; but who
still remains somewhat off-handed and aloof, that he
does not choose to become fully man, since he
insists on being born of a sinless virgin and on
never sinning himself: and so who also ~~is~~
wills still to be something other than man human,
completely bright and light, innocent and spotless,
a pure victim of men's stupidity and ignorance, and
a creation of his own unwillingness to face and admit
his own dark side.

In God's incarnation in Christ, then, there is no
reconciliation of the opposites ^{on Jung's present interpretation,} For God is unwilling
to admit he has a shadow problem and chooses now to
manifest only his light side. His followers, ^{especially} are here &
into the same trap, and fall victim to the splitting
of the opposites manifested in the venomous pronouncements
of the book of Revelation. ^{These} pronouncements, however,
~~there~~ are interpreted ^{reputed} with a compensatory vision of

a future event which will occur after the war of the opposites has come to an end: the birth of the new divine child from the sun-moon-woman recorded in Rev. 12:1. This event is to occur ^{according to Jung's interpretation,} at the end of the second millennium of Christianity (ca. 2000 C.E.), the millennium which culminates in an indescribable world-wide catastrophe because of the appearance of the Antichrist. This event is to mark the issuing in of the age of Anthropos, where nature will be reconciled to spirit in the coming to consciousness of the total Self as a ~~complexio oppos~~ beyond the opposites in a complexio oppositorum which appears dark only when consciousness takes all the light to itself and lays claim to too much moral authority.

The godhead thus possesses a terrifying dual aspect, described by Jung in the following words: "a sea of grace is met by a seething lake of fire, and the light of love glows with a fierce dark heat of which it is said

'ardet non lucet' -- it burns but gives no light. ⁽¹⁰⁾

That is the eternal, as distinct from the temporal gospel: one can love God ~~but~~ but must fear him."

This dual nature of God splits the individual human being and \pm all of Western mankind into similar opposites, thus constellating apparently insoluble problems. But, ^{then, Jung continues,} when we observe the individual, ^{contemporary} person in pursuit of individuation, torn asunder by these inner conflicts, we observe that his psyche produces symbols such as an Anthropos figure or a mandala, symbols which unite the opposites and symbolize the essence of the individuation process. These symbols of the Self, when given -- and their eventing is a gift, experienced as grace -- move the individual beyond the conflict into an unthought of new possibility; beyond the moral conflict constellated

by the opposites, by the imbalance and ambivalence of our God-image. Those who will take up the conflict within themselves and make it conscious are the only ones capable of helping the world ^{to} avoid the total catastrophe which threatens, even awaits, all of us.

One who waits with a listening attitude for the creative decision to come from the Self and acts on it in spite of the danger of error will find a higher level of consciousness beyond the opposites. The moral problem

today, ^{as Jung conceives it,}

is a ~~new~~ need for a widening of our reflective consciousness, so that we can be more clearly aware of the opposing forces within us and ^{can} cease trying to sweep evil out of the way or denying it or projecting it onto scapegoats. We must really see our shadow, our

dark side,
 to integrate it slowly into the totality, without living it out, w/o literalizing it.

instead of mindlessly living it out. We have to learn This process of individuation will lead to a transformation of the God-image in our time which will unite these opposites in God as well as

(12)
in ourselves -- for the Self is an image of God. These
new manifestations of the God-image are connected
for Jung with a radicalized notion of God's ^{desire for} incarnation.

The God-image comes to its unity beyond the opposites
when we realize that only we can bring it to this
unity, ^{that} only we can reconcile the opposites in the
God-image, and ^{that} we can do it only by the emergence of
the discovery of the Self, which is the new image
of God in human history. God wills to be incarnate
in all of us and his will is ~~not~~ fulfilled in
the individuation process and, ^{especially} in its key moment

1) the experience of the self beyond the opposites. The
individuation process is the process of the becoming incarnate of

God.

This leads to one final point which Jung failed
to satisfactory conclusion,

to pursue a ~~however~~, but which is treated in
suggestive
masterful fashion by David Burrell. It is the

problem of God's wholeness viewed from the
standpoint of the Christian notion of the Trinity.

Jung has -- correctly, I believe -- found this symbol to

be incomplete. Jung ^{at times} tries to fill the fourth place ⁽¹³⁾ with the devil. But will this do? Independently of the knotty metaphysical problems connected with the ~~the~~ status of evil as reality or as privation, will it do to fill up the Godhead with what Jung had previously seen to be a ~~projection~~ ^{misunderstanding} - - a projection of the archetype of matter as ~~a projection~~? At this point Jung's thought becomes very complicated, and I am not yet able to follow it to my satisfaction, but I would suggest that Burrell's alternative meets Jungian specifications for wholeness symbols while also reinterpreting a particular set of religious symbols which I believe the psyche ^{and develop} wants to revive:

wants to revive the symbols of the Christian tradition.

Might it be, suggests Burrell, that the believer in Kierkegaard's sense of faith forms a quaternity with God? Faith for Kierkegaard, we saw, is defined in this way:

"by relating to its own self
and
by willing to be itself
the self is grounded transparently in the
Power which posited it."

though
the letters
were evil?

(19)
Thus the deficient symbol of the Trinity displays ~~the~~ an
invitation from God, who acknowledges ^{in this symbol} that he is
lacking what the believer alone can provide: or better,
what the totality of selves in Kierkegaard's sense can provide
to God: materiality, community, language, ^{human consciousness,} a body,
a psyche, femininity.
- Next week: Evil
or later Jungian contributions