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The Search for Spirituality Amidst the Artificial Realities of Global Materialism

Chapter 7 – Digital Spirituality

The power of a person lies in his/her decision.

Besides satisfying natural curiosity, Digital Spirituality provides a model of understanding ultimate reality that works. It enables us to search out that which is scientifically unsearchable as well as provide pragmatic guidance in day-to-day decisions. We are better equipped to engage Ultimate Reality despite knowing that our understanding is by design incomplete and our lives dependant on forces outside of our total control because we die. The conscious experience of personal life within the context of total human experience reveals this latter fact in the contemplation of our mortality. It is potentially a good thing if properly embraced by our decisions to choose life in the hope of attaining the transcendent consciousness of an eternally creative identity within the context of unconditional love, which is the ultimate and only sustainable joy couched in deepest peace.

Digital decision-making is designed into the fabric of the universe. By being alive you have no choice but to participate consciously or by passively reactive default. How you participate in the process determines whether your life is delimited to one of the enslaved paths to destruction or whether you create an eternal identity of elevated liberty in love. You must take responsibility for your decision making process. If you don't, the decisions made for you portend to eventual destruction, only delayed and temporarily detoured, if at all, by your desperate reaction to circumstances as a result of a brief realization of what is happening.

Those delays and detours are reminders that you could more directly participate in the process of temporal life through the exercise of your consciously creative power of decision. It is the most powerful tool of ultimate reality and goes hand-in-hand with faith, which is to act on your decision in hope of success. It is the creation of a potent temporal reality by imagination that is both fulfilled in matter within the context of time and space as well as contributing to a unique expression of ultimate reality, a part of eternity.

In simplest terms, it is a choice of life or death, being or non-being, light or darkness. Digital Spirituality is a guidance process to make more good decisions than bad ones, to choose a liberty of faith instead of the chains of fear, to substitute an experience of life more aligned with ultimate reality by recognizing the deceits and desires of all the many artificial realities present in human social, economic, religious and political systems as well as those that lie between our own ears. (Yes, mine, too!) Some gaping pits in the road of life may indeed be avoided, though it seems that we must all fall into some of them in order to learn anything of deep spiritual value.

It is not possible to eliminate all artificial realities from our consciousness (awareness) and belief systems in this life, but the goal of Digital Spirituality is to come as close as possible to doing so with the recognition that our decision paths in the journey towards ultimate reality is by design and purpose a bit different for each person's experience in the material dimension. This means that the search's scenery will be a bit different for each of us. We are not to judge but to help and encourage one another. God does judge, and the gates to ultimate reality are narrow. Fortunately, humble persons of spiritual potency are smaller still. In the meantime, we can choose to build a parallel metaphysical paradigm with eternal consequences to how this life is experienced in the flesh instead of merely suffering the wretched consequences of failed societies or cultural systems even though we ourselves have lived lives of natural spiritual balance.

Let me try to illustrate this concept with an imperfect analogy. If the ocean is the life force, we want to surf it at its crest all the way into shore. We do not want to hold back and do nothing until we tire and sink to the bottom of the bay to be rolled onto the shore drowned dead. We do not want to experience an over concentrated energy of the wave so that we are pounded into the surf when it breaks apart, as all artificial realities built out of unsustainably imbalanced concentrations of energy do. By riding the crest of the surf, we have learned necessary skills and go with the flow plus, that is we are not merely

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floating on the waves waiting for life to happen to us, but we have seized the opportunity decisively by adding energy of our own to catch the ride provided by the natural, or perhaps social, forces around us.

Of course, no one catches the first crest that comes by successfully. Learning requires repeated conscious effort through multiple failures until some success is attained. Catching and mounting a wave does not preclude additional falling off before reaching the shore. Some fall soon after a bit of success, and some falls may be brutal. The important thing is to get up quickly and not just sink in despair trying to figure out the failure too deeply. Figure it out while getting up lest you miss the crest just behind you. Good waves come in cycles. Too much time lost in feeling too tired from self-doubt could result in being swept towards the shore by the currents of life and caught unawares by a tumbled demise. Obviously, the closer to shore when you fall, the more quick of a recovery is required, but even that is possible so that the ride in can end riding the crest of the wave instead of being crushed by it. Every successful surfer falls many times. Some of my own falls have been very brutal. I don't totally forget them, but I decide to put them out of my mind replacing them with present focus on the coming waves and catching one lest I get hit from behind unknowing or swept crashed upon shore because I waited too long for the perfect wave. We do not all catch the same wave, and the perfect wave for each of us is the one we catch and ride successfully to shore, heads and bodies above water.

The truth is that the materially real ocean of life that we smell, see, feel, hear and taste is only part of reality's picture. An undetected parallel ocean of ultimate reality surges around us concurrently. Somehow it affects the waves we deal with sensually. Our interaction with the ocean we know materially has implications for the one we cannot directly sense, yet we cannot choose to remain ignorant of it without suffering the consequences. We can ride the fleshly felt waves to shore and still be tumbled by the crushing surf of ultimate reality at the end. It is a different kind of ride not fully visible now, and not even seen by others on reaching the shore.

The truth is that we will not really know if we have caught the ultimate reality wave along with the natural one until we hit the shore. If we have, then its crest will carry us out of others' sight or sound, over the shore and sand hills and even the mountains reaching to heaven. The two are parallel, and the latter more consequential than the former. As you have probably heard before, the power of ultimate spiritual reality is evidenced only by its secondary by-products, as a strong wind blows leaves through the air. We can see the leaves but not the wind.

The tricky part is that you can buy a leaf blower to make those leaves fly, too. There are a great variety of leaf blowers for sale and even more already in use by others. You do not need to buy one for yourself. Most people just feel the secondhand wind of someone else's blower. Some of these artful leaf movers are so beautiful that people just sit sensing the awesome breeze in mistaken wonder, not seeing that they are mere fans instead of the true wind. That is what artificial reality is all about: it deceives by imitating the visible manifestations or behaviors. The clue to knowing which is which lies in the nature of the price paid.

More technically phrased, Digital Spirituality is the binary mathematics for the metaphysical dimension of the universe as applied in the material world. In other words, all spiritual disciplines and phenomena can be understood to reflect either a "yes" or "no" event, state or condition. Thus, all paranormal and traditional spirituality can be simplified into phenomenal components defined by combinations of these "Yes" and "No" elements. I have yet to find a psychology, religion, morality, philosophy or other "spiritual" manifestation that does not yield itself open to better understanding by applying systems approach of Digital Spirituality to its functional performance and essential essence of being.

