

## Perspective

# Unveiling Apocalypse: Reflowering the Tree of Life (Part II)

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## ABSTRACT

In this three-part article, the author will survey and discuss the wider, deeper backdrop of apocalypse as part of our existential condition over the last two thousand years and extending into the next century. Apocalypse is an expression of a sense of future-shock, of political domination by corrupt world powers, of military turbulence and genocide on a vast planetary scale. In many ways this has been a burgeoning reality ever since the agricultural revolution. It was certainly the case around the time Revelation was written. Today we are facing a much huger planetary apocalyptic crisis, in which we have gained the powers to effectively destroy much of life on Earth and ourselves through nuclear holocaust and are having impacts which are leading to irreversible changes in the climate, ocean levels and biological and genetic diversity, diminishing our own survival prospects as a species in the process. The author argues that apocalypse is a motif in every person's existential consciousness in the sense that we seek to understand the ultimate mystery of existence and come face to face with it before we pass away into oblivion. The author also argues that the 'unveiling' of reality is also absolutely central to the scientific revolution. As we have progressed from the first wave of Greek science through to the Renaissance and the flowering of the Western scientific tradition, the covers have well and truly been thrown off reality. With our own generation, "apocalypse now" has become an even more potent planetary reality - nuclear weapons of mass destruction, overpopulation, mass extinction of genetic diversity and climate change. We are thus literally facing planetary apocalypse, if we don't get a grip on our own folly and the impacts of business-as-usual on the planetary future.

Part II of this three-particle includes: 4. The Empty Vessel and the Prodigal Son; & 5. Unveiling the Sacred Reunion under the banner of the Tree of Life.

**Key Words:** Unveiling, apocalypse, tree of life, religion, science, God.

## 4. The Empty Vessel and the Prodigal Son

Despite its pretensions to brotherly love and forgiveness and to be the true religion of the only begotten Son of God, Christianity suffers from a rot of confusion at the very core of its being that stems from the very apocalyptic vision it is founded on. While Judaism is a fundamentally covenantal religion of the continuity of life - to be fruitful and multiply, Christianity is a sacramental religion (Ruether) of death in which the inner sanctum Holy of Holies is the Eucharist - drinking Christ's blood and eating his flesh ,À the soma and sangre ,À in remembrance of his crucifixion. This classes Christianity not just as a religion of human sacrifice

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like the Aztecs, or cannibalism like the Maori, but one of cosmic deicide, Æi without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.



Christian versus Aztec blood sacrifice. The Dream of Mary (Christoforo Simone dei Crocefissi) Sacrificial blood streams from her Tree of Calvary (the place of the skull). Right: Tree of the Middle Place Blood mother of the corn from the place of the skulls. While Mary dreams of the sacrificed Jesus, the blood mother is sacrificed to the harvest. At the crown of each is a bird - a Christian pelican picking its flesh for blood and a quetzal sometimes holding a snake to symbol regeneration (Campbell). The Aztecs saw great similarities between the Crucifixion and Eucharist and their own forms of human sacrifice.

This in turn comes from the utterly violent fact that Jesus is a figure of primary homicide in a purported crime against the entire universe, crucified by the Romans and accused of blasphemy by the High Priests in the enactment of a diabolical ritual sacrifice, including the setting at naught of the sacred king, cursing the women of Jerusalem and the plaintive cries to El on the cross. But this is only the beginning of the contradiction, because it is Abba himself who has ordained this sacrifice,

This is a situation whipped up by Jesus himself in the conviction that there is an active dark force of evil in the world extending far beyond mere human fallibility, where God and the devil are as complementary as day is to night. The synoptic gospels clearly say that Jesus effectively preordained this violent fate as an orchestrated collision with the devil, who had tempted him to cast himself down from the pinnacles of the temple:

*And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (Luke 4).*

In John, Jesus passes the sop to Judas Iscariot, effectively instructing Judas to betray him to the Romans in a death pact:

*When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. ... He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon (John 13).*

Judas then returns the pieces of silver in a ritual reenactment of Zechariah's apocalypse, although he is effectively carrying out Jesus' instructions for the "Passover Plot" (Schonfield). To take the contradiction to its cosmological conclusion, although the Jews have been blamed and sometimes violently punished by Christians ever since, we are then asked to believe that this entire spectacle is actually God sacrificing his only begotten Son so all who might believe in him shall have everlasting life in the apocalypse.

This is the tragic flaw in the entire conception. Why would a God of creation that made the scented wildflowers, or the lilies of the field as Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, and the dappled forests, and all the creatures that run, swim and fly, and human beings full of a spectrum of emotions, from love to hate, and a stringent desire for personal autonomy, reduce the entire universe to a sacrificial filicide to save humans from the wayward ways, that He had Himself created; to avoid a damnation that He Himself had set in motion? This is a completely flawed cosmology, little better than the Aztecs thinking they had to sacrifice 12,000 men, women and children to keep the Sun on course in the heavens. A God called the loving Father Abba who chooses to have his own son tortured and killed at high noon with the dark forces to redeem us from sin is a Neolithic throwback to blood sacrifice to ensure the fertility of the agricultural harvest. We don't need to invoke death to invoke life. We don't need cosmological homicide to have our sins forgiven. Fertility and birth itself are the antidotes to the mortal condition, not filicide, or human, or transcendental homicide in the name of eternal life.

And this explains ultimately why Christianity never took root in the Holy Land, although a small Jewish Christian following sprang up at the time. By contrast, end of days Christianity spread like wild fire across the pagan world because the idea of the heroic sacrificed demi-god as a world-savior was deeply embedded in the pagan psyche. From there its spread to a particularly decadent Rome, where Christians preferred torture and death to acknowledging Roman gods in the conviction that the end of days were at imminently at hand, until Constantine turned the tables and made the world's greatest pagan religion of the time the state religion of Rome and Christianity took on its alter ego of homicidal violence in the form of the Crusades and Inquisition. The consequence is that Christianity is a tale of a miraculous hero far off in another day and age, where all measures of credibility evaporate into the sunset, where Jerusalem itself is a fantasy ground, which only a few Christians ever visit.

