

A Proposal for a New Bible-Study

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When I was young, I always wanted to know everything. As I grew up I found this troublesome and it put huge weight on my shoulders. Growing older, I continued to study and ask myself, “Who am I? Why am I here? What does it mean to be alive? What is it that makes us be alive?”

Not able to answer these questions, partially due to the complexity of human character, I came to a couple of logical conclusions that weren't even close to the end of the story, but instead set me forth on a new beginning. I recognized that I really didn't know anything and found solace in the fact that I didn't have to know anything.

Nowadays, walking the Earth with what for instance Bruce Lee would call ‘an empty cup’, I allow it to be filled and now and then come to a realization. Every little realization that stems from the presence of being in the here and the now is a small victory that allows me to interpret and reinterpret what has happened before, what's happening now, and what will happen in the future.

It's with this frame of mind that I believe we should look at the Bible and reinterpret it. At first there is nothing, because we haven't studied it. Then we study it, casting some light, but we find ourselves once again in darkness realizing that there are still things and will forever be things we don't know. We will forever live in day and night.

As you'll soon find out, there may be an even more literal interpretation to the genesis of mankind, related to every holy miracle of birth that we witness on a daily basis. Before we get to this, what was there before we got to the Bible?

Before Judaism we had the gods of the ancient Greeks: not gods as entities that resided outside of ourselves in some kind of heavenly place, but powers that we sought to identify in ourselves, that we would sacrifice to in ritual to boost our morale for forthcoming events. They were separate powers that would battle each other: war versus peace, love versus fest, and so forth.

Turn to Occidental culture and we face the dichotomy of Yin and Yang: opposites united in that they can't exist without one another. In Yin you find Yang and in Yang you find Yin. It was their way of identifying dialectics: thesis and antithesis that through dialectical debate led to the synthesis of truth.

Turn to the multiple translations we have of the Bible and what do we find? Considering that the Hebrew word for ‘God’ also can be translated as ‘power’, it reads that there is only one power and within this one power all other powers stand to be united, as the Bible testifies.

Separate the powers and the world turns to oppression or warfare. If everything is supposedly okay, then problems won't be recognized and won't be fixed. If we allow ourselves to identify a group of people as evil, we turn to warfare.

When we acknowledge such a thing as sin exists and we need to counter it, for instance by going to the police without ourselves judging, we resolve these problems or at least diminish them according to the higher standards of the majority of people, of all human beings, as found in a proper democracy that focuses on democratically elected laws.

Also, when we recognize that the majority of people are good and no group of individuals is evil – only minorities within every group of people that break the law and are as such sinful – then we won't allow ourselves to be put up against each other.

Turning back to the Bible and the classical texts, what does it really say? For instance the Hebrew word 'virgin' also has a version that can be interpreted as 'bachelor'.

I should point out here that the New Testament wasn't written in Hebrew, but in Koine Greek, but what room for interpretation does that provide? Did they make a distinction? When I look up 'virgin' in Koine Greek it does exist, but 'bachelor' simply doesn't according to modern day, probably biased standards.

What if Joseph's inner strength told him to respect the position of the bachelor Marie and take her to be his wife and to care for her and her child, this child also being born to his inner strengths?

Male lions and perhaps also in ancient cultures human beings before we truly became human, sometimes kill the offspring of other male lions when they make female lions their own. Maybe what the Bible noted is that we as humans care for other human beings and simply shouldn't judge?

There are many ways to interpret these texts that all mean to look at the rise and the fall of humanity. What do we look for in ourselves?

Don't we all as human beings in treating human beings look for ourselves to become gentlemen and ladies? Only referring to the gentleman, commonly known also as Lord, finding that inner strength that we all seek, doesn't that in general apply to all human beings?

We do need to drop the masculine preoccupation and embrace the feminine and as such neutral interpretation (of which I can't say it hasn't already been noted in the Hebrew Bible as for instance 'noble') but most human beings in what makes them human do try to serve a bigger good. What this is? I would argue love, health, and employment proper. What does the Bible have to say about this?

I may not know, but I do know this. When it comes to the genesis of life, with new babies being born, at first babies don't see anything, meaning there is darkness. Then there is light, which in meaning also is soon separated from darkness. It soon follows by the perception of night and day that we have a turning of the times.

As our perception and as such vision grows stronger, through the force of our soul that grows within us, we learn to distinguish humans and animals. We aren't really able to discern faces yet, but we see laughing and crying and the seed for empathy grows within.

Then we learn to discern our father and mother. When we are young they seem perfect, they have no mistakes. We, as children, live in paradise without shame. We don't feel we have to be dressed.

Then we learn that our father and mother have their limitations and their mistakes, they can't do everything, casting us out of the paradise we once perceived. We learn to acknowledge this, the fact that humans have their faults, and we learn to mend our mistakes, while still caring for the people around us without judging when we and the people around us don't stand to be harmed.

We learn that we are a part of a greater whole, a greater good, that manifests itself in society, where we need to learn to respect that we are all alike in our differences, and our existence does have meaning through what we add to the world. Living becomes about

caring, about doing, about making sure everyone is okay by acknowledging and mending sins.

We continue to do this until we are old and we die, often only realizing when we are old, that as we are old, we haven't really changed, we are still bound by the power that drives us from inside of us that we witness as our very own souls. This power that we have had to learn to wield and that passes on as we die, with other people taking our place, and us living on within them as they have witnessed us, directly or indirectly.

When I look at the Bible, I don't look at it as a book of doctrine. I approach it first and foremost with questions one should always ask: "What does it really say? What does this really relate to? And how do *I* feel this relates to *me* and the *people around me*?"

I feel the Bible was never meant to be a book filled with doctrine to follow. It's a book that was meant for us to question ourselves and the people around us, to help us find ourselves. It was also never meant to exclude, it was meant to include, but not out of a *have to* kind of relationship, but out of opportunity: when you need me, I'm there for you, as a human being, and I help when I can help. Yet, when you don't need me, I respect you as an individual and leave you be, so feel free to be on your way.

Let's not fight each other, but instead fight whatever torments our souls. In the end you will learn to accept, you will learn to love, you will learn to laugh and live life again, because we are all worthy. We all have the power of this greater good inside of us and through our democracy, our system of law, healthcare, and society as a whole, we need to keep striving to bring it out. In the end, the goal is to be human.