Since we cannot totally trust to our own sensibilities in perceiving and understanding spiritual realities, we need a reliable and objective source of guidance to help us. If an honest and truly genuine metaphysical guide, it will itself be subject to multiple comprehensions that will differ from person to person and yet provide tools to help minimize self-deception as well powerful guideposts through the

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maze of decision-making called life. When examined with the eyes of broadest human experience and knowledge, it will provide the required basis for making right decisions that consistently trend toward life and the perfect ideals of ultimate reality that Plato and other great philosophers have discussed. Every person faces the intangible challenges of a chaotic cosmos of competing claims or manifestations of spirituality, some of which derive from a spirit world too potent to trust by simply relying upon our own wits and abilities.

Thus, I have come to regard the Bible, as attestable by archaeology, to be the oldest and most dependable spiritual book in the world. That Word of God is confident of its truth and victorious life changing power. It invites each of us to test it. (Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 38:4) Furthermore, it is the only collection of holy writings to speak authoritatively from beyond the grave with the promise of eternal life through its chief spokesperson, Jesus – Yeshua in the Hebrew. (John 1:1-18; Romans 1:3-4; 1Corinthians 15:1-19; Revelation 1:5-8) To those who seek it honestly in faith, the Bible promises a consciously dynamic eternity as an individual transformed into a unique, personal and identifiably creative expression of God's unconditional love as defined within his holiness. These divine guarantees are given through covenant agreements originating and empowered by a Creator God so that our success is not limited by our own inabilities and weaknesses.

Digital Spirituality is a fresh approach to an old message derived from my study of the Israelite and Christian scriptures, which reveal the foundational truths and principles utilized in the creation of the universe. This approach is first represented in the Garden of Eden by the two trees. The Tree of Life is the "Yes" decision, for it represents the spirit of pure light in which "there is no darkness at all." (1John 1:5) In the Bible this spirit is referred to as the "presence" or "fullness" of God. This "Yes" spirit is also called the Holy Spirit and is referred to as the pure Light or personified Eternal Life/Love inherent, the One Who is also transcendent of the physical universe.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is the "No" or "Null" spirit empowering mortal and angelic life in the biosphere. It represents the emptiness, which is a state of death because its two equal and inseparably bound components of light and darkness balance into nothingness like the Asian yin-yang symbol. The Great Deception has been to focus humanity's attention on the more readily accessible spirit of good and evil to the exclusion of the Holy Spirit of pure Light and incorruptible goodness of divine love. The deception lies in presenting the "light" or good side of the life force as being the "true Light of God" in order to hide from human access the existence of One Holy Spirit of the God of Israel.

This deception has enslaved humanity to terrible suffering and an ultimate destruction. Illusions of power and eternity can be generated by distorting the life force even though it can only provide people with a mortal life lived under an eternal death sentence of indeterminate timing. Consequently, most religious traditions consist of behavior-based rituals and techniques that try to battle or balance the evil side of us to a positive net experience of the immediate now. They ignore, distort or falsely claim the Holy Spirit of divine goodness and eternal life revealed in the life of Yeshua/Jesus, and thereby they add to the confusion if not also to the deception.

The "Law of Attraction"

I am going to illustrate my point through the example of that perennial favorite of self-help gurus and spiritual hucksters, probably best known today as the "Law of Attraction." Because western Christian traditions have mostly ignored the life force in the Bible, the general population, including Christians, has been easy prey for this poorly understood, incompletely applied and potentially dangerous spiritual phenomenon. It is a perfect example of how the organized Christian set of denominational churches has failed its followers as a result of rejecting and/or ignoring the biblically Jewish foundation of the Christian faith.

The Jewish approach to Bible study takes the original Hebrew words and roots well into consideration when developing theology. Granted that most Jewish people are as ignorant or more so of their heritage religion as about 90% of Christians, I can still find multiple discussions of soul (*neshamah*),

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life force (*nefesh*), spirit (*ruach*) and body (*guf*). While I might have some disagreements with Jewish scholars over the specific meaning and application of these terms in everyday life, I could at least have a discussion with the expectation of intelligent engagement and a probable outcome of learning something from them. I cannot say that about most Christian scholars, with the probable exception of some Catholic Jesuits. This is very sad to me, because I do not consider myself a professional scholar but merely a person who has asked some questions and thought seriously about some answers that reflect theoretical possibility that makes pragmatic sense. I guess that comes from being in business for so many years.

By ignoring the biblical references to the life force, Christianity, to my knowledge, is analytically silent about ESP and other psychological anomalies. It has been compromised by secularism and sold out to the material abundance of Globalism. Christian religious leaders too often subordinate their idealism temporarily, of course) to the security of salary and benefits. I am certainly aware of a vigilant minority of Christian pastors and evangelists who warn of the dangers of dabbling in the occult and commend their work, even though I may not agree with all the fine points of what they teach. They are at least warning of the very real dangers that most people ignore or treat with ignorant secular dismissal. There is much more to evil than intrapersonal psychological struggles or the shock effect and debatable artistic values of symbols culturally associated with the devil or death! Do not be deceived. Even proponents of the "Law of Attraction" would agree that if you set your mind on evil matters and surround yourself with dark themes, you have tuned your psychospiritual antennas or set welcome mats out to receive evil visitors or at least bad karma - harmful things into your life.

The fact is that paranormal anomalies do not fit into conventional theology, so anyone experiencing such a phenomenon must essentially work it out on their own. There is no orthodox guidance. Maybe that is good from one perspective, but from another, it opens up the sincere searcher for spirituality to great danger. I do not mean just a difference of opinion as to the nature of reality or other doctrinal detail. I mean real harm - both physically and psychospiritually. All eastern traditions that I know about point out and treat as real the potency of prana, qi, chi (or other name for the life force) and its channels in the body and mind. Each has its own, broad traditional approach to dealing with it. Most have ways of dealing with evil spirits, while Hollywood's expression of commonly accepted beliefs can't get beyond **The Exorcist** and other aspects of Catholic rituals dealing with possession.

Some Christian mystics recognize the existence of good and evil spiritual forces. Most embrace the battle of good versus evil. Some encourage one to embrace his or her dark side to achieve wholeness, a mystical unity with God and the creation. The latter risk being condemned for rebellion against orthodoxy. I can agree with the concept that perhaps they have substituted their own definitions of what is good and evil for that of organized Christianity. I am not so concerned with their disagreement with human organizations as I am with a possible disagreement with the Creator. While the role of other humans and collective wisdom is pragmatically vital in the exercise of humility, it is not final.

The biggest error in Christian dogma has come in the understanding of original sin. It is not sex. It is the choice of the good and evil life force Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil instead of choosing the Tree of Life eternal, the Holy Spirit. Herein lies the great deception. The good side of the (life) force deceives one into tapping into the whole system, which also contains the evil. The good side of the life force obscures the existence of the good only Holy Spirit so that people do not realize all of the options available to them. In this intentional confusion, most make bad choices and the power of their decisions works against them. This is the primary reason why Satan the Enemy has more followers than the Creator God of Israel.