Jerusalem today is a living manifestation of this contradiction. While orthodox Jews and Muslims make the life-blood of the city amid incipient violence over the temple mount, Christianity hangs on in a slowly mouldering attrition in a bunch of stations of the cross, the golden onion-topped Orthodox church above the Garden of Gethsemane and the Holy Sepulchre Church, where a bunch of Armenian and Greek Christian priests have regular punch-ups over territorial disputes, while Christian tourists visit the attractions on oogle-eyed day trips to witness the scattered 'relics' of a gruesome homicide two millennia ago that means little other than shekels to the realities of the city today.



Panorama of the Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Cemetery of the Resurrected, and the Gates of Mercy filled with rubble by the Muslims to try to prevent the messiah's return.

This brings us to the essential emptiness of the sacrament. The Eucharist is not only a diabolical celebration of homicide and suffering, it is an empty sacrament. The Jewish covenant is a verifiable contract for the good life. The Eucharist is a blood-stained fallacy.

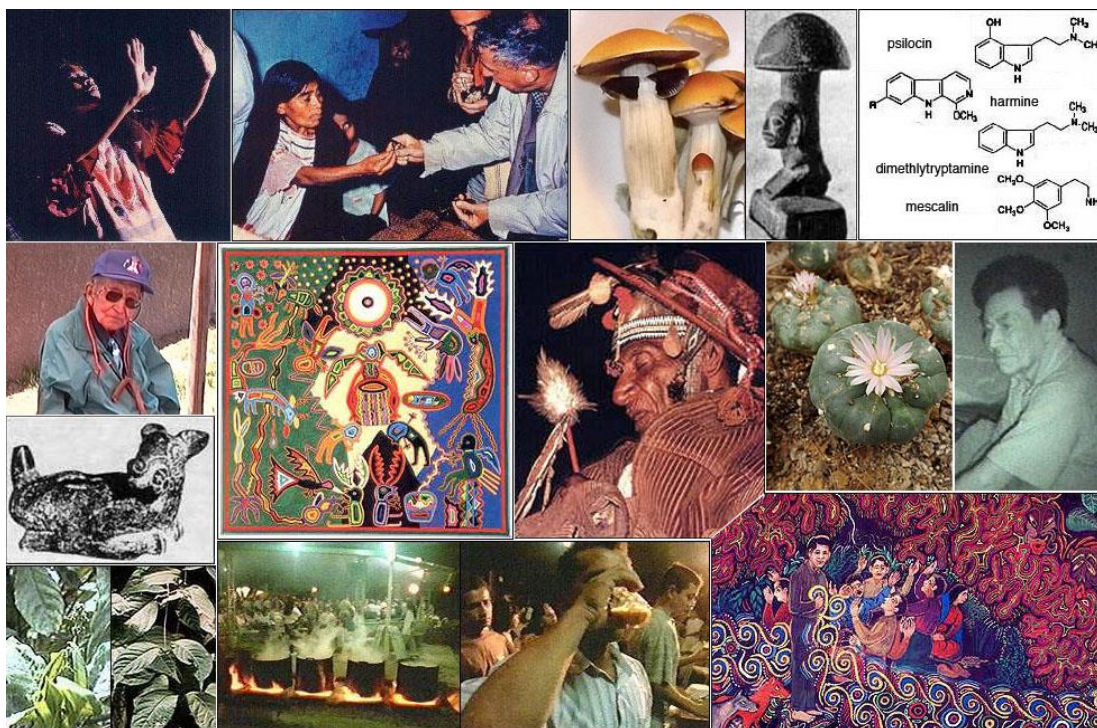
But this isn't necessarily the end of the matter. Religions, particularly those who spread across far-flung continents have a capacity to evolve and adapt themselves to the cultures and visionary experiences of the new places they take root, so maybe it is actually possible to redeem a deeply flawed tradition through natural processes. Could Christianity, which is one of the two dominant world religions, adapt itself to a planetary life in a closing circle in which nature is respected as sacred and protecting the passage of the generations of life, cherishing the Earth and protecting it, is the ongoing perpetual *raison d'être*?

Through the vagaries of natural evolution, the vast majority of the natural visionary sacraments have found themselves in the diverse ecosystems of the Americas, rather than the arid desert climates of the Middle East. Despite centuries of repression by the conquistadores the sacred mushroom and peyote have survived and adopted new forms of reverence, including Christian as well as pre-Colombian elements, both giving new expression to first-person mystical vision and bringing a major world religion back closer to its ancient shamanic roots in the vision quest.

Sacred mushrooms have been used for over 3000 years in Mexico. They were repressed by the conquistadores so effectively that all current trace of them disappeared from the record.

*Friar Sahagun, one of the first conquistadors to chronicle teonanacatl, or flesh of the gods, remarked of the Aztec mushroom eaters 'when they become excited by them start dancing, singing, weeping. Some do not want to sing but sit down and see themselves dying in a vision; others see themselves being eaten by a wild beast; others imagine they are capturing prisoners of war, that they are rich, that they possess many slaves, that they have committed adultery and were to have their heads crushed for the offence . . . and when the drunken state had passed, they talk over amongst themselves the visions they have seen' (Schultes and Hofmann 1979 146).*





Dimensions of visionary sacrament use of sacred mushrooms, peyote and ayahuasca, all of which use Christian, as well as native, shamanic motifs. Top row: Maria Sabina in reverie and handing sacred mushrooms to Gordon Wasson, *Psilocybe cubensis*, a sacred mushroom stone (1000 BC) with grinding metate, psilocin from the sacred mushroom, harmine and dimethyltryptamine, active principles in Amazonian ayahuasca – Vine of the Soul, and mescaline active in peyote. Second row Tellus (Goodmorning) Ramona, my Native American Church roadman, a sacred deer from Monte Alban with peyote in its mouth (500 BC) the nierika or cosmic portal to the spirit world of the Huichols opened by peyote, Don Jose Matsuwa the famous Huichol elder, peyote (*Lophophora williamsii*) and Senor Trinico, my ayahuasca shaman from Yarinacocha lagoon Pucallpa. Bottom row: Chacruna (*Psychotria viridis*) and the ayahuasca vine (*Banisteriopsis caapi*). Scene at an ayahuasca-taking Union Vegetale church in Brazil and a painting of a jungle ayahuasca vision session "Fighting Through Tikunas" by Pablo Amaringo.

