



Introduction to “ ‘Both Jews and Greeks’ ”

Review of Previous Article

Since the loss of a derivative god-consciousness about 3,000 years ago, mankind has vainly sought to recover this vanished authority that enabled him to survive and prosper. The authoritative direction of this commanding god-consciousness helped mankind to utilize inanimate elements and to domesticate plants and animals. However, it also was used by mankind to dominate other human beings. In the absence of this god-consciousness, there have been three notable developments in the struggle over authority:

1. The surrogate authority of religio-political and economic power structures emerged, claiming their own deification. For example, the Pharaohs regarded themselves as the emanation of the god, Ra. Adolf Hitler believed himself to be God.
2. There was the birth of the individual, autonomous authority of “divine” reason during the Axial Age (800-200 BCE). This has persisted into modern times.
3. With the emergence of postmodernism during the past 25 years, there has been a profound loss of confidence in the legitimacy, power and effectiveness of existing authority — whether corporate power structures or individual reason.

Meanwhile, for 3,000 years the One-and-Only God, YHWH, has sought to convey the ultimate truth of his own authority (from the Latin word *auctor*, which means “creator”). The simple yet profound reality is that YHWH himself, as Creator, is Ultimate Authority. Beginning with the liberation of the Chosen People from Egyptian slavery, YHWH revealed his authoritative and creative presence in countless ways, including various symbols and, ultimately, Temple metaphors.

While rejecting the philosophic dualism between “soul” and body (Genesis 2:7) and the monism of pantheism, Judaism understood the “prophetic dualism” between the authoritative Creator and his creation. Yet Judaism did

not grasp the enshrined promise and fulfillment of familial dualism, in which YHWH would become human and manifest himself as Jesus Christ in order to be our Adamic father, our Friend (John 15:15) and our Brother.

Furthermore, neither Judaism nor any other religion has understood that, in becoming human, YHWH acted authoritatively to inaugurate the end of the old Creation, which necessarily existed by command and is tainted with domination, evil and death. Mankind has not perceived that, by his sacrificial death, YHWH also acted to inaugurate the end of self-existent divinity, of autonomously existent mankind, and of all attempts at the nihilistic destruction of Creation. Nor has mankind appreciated YHWH's inauguration of an eternal and irrevocable new Creation, which will prosper by mutual consent. The time has now come to acknowledge that YHWH's incarnation as Jesus Christ is the manifestation of ultimate Authority.

... [F]or ... [by, with and unto (Greek, *en*)] him we live, and move, and have our being
... For we are also his offspring. — Acts 17:28.

Overview of This Article

Despite five successive “falls” over the course of millennia, mankind has persistently pursued its failed attempt to achieve divinity and thus possess the divine language, consciousness and ultimate authority that led the Creator to establish and oversee all Creation. To use the Genesis metaphor, from the beginning mankind has been enthralled by the serpent's assurance that “ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5).

In ancient times it was only the removal of a primordial god-consciousness and the dawn of self-consciousness, during the time of David, that brought an interruption to mankind's manic determination to possess God. The First Jewish Temple, erected in the time of Solomon, profoundly signified that the One-and-Only God, YHWH, promised to irrevocably adopt humanity as his own reality. In this act of ultimate compassion and *kenosis* (self-emptying), mankind would not become God. Rather, *God would become human*.

Sadly, the metaphoric meaning of the First Temple and its services was little perceived or acknowledged by God's Chosen People. Finally, they were conquered by their enemies. The Assyrians dispersed the northern tribes in the eighth century BCE, while the Babylonians exiled the southern tribes in the sixth century BCE. The First Temple was destroyed, its services were terminated, and its metaphoric meaning was lost.

After the defeat of Babylon by the Achaemenid emperor, Cyrus II (539 BCE), the Hebrews were allowed to return to Judah and rebuild the Temple. However, until the reign of Artaxerxes I (464-424 BCE), the restoration was fragile. At this critical time strife was replaced by peace throughout the Middle East — in Greece, Persia and Judah. In this new atmosphere earnest communication and consultation developed, involving Greek scholars, Persian rulers, and Jewish officials in the Persian government.

It was in this environment that intense efforts were made to reverse the fivefold fall of mankind. Greek philosophers devised a fivefold *paideia*

(instruction) to ultimately return mankind to the level of divinity. Similarly, Ezra, Nehemiah and their Jewish colleagues redacted (edited and revised) the Hebrew scriptures so that the Tetrateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers) plus a fifth book (Deuteronomy) became the Pentateuch (*Torah* = instruction, from *yarah* = to teach, to instruct). For the Jews the Pentateuch was the mystical counterpart of the four earthly elements — air, water, earth and fire — plus a fifth and heavenly element — ether. Furthermore, the heavenly, ethereal realm involved three levels — Mosaic Law, angels, and throne of God. Thus, the Jews intended for the Pentateuch to provide a fivefold means for the Chosen People to prevail on seven levels altogether (signified by the seventh-day Sabbath), ultimately reaching the divine throne — the level that they contended Moses had already achieved.

Tragically, the efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah were a profound contradiction to the Davidic conviction that YHWH himself had promised to leave the heavenly, ethereal realm and to fully adopt Creation as his own reality, thereby becoming our human Father, Brother, Friend and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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