The "Law of Attraction" has been re-packaged and sold under many names. It has been called, "the Power of Positive Thinking." "Unleashing the Genius Inside," "Psycho-Cybernetics" and lately, "The Secret." Just like ESP and every other parapsychological anomaly, the Law of Attraction cannot be substantiated scientifically. Furthermore, it is undermined by each person's subjective experience of this "law" at work in his or her life. It is simply too easy to convince ourselves that it is working when the issue may be simple circumstance - we got lucky at the fight time. I wrote extensively about this

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latter phenomenon in my book, **God is Not a Slot Machine**. There are many scams and pseudo-science delusions sold in this world. With an Internet search just minutes away, I am surprised that more folks do not search before they leap. The following comes from Wikipedia on looking up our topic:

Proponents of the modern Law of Attraction assert that it has roots in Quantum Physics; according to the law of attraction, thoughts have an energy that attracts like energy. In order to control this energy, proponents claim people must practice three things:

1. Know what one wants and ask the universe for it.
2. Feel and behave as if the object of one's desire is on its way.
3. Be open to receiving it.

Proponents say that by abiding by these, and avoiding "negative" thoughts, the Universe will manifest a person's desires.¹

My guess is that you have already figured this one out, if you have been reading in this book for any length of time. The dead giveaway is the potential for either good or bad, positive or negative things to be attracted. By now, you know this refers to the life force, to the realm of natural spirituality and the necessity to balance within natural bounds any request made of the "universe." Any fulfillment beyond what the immediate spiritual environment can supply, any concentration of power that comes in conjunction with a metaphysical artificial reality, requires outside spirit help to make it happen. With that there is always a price to pay – sometime.

What is the potential problem here? The big thing is that people typically ask for what they want, for what they think is good for them. However, just like small children, we adults do not really know what is good for us. When it comes to spiritual matters, we are all children. We can see it when it comes to our own children – usually, but we have a hard time when it comes to our own wants and desires because human nature is naturally selfish, self-centered and rebelliously autonomous. We do not want to be told what is good for us.

The truths of this observation are part of the deep meaning connected with Jesus' advice to "become as little children" and His observation that each person chooses whether to serve God or materialism (mammon). One or the other takes precedence in how life is lived as a whole as well as in the many little decisions that make up the whole. Too often, what we want for ourselves is bad for us – physically and/or spiritually.

Look at our predominantly obese and overweight profiles or at the typical American house so full of stuff that most have garages they can't put their cars in, so we rent public storage units. The "Law of Attraction" works, and it can be used lawfully, or it can be used to create destructive artificial realities that also lead to spiritual slavery and the destruction of our potential to live as an eternally unique expression of perfect love. It is possible to destroy who we could be for eternity by attaining what we want now temporally/momentarily in the material dimension. This kind of present, motivating desire may be experienced for a heated instant or for a lifetime: either choice is but a flashing moment in the course of eternity.

Natural Faith is Hard Work

Many manifestations of the Law of Attraction are really just good preparation. "Be prepared for success" is a concept I have read in many sources. When we focus our lives on matters that we find interesting, hard work takes place mentally and physically. Our brains operate very much like goal-

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_Attraction, retrieved June 22, 2007.

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seeking behavioral computers. Using the power of decision, our minds operate as goal setters and innovative artificial reality builders. We use our natural innovative capacity to imagine that which does not exist from the design of a piece of art, a room arrangement or a new gadget. Once the vision is in mind, the brain goes to work to execute it using the resources at hand. Faith is not hoping or wishful thinking: it is hard mental work. Faith is confidence in the capacity to execute as well as acting on and being open to the conceived goal or perceived reality – artificial or otherwise. In other words, faith is a natural tool of the mind and brain that may operate in either the physical or metaphysical realms of the universe.

Some aspects of my comments above are rather obvious. If one wants to succeed at some undertaking, he or she prepares by studying, reading resources, paying attention to what is going on around them wherever they are and putting oneself into the proper environment or social context where the desired object or activity is more likely to be found. In other words, you notice opportunities missed by others who have either not prepared themselves or are not focusing on their declared goals, and you don't go fly fishing for trout in a desert sand pile. That stated, it is also true that some of the greatest discoveries take place in the presence of the overlooked obvious. The mechanics are plain: for any new artificial reality to be effective, others must be ignored or destroyed. The uncovering of false assumptions always leads to new discoveries, some of them very profitable. Here again, we encounter the witness of paradox to pragmatic truth.

Success then is a good measure of hard work in gaining essential knowledge, learning vital skills, assembling resources or assets, managing expectations and execution of a good plan to apply all of the former. There is nothing mystical about this, but confidence or faith is essential to achievement. The frontiers of understanding lie in the realms of poorly understood science and natural spirituality. I am sure that there are biomechanical aspects of human physiology relevant to successful behavior that remain to be discovered. I am also convinced that a human mind draws on forces not measurable or perceivable by scientific methods, although evidence for these spiritual forces' existence is observable and have been experienced by thousands for millennia.

Advances in brain research often take place in dealing with cases of severe injury and/or diseases of the brain. How the brain works around the facts of absent functionality has been very instructive to scientists because it reveals potential capabilities and functionalities that uninjured brains do not need to draw on because they are able to use normal, more efficient options. Physiological responses of subjects studied while under hypnosis or eastern meditation also offer other opportunities to learn about how the brain works. While the latter reduces or shuts off aspects of mental activity, the former substitutes the hypnotizer's artificial reality for that of the subject's. Under hypnosis, decisions about what is and is not real are made for the patient/subject. If he is told that he is cold, he feels cold and his body responds physiologically. In real life, the power of suggestion, self-talk or the pressures of peer opinion evidence the same effects: one acts as if or responds to the externally determined perceptions of reality as if they were indeed true, such as in the Ugly Duckling stories. (Do not take these observations as suggestions or recommendation to volunteer for such research: it could be dangerous.)

My purpose of the above is to de-mystify faith and separate it from the true mysteries of spiritual search and discernment. In short, the presence of faith does not necessarily testify one way or the other to spiritual presence, access or encounter; however, faith is often mixed up with spiritual matters and never seems to be far away when psychological anomalies take place. The three points given in the Wikipedia article for the Law of Attraction to work are essentially the same points that parapsychologists give for successful repetition of ESP phenomena.

Even the biblical references to faith conform to this pattern of concept development. Extract some verses from context, and they sound like they are parts of a psychological training program for material success in life and business:

1. "Ask in faith without any doubting..." (James 1:6)

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2. "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)
3. "Show me your faith by your works..." (James 2:18)
4. "Faith is the assurance (evidence) of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

So faith is a technique, a protocol or psychological tool to get the mind, brain and body to work effectively as an integrated whole by overcoming self-restrictions otherwise known as fear. Human nature's drives of self-preservation are sourced in the fear of death and its companion, fear of harm or partial death. To accomplish any feat of note in life, one must overcome fears as well as the negative opinions, active opposition and all other kinds of dis-encouragements dished out by others around you and/or opposed to you.