Then in 1953, Gordon Wasson, at the encouragement of Robert Graves, made an expedition to Huautla de Jimenez and, after several false starts, persuaded Maria Sabina after she had had a vision of his arrival, to perform an all-night velada for his expedition. As a result of revealing the secret, her house was burned down and one of her sons killed. Gordon went on to describe it in terms of Pentecost:

*"One can imagine the many trembling confabulations of the friars as they would whisper together how to meet this Satanic enemy. The teonanactl struck at the heart of the Christian religion. I need hardly remind my readers of the parallel, the designation of the Elements in our Eucharist 'Take, eat this is my Body ...' and again 'Grant us therefore my gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son ... and to drink His blood ' But the orthodox Christian must accept on faith the miracle of the conversion of the bread and wine into God's flesh and blood: that is what is meant by the Doctrine of Transubstantiation. By contrast the sacred mushroom of the*

*Nahua carries its own conviction: every communicant will testify to the miracle that he has experienced (Furst 191)*

*"geometric patterns, angular not circular in richest colours, such as night adorn textiles or carpets. Then the patterns grew into architectural structures with collonades and architraves, patios of regal splendour, the stone work all in brilliant colours, gold and onyx and ebony, all most harmoniously and ingeniously contrived, in richest magnificence extending beyond the reach of sight, in vistas measureless to man ... They seemed to belong... to the imaginary architecture described by the visionaries of the Bible"... "The spirit of the agape of which we have already spoken was a prelude to a wave of generous tender feelings that the mushroom aroused in everyone ... Twice in the course of the night the Senora reached out her right hand to me and sought contact with my fingers in friendly greeting, across the chasm of the language barrier." (Riedlinger 1996 30-34).*

Maria Sabina herself personifies both Christian and Mazatec elements in her chanting:

*"Says, woman who thunders am I,  
woman who sounds am I.  
Spiderwoman am I, says  
hummingbird woman am I says  
Eagle woman am I, says  
important eagle woman am I.  
Whirling woman of the whirlwind am I, says  
woman of a sacred, enchanted place am I, says  
Woman of the shooting stars am I." ...  
I'm a birth woman, says  
I'm a victorious woman, says  
I'm a law woman, says  
I'm a thought woman, says  
I'm a life woman, says ...  
"I am a spirit woman, says  
I am a crying woman, says  
I am Jesus Christ, says ...  
I'm the heart of the virgin Mary."*

The Native American church also has a series of accounts relating peyote to Jesus:

*"God told the Delawares to do good even before  
He sent Christ to the whites who killed him ...  
God made Peyote. It is His power.  
It is the power of Jesus.  
Jesus came afterwards on this earth, after peyote."*

*There's a cloud; something coming. That's a man coming this way, with a buckskin suit on; he got long hair. He come right straight for him; it's Jesus himself. So he told this boy, "Well, one time you was crying, and your prayers were answered that time. So I come here. I'm not*

*supposed to come; I said I wasn't going to come before two thousand years," he said. "But we're going to bring you something, so you can take care of your people ... we're going to give you that power to do it." So they went up a hill there. There's a tipi there, all ready. So Christ, before he went in it, offered a prayer. So they went in there. Then he showed him the [ritual] ways; the medicine, how to use it, he gave him the songs. Whoever takes this medicine, he will do it in my name." (Anderson 23).*

The shamanic use of ayahuasca has likewise been reformed into a modern religious movement Union of the Vegetal to "remember past lives and to understand the true meaning of reincarnation as well as to become familiar with the origin and the real destiny of nature and of man". The Union Vegetale is a nominally Christian movement to experience inner harmony through partaking of ayahuasca tea. A fortnightly meeting is held by the movement, which includes members of both sexes from all walks of life. The Celebrants sit for four to six hours in the church meeting hall in contemplation, music and some speeches.

Modern scientific studies using psilocybin on subjects with no prior history of drug consumption consistently demonstrate that the participants have genuine religious and spiritual experiences, confirmed to be of continuing value months or years later, and provide those facing a terminal condition with a sense of personal realization and respite from their fear of death (Griffiths et al.).

All these practices are very different from the orthodoxy of a priest who acts as a moral arbiter and exerts the doctrine of the religion as a prescriptive sine qua non. Here each participant is directly in contact with spiritual or mystical experiences first hand and the roadman acts merely as a guide to ensure safe passage for all the voyagers. This is as different from a conventional orthodox church service as Christianity is from Judaism, yet those who partake see it as a palpable real tradition, no longer seeing through a glass darkly by virtue of the priesthood and scripture, but now face to face.

Although it is likely only a minority of people would choose to engage such a demanding mystical experience, the epoptea was just such an inner-sanctum rite of passage in Greek religion. It would serve to transform Christianity from a contrived religion based on human sacrifice, into a movement where the participants are themselves the agents of world redemption, just as it is above all the people of the Jewish religion who maintain its ongoing fertility and fecundity, despite a belief in the one God. This would also bring religion closer into the ethic of the pursuit of knowledge embraced by science and the Eastern meditative traditions, because it is a veridical quest to discover the inner nature of conscious experience, by sifting the chaff of fantasy and delusion from the wheat of mystical insight and illumination. In such a movement there is no place for cult leaders with utopian pretensions because it is a democracy of mystical insight which all can participate in.

The ultimate solution for Christianity is to become transformed into the universal way or [Tao of the Tree of Life](#), a covenantal religion vouchsafing to cherish and replenish the living planet and facilitate the enlightenment of all sentient beings, with the sacramental following of the living sacraments forming a minority inner sanctum rite of passage for those who choose to partake it.

