

## Escape from God ...?

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**Excerpts adapted from recent diary entries [important clarification inserted below in bold type on 13 April 2019]:**

On the Run from God... (provisional title of the memoirs I am writing).

My grandmother used to tell a story about me when I stayed with her once as a very small boy. She said I had been outside their house in the sun for a short while one day when I suddenly came running inside exclaiming: "The sun is moving! The sun is moving!"

When she and my grandfather looked at me I said I saw how the shadows of the houses moved.

My grandmother, who was a good Catholic, said: "The sun does not move but God holds our earth in his hand and moves it around the sun."

"Can we see how God does this?" I asked, and she told me God cannot be seen.

Then, according to her story, I retorted: "How can God move our earth if we cannot see him? I cannot believe this."

For some reason my answer impressed my grandmother so much that she regarded me as a very bright kid.

Perhaps ever since that time I have tried to find this invisible God.

I was raised a Catholic and took my religion seriously until doubts became too strong in my teenage years.

In my early twenties while traveling in the Middle East I officially became a Muslim in Damascus, Syria and performed the Haj (pilgrimage) to Mecca and Medina with some friends. Having forsaken Catholicism I was yet unable to become inspired by Islam and never delved into it.

Then two years later, at age 24, I met the Unification Church of the Korean Rev. Sun Myung Moon in the United States. I became more inspired than I had ever been before and thought I had really, finally, found God.

The Divine Principle, the teaching of Rev. Moon, and the mostly friendly and loving yet also very competent members of this movement convinced me for a time that God worked through them to create a better world. I always had doubts, of course, about God, about Moon, about the teachings and also about my fellow acolytes. But I felt nonetheless that this movement was the best hope for a humankind I considered debauched and bound for self-destruction.

.... About the title of my book "On the Run from God": The God from whom I am running away, trying to escape, is a myth – in my view. It is an extremely powerful myth that holds most of humankind in thrall, in bondage. To me it is a God that cannot exist but is nonetheless real to most of my fellow humans.

.... I don't believe in such a God. I thought I did many years ago, and clung to an illusion of such a belief for many years. But gradually, between 1994 and 1998, I came to realize that my belief itself was unreal – it wasn't me. I did not really, deeply believe in such a God. I never did. I only wanted such a God to exist, because I accepted other people's contention that it was good, right, just.

Starting in 1994 I applied Occam's Razor to the entire concept of that God. Over the next several years I came to understand that I could never really believe in such a God and that such a God really could not exist. It did not make any sense at all anymore.

Today I remember that it was comforting to believe there was an almighty father/mother who had created us and who was good, benevolent, gracious, compassionate, and who always supported us when we did our best to be good too.

It was comforting to feel we were the children of this God, and that together with our Heavenly Father/Mother we could right this world, rid it of all evil. I, too, clung to this belief. I always had doubts, which I had to find ways to overcome. I imagine everybody wrestles with such doubts at times.

Then we have to dig deep into ourselves and pray, and our hearts tell us how bleak and terrible the world would be without such a God. And we repent. Then we feel good. We feel this God's warm embrace. It seems God likes it most when we repent. That is what binds us to this God – repentance. And it always makes us come back for more of this warm embrace that we feel after we repent. I felt like that too, many, many times.

However, this warm embrace is gone when I return to reality, when the prayer is over. Very quickly afterwards there is nothing left but a memory of the embrace that fades fast when confronted by the reality around me and the realization that nothing has changed as a result of the prayer. Everything is still broken, shattered. The world is still beautiful in one sense and a horrible mess in another.

I do believe it is up to us to right this world. I do believe I should do my best to be good and do good. Simply because I am horrified by the bad I see within myself and around me, and because I love the beauty and the goodness that I also see everywhere.

In my view now there is a real God hidden behind the mythical, false God described by the monotheistic religions. The real God must have inspired the myth but is quite different from the way He/She/It is described. Over the last 20+ years I have been trying to understand that real God, and I am still searching....

I believe I, we, all, everything, are parts of this real God. God is all there is. God, originally, is not good or bad. Yet He/She/It encompasses all the good and all the bad, all the beauty and all the ugliness as we understand them.

God as universal consciousness divided Him/Her/Itself into innumerable parts, each clinging to a physical entity – a projection that made the separation from other parts of universal consciousness real. Many parts were joined together in larger physical entities. Each of us humans is composed of many parts joined together. Our individual consciousness arises out of the many parts joined together to form one mind and one body.

Our individual, separate consciousness cannot continue to function once the body that holds it decays. It's like water in a cup. When the cup breaks the water flows in all directions until eventually it returns to the ocean. The ocean is universal consciousness, God. But the water has memory. There is universal memory, which in my mind determines time itself. There is also entropy, which I think degrades the memory to some extent. I don't know, of course. These are just stray thoughts of mine.

God created everything by dividing Him/Her/Itself and then pushing everything to evolve in various directions. I believe we humans, collectively, are a spearhead of this evolution of God. There may very well be others, other spearheads – meaning the most highly developed, separate forms of consciousness. This evolution continues, of course. God's – and our – understanding of good and bad evolved from the interaction of the separate consciousnesses into which God had divided Itself, especially us humans (spearhead/s).

I believe God, as the sum or the ocean of universal consciousness, retains an identity, a personality clinging to the physical universe as a whole and in particular to the spearhead/s of evolution (really God's own evolution) – us humans (and perhaps other such spearheads – advance guards – in other parts of the universe). So this God inspired all the so-called holy scriptures (at least those who conceived them) and prophets, etc. God inspired those who produced what became the Torah, the Bible, the Vedas, the Avesta, the Quran and many others. But God's own personality evolved and continues to evolve – through the spearhead/s, through us.

That is my belief now, after struggling for many years to formulate an understanding that would explain my doubts and allow me to separate from the teachings of Rev. Moon to which I had clung almost desperately for so long.