But Hebrews 11:3 states that the Word of God using faith created the world. That verse gives away the critical factor for those engaged in a search for genuine spirituality instead of merely material success - not that material success by itself is evil or undesirable. The focus shifts back to the human power of decision applied to where and how and for what purposes one uses the powerful tool of faith. The Law of Attraction appeals to "the universe" and maintains that negative as well as positive energy may be attracted, so it works solely in the material realm - on a psychobiological level that easily overflows into the realm of natural spirituality and the life force. "Asking the universe" can also open doors to pneumagenic spiritual encounters when a person forces demands beyond natural balance. As I discuss below, angels - both good and bad - are super power tools when it comes to the transfer and application of higher concentrations of focused spiritual power. Their activities distort the fabric of the physical realm to create miracles tiny and mighty.

I believe that the human mind will naturally use the immediate contextual life force energies available to accomplish a strongly desired and specific goal without going to any particular effort or applying some necessary "magic" ritual to get it to do so. The danger lies in asking out of balance. Natural spirituality flexibly provides for a positive-forward balance without disturbing the natural order or stealing the essentials of life from others. I think of it as a healthy set point to partially counter entropy in action, which is the natural and scientifically confirmed dissipation of energy or trend to disorder. Life requires order. Biological health requires healthy cells, organs and systems to function properly, orderly. But human beings have a history of repeatedly creating harmful artificial realities through the assembly of too much power and energy in one place so as to distort the natural balance creating an ever-building imbalance that will correct at some point. The greater the distortion created, the more difficult, painful and potentially destructive the (over)correction to balance.

The lesson is that people cannot ignore the lessons of natural spirituality built into the physical environment and jointly operational in the metaphysical, neither should the wise usurp God's role in defining what is good for him or her. What is good for one person many not be so good for another: it varies from person to person. We handle different challenges and temptations differently. God seeks to build our strengths and manage our weaknesses if we will humble ourselves to give Him the opportunity to do so. This means the surrender of my life, not anyone else's, to the ultimate spiritual parent, God the Father, who wants only good for us. Our challenge is to see things as He does, but there is help to do so. The revelation of a second spiritual force that is inherently good, that can only enable that which is goodness to all involved, seen and unseen is what the Holy Spirit is all about in the Bible, though maybe not in most organized religions. It is the true secret of life, an eternal life of unconditional love that is being hidden from humanity.

Reducing the Complexity of Spirituality

Human life is naturally experienced as a conscious state measured by time but possessing no self-sustained future. It is an existence where every good has an inseparable, counterbalancing evil. The spirit essence represented by the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is also referred to in the Bible as the "breath of life" shared by man and animals. The life force that energizes our nervous and spiritual

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identity being is by analogy compared to the air we breathe that empowers our physical biology.

As I have mentioned before, the scientific integration of the metaphysical into a vision of an ultimate reality continuum that includes the physical realm is an untested and immeasurable exercise in reasoning. As my surfing analogy frankly illustrates, the accuracy of my paradigm will only become apparent after death, if at all. Trial deaths do not count as those experiences are subject to manipulation by fallen spirit beings, which by their track record are unmasked to be deceiving enemies. However, I find my theoretical construct remarkably useful in pragmatic application to daily life and how to negotiate the maze of humanly created artificial realities to make decisions that trend more towards life than death. I believe that they also create eternal consequences.

The confusion and complexity of humanity's spiritual understanding derives from our own spiritual position in the metaphysical universe. Due to the events recorded in Genesis, our naturally received position in metaphysical reality is found solely within the null spirit essence; therefore, we lack the tools, ability and opportunity to discern on our own the spiritual orientation (identity of the power source and agencies) and functional mechanism of metaphysical phenomena as they occur. It is impossible for us to directly access the yes spirit of God on our own terms. Since human nature does not possess the innate ability to objectively sense or control even the null spirit of good and evil, how can a person rationally and spiritually comprehend God without help?

Study of the natural universe through the eyes of science reveals much about spiritual reality. Natural spirituality presents itself as the most universal approach to begin the search for spirituality. Even the Bible admits the validity of this approach:

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

Instead of relying on revealed information from sources that can be trusted, we humans have followed our natural inclinations to rely on what we discover experientially: we try things out to see what works. This is a painful and confusing way to learn, and it is often fatal for eternity. Our incomplete success in understanding the spiritual dimension of the universe has given rise to a diverse set of conflicting and confusing theologies and spiritual traditions derived from differing cultural and individual experiences. Each focuses on the practices of their one slice of the picture so that a person can literally spend a life away in moving from one sliver of incomplete knowledge to another without ever coming to the fullness of truth or discovering that there is another spirit, the Holy Spirit of the God of Israel.

The facts upon which Digital Spirituality is based have been revealed from an external source possessing clear perspective of the metaphysical dimension - the Bible. Even with access to the biblical revelation we can at best only approach a description of the metaphysical due to the natural limitations of our brains and sensory organs. The Bible itself states that without the intervention of God's Spirit, a person cannot accurately comprehend the spiritual messages of the Bible.

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1Corinthians 2:10-14)

Out of love God has attempted to communicate what we cannot naturally perceive about spiritual realities. His mission has been to deliver truths based on evidence and a purpose that lies beyond the vague yearning or potential for realization that we experience naturally. God accomplished that

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mission first by sending His Spoken Word into the Creation itself. Then He gave Israel His Written Word in the Law or Torah, and finally He came Himself in the birth, life and death of His Living Word made flesh, His Son, called Salvation, who is Yeshua in Semitic languages or Jesus in most western ones.

The other primary factor for our inability to clearly understand spiritual matters is due to the fact that, as in binary mathematics, the metaphysical chain of simple yes/no decisions describes a complex universe of created and evolving systems that interrelate and interact with each other multidirectionally during any single event or instance of time. To grasp what is occurring, we would be required to analyze or break down these complex metaphysical systems into discreet chains of unique factors that can be traced or followed in the direction of their impact or manifestation. This is not possible for humans on their own spiritual power. We cannot naturally grasp the whole spiritual picture, so we are forced to rely on external spiritual sources of information - many of which cannot themselves be trusted. Through the systems approach of Digital Spirituality, we can test the nature of the sources and generally predict outcomes of spiritual disciplines or exercises despite our human limitations.

Digital Duality

The universe is constructed out of multiple, hierarchal sets of dual components. Each component has two options – on and off, light and dark, yes and no, etc. At the highest level is the choice of spiritual power source: Holy Spirit or life force. The latter is the default setting and within its parameters provides many opportunities for choosing towards health and life or towards sickness and death. The good and evil, light and dark aspects of the life force seem like two different spirits to the natural human being.

Throughout history, a minority of people have intentionally chosen evil. For most people, the spiritual issues have revolved around discerning between the two goods, when both are known, but as previously noted, the vast majority of the planet's billions are either willfully ignorant of the Holy Spirit or unknowing victims of the Enemy's great deceit and power. As I will explore more fully later, Lucifer (now Satan) is responsible for the negative or black spin of the life force. He exercises its influence worldwide through the spiritual atmosphere as organized by the various traditions of astrology.