My involvement with apocalypse comes from a long and tortuous history that began when I first took psychedelics in the nineteen sixties and realized that all traditional conceptions of God and religious doctrine were fantastic tales told to make a simple kind of sense of the world in the face of a *mysterium tremendum* so extraordinary and inscrutable that we all need to go right back to square one, with no preconceived assumptions, if we are going to make any sense of it at all.

From there I embarked on a dual quest. One part of this was to understand life as a cosmic phenomenon in the universe. I wrote a rather quaint overview of what was known at the time about biogenesis entitled "Unified Field Theories and the Origin of Life" whose thesis is that conscious life is an interactive cosmological consequence of the symmetry-breaking of the four fundamental forces of nature in the cosmic origin, a thesis which has become increasingly confirmed with the progress of research (see:<http://dhushara.com/biocos/> and its sequel <http://dhushara.com/unravel/>). At the same time I studied how chaos and quantum entanglement might support conscious free-will (<http://dhushara.com/stc/ct.htm>).

Complementing this, I made a vigil on my first academic sabbatical to the East where I took Tibetan Buddhist initiations with Yeshe Dorje and the previous Karmapa and wandered India as a Shiva sadhu, as well as making a journey to the sources of the world's psychic power plants, involving ganga in India, peyote ceremonies with Tellus Goodmorning as roadman in Taos and sacred mushrooms in Mexico. On my next journey I travelled to Yarinacocha lagoon on the Amazonian Ucayali where I took ayahuasca with Senor Trinico, returning again nineteen years later during the millennial vigil.

At some point in the 1980s during a powerful velada on sacred mushrooms, I realized I was probably the only person in the world who could bring the threads of mystical and scientific reality together in this way and I decided to give the world until the second millennium to demonstrate some capacity to engender a long-term epoch of sustainability, in the face of nuclear mutually-assured destruction, and the holocaust of biological diversity, accompanied by human caused planetary impacts.

I have some sort of 'karmic' or synchronistic connection with the Christian tradition, born Chris King on the Epiphany 1945 just as the first plutonium began to roll out of Hanford. Although Christmas is a contrived date intentionally co-opted by the early church to capture the winter solstice from Mithraic religion, now shifted to the 25<sup>th</sup> December because of a disparity between the Julian and Gregorian calendars, and Easter, with its eggs, was co-opted long after the death of Jesus from the festival of the Goddess Eostre, or Ostara, the Epiphany is a date with its own ancient roots. It is the advent of both Jesus and of Dionysus and celebrates water-into-wine and the baptism of the dove.





Missal of Odalricus - early 12th century (Lavin). The three signs of Christ's manifestation on the Epiphany. Water to wine, the baptism and the Magi. The word Epiphany from the Greek and means "manifestation," "appearance," or "revelation." ... A festival of Dionysus' Advent was kept on this day in the Aegean and Anatolia.

*We keep this day holy in honour of three miracles:  
this day a star led the wise men to the manger,  
this day water was turned to wine at the marriage feast,  
this day Christ chose to be baptised by John in the Jordan,  
for our salvation, allelu-Yah  
(Magnificat antiphon)*

With the world in a state of unmitigated short-term thinking amid bouts of genocidal conflict and no sign of a cohesive agreement to preserve biological diversity, let alone avoid a hard landing caused by human impact and climate change, I secured another academic sabbatical to do a biodiversity field study of human impact in the Amazon in 1999 and to attend a millennial celebration in Jerusalem at the end of the year which becomes the subject of the next section.

## **5. Unveiling the Sacred Reunion under the banner of the Tree of Life**

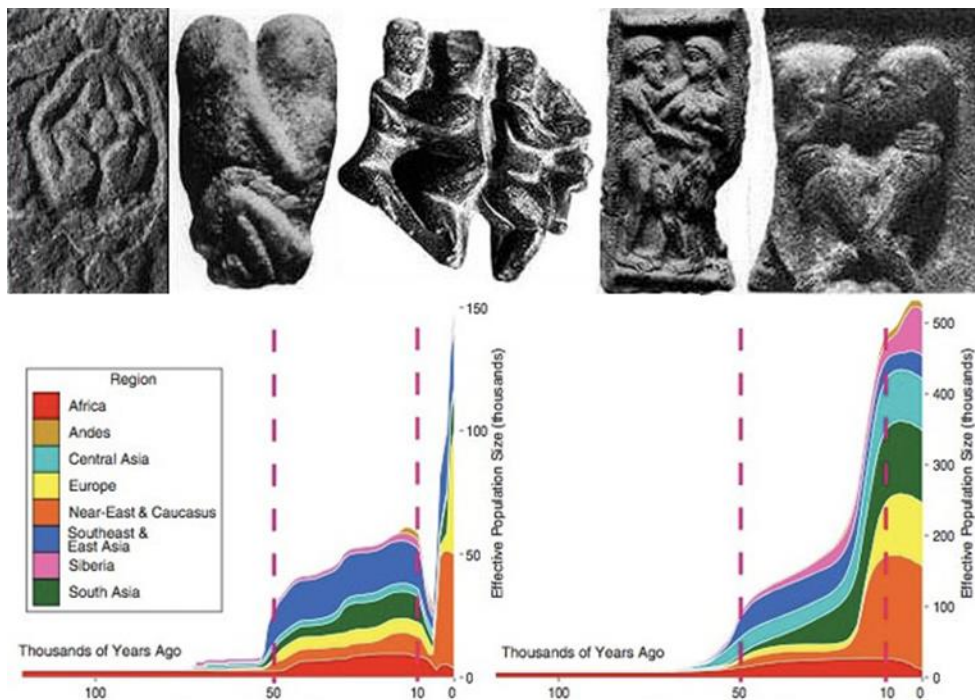
Having documented the burning season in Bolivia and human impact from the Andes to the Amazon in a six-week river journey, Jane King and I travelled to Jerusalem via Rome, where we participated in a series of rites of passage to pronounce the reflowering of the Tree of Life in the Sacred reunion of woman and man, to consummate and culminate the epoch of messianic apocalypse.