Although the finished product challenges our mental powers with its extreme complexity, it can be broken down into systems of twos just as binary mathematics can describe any physical reality. These sets of components operate in systems where their innate qualities function predictably according to a variety of interrelationships governed by the laws of the universe. A systems grasp of the components, their functions and rules of interaction provides insights into, and tools for, creative problem solving. With them one can build a useful road map in search of healthy and balanced spirituality.

God structured the universe with built-in dual realms set up under laws that function in a manner that forces the exercise of decision. The metaphysical or spiritual realm is made of unchanging substance that lasts forever by operating at frequencies and energy levels significantly beyond the speed of light. The physical is made of matter, which is subject to time and exhibits a changeable, cyclical nature. Time travels in a straight, but bendable or curved line like light but manifests itself in cycles linked to the movements of planets, stars and galaxies. The best model I can think of to at least partially illustrate time's straight line yet cyclical characteristics is the Möbius Strip:

The Möbius strip has several curious properties.

A model of a Möbius strip can be constructed by joining the ends of a strip of paper with a single half-twist. A line drawn starting from the seam down the middle will meet back at the seam but at the "other side". If continued the line will meet the starting point and will be double the length of the original strip of paper. This single continuous curve demonstrates that the Möbius strip has only one boundary.

If the strip is cut along the above line, instead of getting two separate strips, it becomes one long strip with two

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full twists in it, which is not a Möbius strip. This happens because the original strip only has one edge which is twice as long as the original strip of paper. Cutting creates a second independent edge, half of which was on each side of the knife or scissors. Cutting this new, longer, strip down the middle creates two strips wound around each other.

Alternatively, cutting along a Möbius strip about a third of the way in from the edge, creates two strips: One is a thinner Möbius strip - it is the center third of the original strip. The other is a long strip with two full twists in it - this is a neighborhood of the edge of the original strip.

Other interesting combinations of strips can be obtained by making Möbius strips with two or more half-twists in them instead of one. For example, a strip with three half-twists, when divided lengthwise, becomes a strip tied in a trefoil knot. Cutting a Möbius strip, giving it extra twists, and reconnecting the ends produces unexpected figures called paradiromic rings.²

God dwells in eternity, but He can see all of the four dimensions of space-time and the 5th dimension of the life force laid out as some multi-dimensional dynamic web. In fact, He can see both sides of the strip at once, as it were. We experience time as a straight-line progression from present into the future leaving a trail behinds us called the past or collectively as history. We mark time by the multiple concurrent cycles represented in the motion of heavenly bodies as they relate to us. This includes the daily rotation of the earth, the month based on the moon's orbit around the earth and the year based on the earth's journey around the sun. The seasons mark the moving angle of sunlight striking the earth's surface based on the changing face our planet gives to the sun in its annual orbit due to its 23½° rotational axis tilt.

The linear and cyclical nature of time provides a primary argument for those who believe in the reincarnation of biological life. This idea correctly recognizes the organic link of the life force with time, because it is a spiritual power that operates in the material realm. Human beings cannot see this characteristic of time or measure it directly because we are a part of it. We can reason, make rational extrapolations of models based on observable phenomena, but we cannot prove it or measure it precisely, which makes predicting the future impossible for any being except God. Fallen angels or demons are totally caught up in the metaphysical dimensions of the life force and dabble in the material realm, so they are a part of it, too. From their perspective, they can see more than we can, but they cannot see the whole thing or comprehend what God might or could do to affect the unfolding of time. Righteous angels carry prophecies only when sent by God and communicate only what He wants people to hear. Even then, the message and/or visions can be subject to multiple interpretations and multiple fulfillments in types and anti-types as the cycles repeat.

Consciousness, the Sixth Sense

Human consciousness resides in the 5th dimension of the universe, which is also the breath of life or life force. Consciousness is born from the activation of the body and brain by the breath of life. Living minds exercising conscious thought create wave patterns of character and personality impressed into this natural spiritual medium. A physical example of this process is evidenced in the banded spectral signatures of digitized light.

Distinct digital signatures of whom we choose to be as unique persons are constantly created through every moment of time. These woven spiritual impressions flow outward from us moment by moment preserving a record of every conscious word or deed in the fabric of the physical universe. They are carried by the natural spiritual energies pulsing parallel to light and at its speed. Thus, each life moment of **NOW** is indeed an eternity – at least until time itself ends or is destroyed in a black hole.

Of course, this web of spiritual fabrication consists of all human and animal energies, which makes it

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobius_Strip, retrieved 6-24-2007.

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very complex. If correct, this theory means that our lives convert into a digitized, time streamed, natural spiritual life force of indivisibly melded good and evil. It remains somewhere in the universe until called back to the stage of mortal consciousness – planet earth. It is from earth’s historical experience of human consciousness amidst biological life that these wave patterns are created. Science cannot detect them, although some forms of String Theory, or the “Theory of Everything” mathematically predict the potential existence of up to eleven dimensions in the universe. I add one more - a twelfth, which is the Source of All – the Third Heaven of God’s Throne. The dark line in the table below represents the speed of light.

Mystics’ Seventh Heaven	Bible’s Third Heaven	12 - God’s Throne of Eternity
6	Bible’s Second Heaven or the Fallen Angelic Dominion. Good angels must battle their way through this to reach humanity.	11
5		10
4		9
3		8
2		7
1		6
Metaphysical Realm		5 - Life Force
Physical Realm	Bible’s First Heaven of the Physical Universe bounded by Space-Time	4 - Time
		3 - Height
		2 - Width
		1 - Length

The 5th Dimension is the transition zone between the four dimensional Physical Realm of Space Time and the 7 dimensions of the Metaphysical Realm. There are 12 in all, which is consistent with the Rosetta Stone of the Bible discussed in Herbert Stollorz’s books, **Apocalypse Prophesied** and **Mystery of Tammuz 17**. Other Hebrew Alphabet Number System principles, mentioned in these books, underlie biblical linguistic concept structure are found to be consistent with this proposed structure of the universe.

For example, the four dimensions of length, width, height and time-distance plus the 5th Dimension at light speed follows the $4 + 1 = 5$ rule that brings humanity to the doorway to heaven. Eleven (4+7) dimensions of the universe are locked in rebellion and will eventually cease to exist. Many physicists theorize on an eventual end to the present universe after some large number of billions of years. In discussing angels and the metaphysical, the Bible should not be ignored as an important source of information on spiritual matters.

Again, God is aware of each point in time because He can surf all dimensions at will. He can access and pull any part of it up instantly. He can wipe out sins of the repentant or the name-digital signature

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of an incurably evil sinner forever. He created and commands the universe effortlessly "traveling" its breadth and depth as needed. Thought is not bound by time or place because it travels the 5th dimension. Similarly, God is not bound by any of the 11 dimensions cascading through gradually lower energy levels from His creative penthouse of the 12th dimension, the Third Heaven (or Seventh according to some traditions) of His presence.