A key feature of the apocalyptic epoch that is central to the bridal unveiling is the fact that the entire period has been one of patriarchal domination, in which woman was cursed and social patterns involving the matriarchy and female reproductive choice were violently repressed.

Although in Genesis 1 woman and man are conceived in the likeness of the 'Elohim - God in the sexually dyadic plural - in the Fall from Eden, Yahweh (Jehovah) is now a lone (male) God, and Eve is now blamed for parleying with the serpent and persuading Adam to eat with her the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, becoming sexually shy covering themselves with fig leaves only to be cast out of Eden with a flaming sword by God, for man to live by the sweat of his brow among thorns and thistles and woman to suffer the pain and travail of childbirth, to be ruled over by her husband and both to go as dust to dust and ashes to ashes in the round of mortal existence. Woman is thus cast as the "Devil's Gateway" in the Christian tradition, along with all the symbols of female reproductive choice as personified in the Great Whore of Babylon - Inanna-Ishtar.

This current of patriarchy opposed to matriarchal traditions is also spelt out in the Pentateuch, where Jacob, the founder of the twelve tribes of Israel spends seven years with the matriarchal family of Laban for each of Rachel and Leah, before departing with his wives and cattle to found a patriarchal dynasty, with Rachel hiding the teraphim, or house Gods of Laban's family, under her menstrual skirts, in a telling portrayal of the women conceding to be complicit in the transition to patriarchy.

This is followed by a severe warning in Judges, that matrilineal patterns were to be violently overthrown by a zealous patriliney. The concubine of Bethlehem-Judah is accused of 'whoring' by going back to live with her father-in-law for four months. When the Levite returns to claim her, the father-in-law keeps saying to stay a little longer. When the couple leave and turn in at Gibeath, and men of Belial ask to 'know the man within', the Levite offers his concubine, who is raped and dies on the doorstep.



The hieros gamos from 10,000 years ago through Catal Huyuk to Inanna and Dumuzi in Sumeria represents conjugal fertility. Below: [Bottleneck in human Y-chromosome](#) from 10,000 years ago resulted from an ongoing sex ratio of 1 reproducing man for every 17 women.

To understand the extreme degree to which reproductive patriarchal dominance occurred across widespread cultures of the planet (Fielder & King), from 10,000 years ago to the Biblical era, we only need to turn to emerging genetic research from 2015. Throughout human evolutionary emergence over the last hundred thousand years, some men have had two reproductive partners while others have had none, while every fertile woman can become pregnant leading to a reproductive sex ratio - the number of reproducing females for each reproducing male of two to one. With the rise of agriculture this ratio rose to seventeen women for each reproducing man, due to the men with power and assets commandeering all the reproductive opportunities through extreme polygyny, supported by subject male military power. The fact that this is observed across a sample of the entire human genome from all continents shows patriarchal dominance became an extreme phenomenon and that monogamy, is a modern invention, although it has probably always operated between couples to provide protection and resources for pregnancy and enable human children to reach an age where they can converse and fend for themselves in an extended family, or village community, around the age of four, as is increasingly becoming the case with serial monogamy.

The entire apocalyptic paradigm has thus been distorted by motifs of male paternity uncertainty, leading to violent repression of female reproductive choice, to the subordination of women and to a highly imbalanced religious cosmology, in which male anxiety about mortality through not giving live birth to the continuity of life, has led to the condemnation of nature, the quest for eternal life, increasingly violent notions of moral punishment, and the notion of cosmological war between dark and light in the manner of a male reproductive contest, central to apocalyptic tumult. Throughout the Old Testament, Yahweh is described as a jealous God, jealous of the whoring of the bride Israel, through the worship of other deities, casting the theme of paternity uncertainty into cosmological proportions. The whole phenomenon of apocalyptic tumult amid the pangs of the messiah is thus very much a distorted product of the male sense of mortality and the endless conflict of male dominant societies upon one another in genocidal war and the rumours of war.

We can thus see that reflowering apocalypse is centrally about the sacred reunion – the ancient hieros gamos celebrated since the dawn of time in the fertility of woman and man personified in Goddess and God, leading to fertile offspring. This is where the balance of human visions of the future come together in a species where sex wars have always been a reality of the asymmetric prisoners' dilemma of the sexes, because of the huge investment of the female in a pregnancy which leaves her vulnerable and travail for months, the potential risks to life of delivering a large head, and years of lactation and early child-rearing, means that humans are at an effective extreme of mammals, only 3% of whom are socially (but not in general genetically) monogamous for the same reasons.

The Millennium-eve ceremony on Scopus above the Mount of Olives looking down on the Dome of the Rock can be seen at: <https://youtu.be/9bIWES8jnkA>.

To restore the sacred reunion in the Millennium in a rite-of-passage to redeem this highly-flawed tradition, Jane King and I, having been invited to a twelve day workshop on the Shekhinah at the Academy of Jerusalem, participated in an all night vigil on Mount Scopus overlooking the Dome of the Rock. We had been offered a grove next to Gethsemane by a member of the family who originally kept the keys to the Haram-al-Sharif under the Jordanians, but we were driven out by a court injunction and police prohibition. The vigil was dedicated to the sacred reunion in reflowering the Tree of Life in preserving the biosphere and its biological and genetic diversity throughout our future generations. Hence we recited a new expression of the Jubilee passage in Isaiah, which Jesus pronounced in the synagogue at Nazareth immediately after his baptism and temptation, also citing Naaman the Syrian and the Widow of Sidon, and was then nearly thrown off the cliffs for doing so, pronounced this time, not as a lone male, but as woman and man together, in the name of both God and Gaia:

### ***The Anointing Reading***

*The spirit of God is upon us  
the spirit of Gaia is within us  
because they hath anointed us  
to sing good tidings unto the meek  
they hath sent us to bind up the broken-hearted  
to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and the opening of prison to them that are bound  
to proclaim the acceptable year  
to comfort all that mourn  
to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion  
in Palestine, in Sidon, in Syria, Arabia and the world  
to give unto them beauty for ashes  
the oil of joy for mourning  
the garments of love for the spirit of heaviness  
that they might be called trees of compassion  
the planting of the divine  
that all might be glorified  
in the abundance of wisdom  
and we shall renew the old wastes  
and we shall restore the former desolations  
and we shall repair the waste cities  
the desolations of many generations  
they hath clothed us with the garments of salvation  
and I as a bridegroom decketh myself with ornaments  
and I as a bride adorneth myself with jewels  
for as the Earth bringeth forth her bud  
and as the garden causeth the things that are sewn in it to spring forth  
so shall harmony and fulfillment spring forth  
among all the nations  
this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*



This wasn't intended to be a magical pronouncement that would change the world overnight simply by saying it, but a unique unparalleled event in its time and place, revealing the foresight to take responsibility to speak the words that are key to redeem the apocalyptic tradition in the sustainable epoch of the Tree of Life.



The evening was accompanied by folk and harp music, chants to the Shekhinah and recitations from all present to bring in the new epoch, culminating in Eliyahu MacLean blowing the shofar and pronouncing the blessing of the collective mashiach:

*We are here together the collective mashiach  
and our vision here tonight will spread  
peace in our hearts and peace on the City of Peace below  
Yeru-shalom Jerusalem  
and bisrata shem in Jah Allah  
we'll be as a light and a source for peace  
in the whole world and in the whole universe.*

On the Epiphany, we led a small messianic march, of a spontaneous twelve, and finally thirteen participants, from the Ascension site on the Mount of Olives, by Gethsemane, the Vale of Kidron and the Gates of Mercy, to the Western Wall:



Chris and Jane pronouncing the Gates of Mercy open and the thirteen in the Vale of Kidron.

At the Gates of Mercy, we declared the gates wide open from Isaiah 60:

*And your gates shall be open continually  
they shall not be closed day or night  
the glory of Lebanon shall come to you  
the juniper the box tree and the cypress together.*

The Gates of Mercy, or Compassion, on the Eastern wall of the second temple compound have been kept shut, filled with rubble by the Muslims in a vain brute-force attempt to prevent the return of the Messiah, in the light of Ezekiel 40:

*It is for the prince; the prince.  
He shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord,  
he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate,  
and shall go out by the way of the same.*



The Thief in the Night Eating the "Prince's" bread, and pronouncing the Gates Open by day.

As the Thief in the Night, I had already entered the graveyard lying outside the Gates and pronounced that all such attempts were in vain:

*This is a piece of bread. This is the bread of life if you like. Now I'm sitting at the portico. There is no exact portico here. There's a small iron wicket fence with some of the grave stones inside. I'm not intruding here. I'm inviting. I'm not transgressing. I am offering. The way of healing for Islam and for the whole world lies in reconciliation. In Ezekiel it says the prince will eat bread in the portico of the gate and come in and go out, pass through by the gate. This passing through is the release of humanity from bondage in liberation.*

At the same time openly declaring the same from the inside by day as well:

*I'm sitting here in the garden that lies inside the old temple precincts. In the background are the Gates of Mercy. And you can see I'm surrounded by trees. And again I call from inside the Gates of Mercy a third time that the gates be opened in the name of the unity of all paths and the reunion of all peoples.*

This is really a comment to parry the monolithic ambitions of Islam to create a utopian domination of the planet, retaining its following by force through homicidal measures such as the death penalty for apostasy, rather than entering into a cooperative relationship with all beliefs and freedoms of belief and association, and the way these issues revolve around the Temple Mount - Har HaMōriyā (הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַקָּדוֹשׁ) or Haram al-Sharif (الْحَرَامُ الشَّرِيفُ), preventing a dialogue of reconciliation.



Finally we arrived at the Western (Wailing) Wall, where we again pronounced the sacred reunion of woman and man, not just God and the bride Israel, but woman and man in the flesh, as the love song actually declares:

*I sleep but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh,  
saying open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled :  
for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.  
I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?  
My beloved put his hand in the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.  
I rose up to open to my beloved and my hands dropped with myrrh,*

*and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.  
Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm:  
for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave:  
the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.  
Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.*

This brings us finally back to the motif of the Tree of Life hidden since the foundation of the world in the Fall from Eden. The role of religion and of spirituality, ethics and our sense of human conscience is to ensure we collectively cherish and replenish the Earth throughout our generations forever, so that its biological and genetic diversity flourish, its climate remains optimally habitable and all the generations of conscious beings have a full opportunity to experience the mysteries of life and existence. The epoch of the Tree of Life is thus the epoch of sustainability, in which life is able to continue and evolve so long as the Earth shall live. This is the cosmic destiny human consciousness faces as the guardians of the living planet.

Apocalypse is a cosmological nightmare generated by a patriarchally dominant culture generating religions of conflict and destruction in the name of the male reproductive imperative and its ensuing male mortality anxiety inflated to cosmic proportions in the quest for eternal life and the cosmic war between God and the devil. This is itself a betrayal of faith in both our evolutionary original virtue, which sustained us into this situation, and for believers in the divine, a betrayal of the genuine power and essential goodness of God, by placing Him in mortal combat with equally oppressive forces of darkness which have no place in any cosmological description, outside the all too natural human failings of jealousy, betrayal, anger, contempt, disgust, envy and expedience.

The scientific revolution has shown us in astounding ways how the universe actually works and how it comes about, and it does have moral and ethical implications for conserving the diversity of nature, knowing how long evolutionary time-scales take to generate the living and genetic diversity upon which the robustness of the planet, and our future with it, depends.

But the unique role of religion, when it is functioning for the human and planetary good, is to bind us together in a paradigm of caring and of moral and ethical goodness and togetherness in which major decisions for the long-term welfare of the planet and its ongoing life may take personal sacrifices on the part of all of us to avoid a tragedy of the commons caused by winner-take-all exploitation and greed.