As long as the universe exists, this present moment of your consciousness, and every other moment in your life and others', will continue to exist somewhere in the expanding flow of space-time and the life force. The Bible predicts a final judgment when all people who have ever lived will be resurrected to mortal life again to face Jesus as the Judge. The process of that judgment is not described in enough detail to satisfy human curiosity. I will speculate on some reasons why later. But the Bible explicitly describes the end of the present universe in an incredible burning lake of fire that consumes everything – heaven and earth. Such a judgment would not include the Third Heaven of God's Throne out of which a New Heavens and New Earth will be made from spiritual material that is good only instead of the present good and evil life force as described in the final chapters of the book of Revelation. No evil whatsoever will exist in this realm because of its structural design.

Free Will

God also built free will into the structure of the universe, which means there is a decision process where in simplest terms, sentient beings choose between two options. From real life experience we know that the decision process takes place on disparate levels in animals and humans due to their diverse qualities of consciousness. People have a greater capacity for change than animals do as well – particularly in the configuration of who we are.

What we recognize as one decision is actually composed of many elements or sub-decisions. It is a series of yes-no answers to each one of these elements, which is like a black and white gradient picture. Each picture is made up of thousands of pixels, some white and some black. Together the picture is mostly displayed as shades of gray. Similarly, most decisions are neither totally good nor evil but a complex mixture of the two. People usually make decisions in a manner where this yes-no decision tree is collapsed to a congealed conclusion absent conscious awareness or distinction of the small steps.

This characteristic of human nature operates as a constant continuum between good and evil symbolized by a circle in traditional cultures. Thus every decision made is an imperfect mix of varying amounts of light and darkness. In other words, human beings experience lifetimes typified by varying shades of gray – some lighter than others. Some may approach full darkness or full light, but because the continuum is an oscillating circle, our nature is inseparably attached to the whole of it so that a pure light or dark state of being is not humanly possible. Thus, the Bible states that all persons are bound by nature to sin to a varying measure.

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, no not one..." (Romans 3:10-11)

Duality is an ever-present theme in the Bible - just as it is in the natural universe. In the beginning there is light and darkness, day and night. In several places the Bible reveals that the physical world is an image of the metaphysical. What we see in our world of material temporality mirrors what exists beyond the speed of light in spiritual realm of eternity. Thus, man is made in the image and after the likeness of God, and the Israelite Tabernacle and Temple are modeled after heavenly originals.

Two trees stood in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3) These two trees presented Adam and Eve with a choice between two spirits. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represents mortal life and its empowering spirit - the life force of good and evil, light and dark, yang and yin, which always ends in death. The two aspects of this powerful spirit cancel out each other as the neutralized mixture of good and evil - light and dark, a null/off answer in the binary math analogy. The yes/on answer is the pure Spirit of only light represented by the Tree of Life. In the Bible eternal life is empowered by the

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inherent, omnipotent and divine nature of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of pure light is the essence and being of a perfect God, who by His very being and nature defines justice, goodness, peace, joy, grace and love.

This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. (1John 1:5)

Thus, on earth we are working with mortal bodies and the potential presence of two different spirits. The born with natural life force is temporal and inherently an indivisible mixture of good and evil in balance. The other Spirit is eternal and incorruptibly pure goodness in character not born but consciously chosen in resistance to opposition. The former may be bent to the purpose of the user according to the exercise of free will, while the latter conforms always to the bounds of God's nature and will of perfect unconditional love.

By analogy, the model of mortal bodies and the life force is paralleled by metaphysical bodies and the Holy Spirit that have some kind of distinct structure and location. It is beyond the scope of this book to definitively conclude that God the Father has a distinct body like the Son, Jesus, but Genesis 1:26-27 discussed shortly below gives us a model to work with in understanding metaphysical life forms. Briefly, the Father may be understood to be structured with metaphysical body and spirit (image and likeness) or be the Holy Spirit alone. The latter case could be possible by an exegesis that Jesus (the Second Adam) was the model after which Adam was made. (1Corinthians 15:45-47) Regardless of how it may truly be in heaven, John chapters 14-16 make it plain that when one receives the gift of the Holy Spirit, he or she has both the Father and the Son present in that Spirit.

The Bible refers to the "third heaven" as the location of God's presence and throne, where only His divine love of pure goodness is resident. (2Corinthians 12:2) There is no darkness at all in God, so no evil can exist in His presence. Since evil is not permitted in His presence, only the Holy Spirit empowers the third heaven. The life force of good and evil does not operate there. As we will see below, it seems that the life force is in some manner a lower frequency, less powerful aspect of the Holy Spirit in that God created it and sustains the universe through it. How and where it becomes a separate force is not specifically stated in Scripture, but there are references to God sustaining the universe through Jesus. (Colossians 1:16-17) Its inseparably good and evil qualities are necessary for the experience and exercise of free will.

Thus, both spirits are present and operate in the metaphysical dimension outside of God's immediate presence (outside of the third heaven) in what is deduced as being the first and second heavens. The earth's natural atmosphere is the implied first or earthly heaven, and the second seems to include the first because Satan is referred to as the

"...prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:2).

Tripartite Structures

Beyond duality, the Bible also deals in tripartite structures or concepts of trinity. The tabernacle and temple are often used in the Bible as vehicles to describe what takes place in spiritual reality. Part of this is a matter of overlapping dualities, and mainly a tri-unity recognizes that a new whole is created when two parts are united. In a tripartite entity each of the two parts is distinctly identifiable, and their union creates a recognizable third construct of being separate in terminology and function that possesses unique properties only possible due to the union of the two components. In one of the most common examples of life, a man and a woman marry creating a family capable of bearing children. This concept may obviously be expanded to wholes made up of more than two parts, too. In the Bible writers refer to individuals as being "members" of a spiritual or organizational "body" and "stones" of a "temple." As we will examine later, both human beings and the temple are described in tri-partite terms.

I understand the use of the term "soul" to be the unique tri-unity of two parts – a body and a spirit.

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The soul is the whole of intangible identity of a being. In the Hebrew Bible, the word "soul" (Hebrew *nefesh*) may also refer to the body alone, whether the reference is to the souls of people or animals. This is because the pattern of our decisions and/or behavior creates a uniquely configured identity that is more reflected in the body than the spirit. Whether the body is composed of flesh or spirit determines whether the soul is mortal or immortal.

Animals come in a wide variety of body packages and levels of consciousness, but each consists of a biologically alive body that taps into and uses the breath of life or life force. The fundamental difference between animals and humans is that humans were, created in the image (internal psychospiritual character) and after the likeness (general external form) of God. As discussed earlier, people naturally possess the creative powers of dominion through decision that we refer as "imagination." In this dimension the human capacity for imagined ideas enables individuals and cultures to create alternative realities, which may be imaginary in relationship with or even alien to the natural environment. In the creation stories preserved around the world, this typically human characteristic is reflected in the universal recounting of giving names. Humans have classified all of the plants and animals giving each species a name. People are given names following birth. On an individual basis, our inherent creative capacity also makes possible the potential for transformational identity shift into the metaphysical ultimate reality known biblically as heaven.

Spiritual Synthesis or $1 + 1 = 3$

$A + B = AB$

$A + B + AB = 3$ units in one

Mortal Body + Life Force = Living Soul (Animal or Human)

Metaphysical Body + Life Force = Angelic Being

Bulding of Stones + Holy Spirit = Temple

Mortal Body + Holy Spirit at Conception = Jesus/Yeshua

Transformed Body + Holy Spirit Restored = Son of God by Resurrection

Metaphysical Body + Holy Spirit = God

Mortal Body (Likeness of God) + Life Force = Living Human (Image of God)

Human Mortal Body + Life Force + Holy Spirit = Living Human Born of Spirit

Linked to Metaphysical Body in Heaven

Image and Likeness

Digital Spirituality focuses on the nature of the two-part make-up of any three-element whole. The binary mathematical structure reveals key insights to how the spiritual world works and why. A systems approach to the structure of life in the universe simplifies biblical theology to the level of commentary. It is still subject to human misinterpretation and error but not to the same degree as elaborate theologies that obscure the power and meaning of the Bible with their many layers of human analytical and philosophic thought, imagination and speculation.

Human identity is the intangible synthesis of a material body and the breath of life. Consequently, the Buddha seems to have come a little closer to the truth about the transitory essence of the mortal human soul than Plato's attribution of personal identity to immortality. Similarly, the atheistic concept of human life existent only in the material here and now is more accurate than variations on mystical myths about divine structures shattering in the mists of a pre-temporal age that gave rise to the individual sparks of immortal light now imprisoned in human flesh called souls. We are not hidden spirits or nonphysical beings temporarily occupying visible fleshly bodies.

In the Bible, death is described as the separation of body and spirit. It does not mention anything else in that verse, so a proper study needs to be made of the whole 66 books to come up with an explanation of that one verse.

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For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (James 2:26).

In short, the soul is the union of the body and spirit. It is not naturally immortal. Rather it is a synthesized identity that is consciously real for a measure of time. Its power is bounded by the natural limitations of the body and the physical forces of the material realm. Who we each are as an individual is created by the set of decisions we make and the consequences there of, which are reflected in one's body, health, social relationships, the work we produce and physical environment we impact. Thus, people should pay attention to their material existence and its interaction with the natural and social environments. Even the Bible states that there are time-bound benefits for taking care of our health and every good deed we do. In fact, we are obligated to dress and keep the gardens of our lives.

The above verse by James (Jacob the Just), Jesus' brother and the leader of the early Christian church, is deep. Its application to our subject is vitally significant to understanding a number of areas concerning life and spirituality, and it affirms several statements that I have already made. James 2:26 defines death as the separation of body and spirit. Thus, it identifies the two basic components that must be joined together in mortal life to function with consciousness. Mortal life and, by extrapolation, eternal life require a body joined to a spirit essence or force in order to be consciously "alive" as a unique identity. The process of separating the two results in death.

Another cardinal principle from this verse is that faith or belief is manifested in action and that behavior and thoughts (works represent anything generated by our own powers, mental or muscular) reflect belief. This third principle will be revisited when we discuss transformation of spiritual identity.

For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten. (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

The corollary to James 2:26 is that death terminates consciousness as we know it and can relate to it. There are a number of scriptures that discuss what happens to humans after death. As in all matters spiritual, we are dealing with a subject that is beyond direct access and experience, so we will gain insights into probable process function within the context of some definitive principles. Confusion between process and principles has led to many books of theology, some strange and sorrowful doctrines and considerable debate – even strife - between denominations.

With the above in mind, Genesis 1:26-27 provides some of the most important insights into understanding both existing the spiritual and physical aspects of human beings as well as the form, structure and quality of eternal potential for each person:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

People materially reflect the form of God being made "according to" His likeness. We know that image refers to the spiritual dimension of the human being because of the exegetical principle of parallelism. Image is repeated twice in the first position, and likeness is aligned with "male and female" because human bodies are unlike God's in that we are naturally either male or female when the genetics are not damaged. God is not male or female: He is both but neither.

I also see this gender distinction as a biological design feature that accommodates the male-female, yang-yin nature of the life force to create balance within the family of humanity as well as provide for the natural cycle of reoccurring life, which is a temporal form of eternity. The genetic, biological and cultural chain of life continues from generation to generation through sexual reproduction. Here we find the source for sexuality as a symbol of eternity in most human cultures. This is also why it played a central role in so many natural religions.

The divine body of God has no gender duality just as the Holy Spirit is only good. Admittedly, the bias of divine appearance tends towards the male in the projection of an individual being while the

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collective whole is often referred to in female terms. Such depictions are consistent with the description of the Holy Spirit as being Light without darkness and the global association of yang/light with maleness. It is a mistake to take this superficial appearance and association too far. God is both but neither gender, and persons of male or female gender are just as imperfect by nature. Neither statement is meant to eliminate discussion on the existence of certain broadly female or broadly male propensity to any mortal weakness or strength.

Soul and Spirit

The word "spirit" used in Genesis 1:26-27 is not referencing the soul or some kind of inner spiritual being as some mistakenly believe. In 1Thessalonians 5:23 Paul the Apostle writes,

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here the faithful Christian is described using tri-partite terminology. Each believer's essential components consist of a spirit, soul and body. I understand this quote to refer to the following aspects of the true Christian: the spirit as the impersonal power of biological life or life force, the soul as the unique identity of the whole person and the body as the materially functional and behaviorally interactive vehicle of consciousness. The soul of the born-again believer includes the Holy Spirit's presence. This distinction is an important key to understanding why the soul is specifically used in the context of this verse.

The concept of soul versus spirit is a problematic one for most who try to understand the Bible. This is because our western culture conceives of the soul as an immortal, inner divine spark, which is a concept inherited from some of the ancient Greek philosophers' use of the word. "Soul" actually refers to being in the New Testament Greek (*psuche*, soul, life or mind). In the Hebrew used to write the Old Testament, the word used is *nefesh*, which is applied to both man and beast.

The Hebrew term given to the natural spirit of the life force was the breath, wind or spirit of life. It is the impersonal spiritual power of the biological creation and physical universe. It is neutral to the point that it can be used for good or for evil. The Hebrew word used interchangeably for wind or spirit is *ruach*. The body of a man or animal is given the breath (*neshamah*) or spirit of life (*ruach chayyim*) to create a living soul (*nefesh chayyah*).