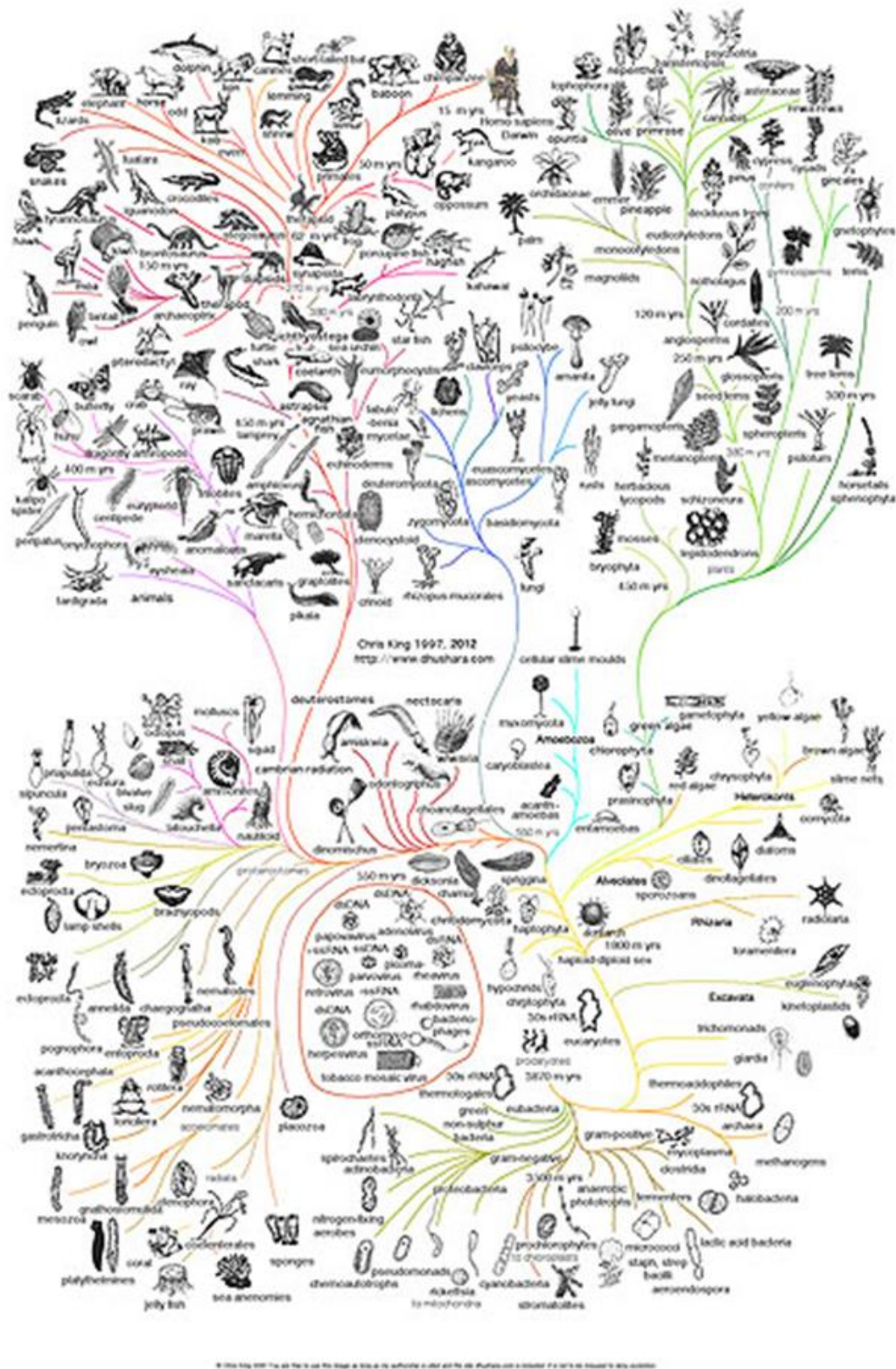
This is precisely the theme of the current Pope's encyclical to care for the planet, to avoid severe climate change and loss of biodiversity, paralleled by similar responses from the Anglicans and a group of Muslim scholars, so it is possible for religion to have a helpful role when it is not oppressive. However, religion also needs to respect female views on contraception and reproduction in an era of peaking and potentially unsustainable human population. Its role should be to mitigate human violence with a sense of wisdom and mutual compassion, rather than to invoke homicidal violence and dismemberment through outmoded doctrines and prescriptions, such as stoning for adultery, amputation for stealing, and death for apostasy.





Plate 3:  
*Mandala of Evolution.*  
Dion Wright.





The Tree of Life is actually the evolutionary tree of life's diversity (Mandala of Evolution Dion Wright, Tree of Evolution Chris King).

Many of the ways religions act already encourage compassionate sentiments, in the virtues of charity and love for others, celebrated collectively in rites-of-passage, from birth, through sexual union, to death, and in the festivals of the seasons. They also encourage caring for others in creating a fairer world for all. This is the joy and magic of people coming together in love with a common cause of the fertility of life itself and the part each of us plays in the fabric of existence. We are thus the agents of giving meaning to existence through the meaning we give to life itself, rather than seeking it in subservient worship and unquestioned archaic doctrines. Extended to an opportunity for mystical experience as well, provided by the living sacraments completes the cycle in the first person, making the whole process one of confirming reality through personal affirmation, rather than prescriptive belief.

We nevertheless need to hold all existing religions to account for their history of violence and deal with them in terms of tough love, resisting all violence and coercion, to avoid them taking humanity and our very ability to protect our future generations, hostage to their coercive and often violently enforced utopian ambitions.

Muslims hold Muhammad as a sacred perfect being, pbuh, under pain of death for his mere depiction, but it is clearly documented that he ordered the summary beheading of 700 Jewish men and took their women into sexual slavery by appointing a dying warrior judge over their fate when they had parleyed with the Quraysh besieging Medina, but had not betrayed the Muslims by actually opening their gates in the Oasis (Armstrong). Thus a genocide was committed, even though an actual betrayal had never occurred, or the Muslims wouldn't have been in a position to exact such a diabolical punishment. Muhammad personally ordered apostates to be killed and women to be stoned for adultery. All people on the planet need to recognise that the prophet's own actions are completely inconsistent with Islam's pretence to be a religion of peace. If any religious leader in this day and age were to commit such heinous offences, the international community would hunt them down and put them on trial for crimes against humanity. We need to come to a day of reckoning about those who have committed unconscionable violence in founding a major world religion with utopian aims for world domination, and steadfastly oppose all rights to commit homicidal violence in the name of religion, or scripture.

For this reason I close with a series of abrogations of scripture invoking violence or repression, as possibly the one person on the planet who has declared the need, taken the prerogative, and the had insight to do so, in the spirit of culminating the violent epoch of apocalypse once and for all time to follow, for the liberation of all sentient beings from bondage and religious homicide.

But to consummate this process, we need to consider the wider horizon. The world is suffering from a schizophrenic mismatch between the scientific and religious traditions. On the scientific side, paradigm shifts - fundamental changes in the description of reality - are happening at an accelerating pace, just as Albert Einstein's quantum theory and relativistic laws of motion formed a new paradigm, generalizing and replacing those of Isaac Newton. Whole new developments, from the theories of fundamental physics, through cosmology and the ultimate origin and fate of the universe, to the human genome project, biological genetics and neuroscience, are completely transforming our understanding of the natural world. By contrast the world's major religions are caught in a sabbatical flat-Earth view of existence, in which the heavens are in the clouds and we all wait in fear for the Day of Judgment. In the middle stands the planet and its biosphere and the

human impacts documented by science which could jeopardize the long-term future of planetary life. Despite efforts on both sides to paper over the cracks and claim some consistency between science and religion, these two world-views have become fundamentally inconsistent and in a state of conceptual and actual conflict.

Science, as the pursuit of natural knowledge, can tell us the planet is in trouble, but it falls to social activists, such as Greenpeace, to try to bring human consciousness to bear on the problem, while world leaders dither and argue, urged on by a few more enlightened of their members, often hobbled by conservative forces aligned to business interests who depend for their wealth on the status quo, leading towards a tragedy of the commons. Traditionally the complementary role falls to religion to give people a view of reality in which life makes sense, to motivate people to act for the common good, and in which our collective prospects and sense of meaning in life and death are given real hope.

Science and religion in deeper human history over the last 100,000 years have appealed to complementary aspects of how the human brain has evolved. Science is basically an abstraction of the practical natural skills of hunters developing potent arrow poisons and gathering learning the nutrient and medicinal properties of diverse plant species, and potential uses of natural products to achieve diverse cultural ends. It is the knowledge of how to live in nature successfully. Religion plays into our sense of meaning, our togetherness as a people, our sense of moral rightness towards one another in the face of potential betrayal, and the subconscious realms where visionary experiences, our mortal fears and sense of belonging play out in senses of ecstasy and ultimate meaning

It is thus religion that has been the motivating force for the rise and fall of successive cultures and civilizations. The world is in absolutely urgent need of the ability to have paradigm revolutions of its religious traditions, so that humanity can come to constructive engagement with the closing circle of one biosphere. Now the tragic fallacy in this equation is that Christianity, Islam and even Buddhism too have set up toxic traps to prevent natural paradigm change. Buddha embodies a state of perfection unattainable in the round of birth and death. Islam has declared that Muhammad is the final prophet, preventing any change to the paradigm under pain of execution. Christianity has in many ways set up an even more lethal trap by claiming the only messiah is Jesus who will return as avenging Lord in the day of judgment, thus not only being the final prophet, but the judge and executioner as well.

Try to imagine for a moment the relationship between Newton and Einstein. If Jesus, as the historical founder of Christianity, is compared to Newton, how can an Einstein ever come into being in this tradition? No Meister Eckhart, Saint Francis, or Mother Teresa can do it because all are caught in the gilded cage of having to worship the Christian doctrinal package, unadulterated by heresy, as good faithful Christians. The current Pope Francis who is a genius about protecting diversity and addressing global warming in his encyclical compiled by world class scientists, and has moved to soften the hard line against divorce, and abortion through forgiveness, is still stuck with claiming that "Good weeps" for the victims of church child abuse. What kind of God of creation lurks in the aether, expressing human emotions and "biological" tears for Catholic wrongdoings, while genocidal religious war rages in Syria and the planet is in ecocrisis?



So, is it true that the only way a Christian Einstein could come about would be by founding a completely new religion, overthrowing the broken paradigm of Jesus stuck on the Cross bleeding for all eternity? Since Christianity is the central cultural religious tradition of the Western world, this is like saying Einstein would have to overthrow science to discover relativity. It is madness pure and simple. It is possible but it would clearly take a huge challenge to the zeitgeist to accept a human innovator daring enough to do a stealth raid as the "thief in the night". The acid test ultimately is universal credibility of the innovation.

Hence we need to look very carefully at what the natural revolution of this stasis is, in complete honesty and transparency. The answer, in the closing circle of the biosphere, is clearly that the central meaning, *raison d'être* and purpose of all our human lives is to cherish and replenish the Earth throughout the generations of living diversity. There is no other end game, no other Unveiling, no other solution - this IS it! It's not a matter of affirmative belief, such as "I believe in the one God", but the ultimate truth of existential reality itself, and our conscious place in the process. This is what I describe as the way of the Tree of Life, the natural successor to Christianity in the Western tradition.

And it comes with two clear implications about nature and fertility, both of which run diametrically opposite to the view of reality pronounced in Eden - that nature is evil, as the serpent is evil, and that woman is the devil's gateway. The truth is that nature is sacred, *sine qua non*, and that sexuality is as sacred as nature. Reproductive fertility and its underlying genetics and the parental investment of the human female stipulates that female choice reproductively and culturally is at least as sacred as male choice.

(Continued on Part III)