...and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life (*nefesh chayyah*), I have given every green plant for food; and it was so. (Genesis 1:30)

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (*nishmat chayyim*); and man became a living being (*nefesh chayyah*). (Genesis 2:7)

Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life (*ruach chayyim*), from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. (Genesis 6:17)

So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life (*ruach chayyim*). (Genesis 7:15) [Transliterations from the Hebrew text are mine.]

Death is sentenced by the removal of the breath from the body of flesh in Genesis 6:17 agreeing with James 2:26. The Hebrew use of *nefesh* for soul also includes an implication of total being, which can be either living or dead souls.

All flesh that moved on the earth perished, **birds** and **cattle** and **beasts** and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and **all mankind**; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the **breath of the spirit of life** (*nishmat ruach chayyim*), died. (Genesis 7:21-22)

Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die. (Ezekiel 18:4) [Emphasis and transliterations from the Hebrew text are mine.]

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That souls can be destroyed is confirmed again in Matthew 10:28 where Jesus is quoted as saying,

And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (*geenna*, hell or unquenchable fire in Greek).

Jesus teaches that mortal life of the body ends with the removal of the spirit/life force and that the destruction of both body and soul is not only possible but permanent. Once the spirit is separated from the body, consciousness ends in what is called the first death. The Bible also mentions a second, fleshly resurrection to stand judgment and possibly suffer a second death. The Bible makes plain that there is only one mortal life to live.

And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment...(Hebrews 9:27)

Animals are not mentioned in this second resurrection to mortal life, so they are not judged morally on the same spiritual plane as humans, which is consistent with them not being created after the likeness, nor are they in the image of God.

For true judgment and painful punishment to take place, people must be conscious and physically alive. This means a union of a fleshly body and the natural life force. To live forever in paradise, a person's name must be written in the book of life. Those who have totally rejected God are not written in the book of life. Those who had served Jesus and the Creator in their mortal lives were part of the first resurrection at Jesus' return about 1,000 years before the second resurrection. How God will determine the fates of those in between these extremes will be loving, just and merciful. Beyond that, the Bible is quiet except to say that God's love will save all that is possible, but there can be no evil or darkness in His presence either.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

We can get a better grasp on the Bible's contextual and intentional use of the concept of soul by learning a bit more about the spirit of humanity, the natural life force. These two aspects of our personness often appear close together in Scripture.

When Paul spoke to the Athenians, he hints at the analogous relationship between the life force and breath. Then he gives some of the most encouraging news for anyone in search of spirituality, God may be found because He is not far from us in being. As a part of His creation, we are sustained by Him as is all life. This is not pantheism, in which God exists within everyone and everything being a part of His very person. No, this verse states that God supports the life, energy and integrity of everything in the material universe because He made it and will fulfill His purpose with it.

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself **gives to all people life and breath** and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would **seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist**, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now

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declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. (Acts 17:24-31)

For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and **we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.** (1Corinthians 8:5-6) [Emphasis mine.]

Furthermore, all of the families of humanity are His children, being made after His likeness and in His image. The Athenians knew about the Jews and Israel. Paul here implies what he states plainly elsewhere, that God worked through Israel, but His purpose is to love eternally every person of every family of humanity. The spiritual image every natural person is born with enables the search.

The Sprit in Man

First of all, the life force activates and powers the brain to understand, imagine and create on the human level, so it is termed the spirit in man. It also enables the impression and spiritual recording of the identity we each create and live by while in the flesh. Because it is impersonal, a mixture of good and evil, the dominant spiritual force of this age and influenced by Satan, the prince of the power of the air, it is the spirit of the world.

But it also puts a spiritual essence within us that can be oriented to God's Spirit and be enabled to understand spiritual matters. The written words of the Bible are Spirit. They can only be properly understood through the perspective of the Holy Spirit. The help of God's Spirit coming near us is like putting on the correct glasses for the first time. It is like having an instant translator of a foreign language speaking in your earpiece.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:17)

We need contact with the Spirit of God to understand the things of God. He gives us two living witnesses during our own lifetimes: the written Word and His Sprit working with our natural spirit, but the latter resists the former so we must ask and then humbly follow what God reveals to us.

"For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." (Isaiah 66:2)

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men **knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man** which is in him? Even so **the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.**

Now we have received, not the **spirit of the world**, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ. (1Corinthians 2:10-16) [Emphasis mine.]

God has given life to the natural universe through the spirit or life force. At death it separates from the body and returns to the cosmos, which is God's. The net result of human life is vanity – emptiness! There is nothing because the structural outcome of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is null since its two aspects cancel each other out. Mortal life ends with the separation of the human body and spirit ending consciousness at death.

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For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street. Remember Him before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed; then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and **the spirit will return to God who gave it.** [Emphasis mine.]

"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "all is vanity!" (Ecclesiastes 12:5-8)

While the life force is a universal and impersonal power, it seems to record a spiritual signature of our life's totality somewhere in the metaphysical dimension. Without a body, this patterned spirit essence is not conscious, but it preserves a unique digital signature on the life force, which will function as a personal identity formula, a combination spiritual-genetic code reserved for and activated by the second resurrection to mortal life. It does not interact with anyone or anything in the universe. The eternal fate of this personal identity or soul is linked to that of the mortal body of material flesh. It is a mortal soul.

At the judgment God is able to recreate the body and being of the mortal person from the digitized signature of this spirit in the same way that an element can be identified and mapped from its spectral signature in electromagnetic radiation. In some way the record of our decisions is remembered and impressed into this spirit as well as our genetic profile. Judgment demands a bodily resurrection unlike religions that teach reincarnation where the body is not important and neither is individual identity. Eastern thought seeks the elimination of individual personality with its absorption into a divinely universal wholeness or emptiness. Spiritual progress is automatically monitored through the concept of karma, which is a kind of spiritual scorecard.

The Bible speaks of an eventual New Heaven and New Earth. It is described in the final two chapters of Revelation. In verse 2 of chapter 22 the only tree mentioned there is the Tree of Life. To me, this indicates that God "makes all things new" in order that the entire universe is pure goodness. He must eliminate the good and evil force that powers the present heaven (outside of His immediate presence or throne) and earth. Thus, this new creation will come into existence powered by only one spirit: the Holy Spirit. When the physical universe passes away, all physical matter and energy will cease along with the life force, so too will any mortal soul's potential for any future consciousness, if the person's name is not found recorded in the Book of Life, he or she will cease to exist or even be remembered.

Mortal or Immortal Soul?

Do you have a mortal or immortal soul? Answering that question is an important part of any credible spiritual search.

Paul teaches that to enable eternal life one needs a metaphysical body made of immortal substance, which is an immortal soul. Since it is not possible for people to secure immortal, metaphysical bodies by their own power, knowledge, learning, righteousness or good deeds, God had to provide a transfer mechanism. Human beings need a catalyst to make this transformation. The biblical term is mediator, and there is only one capable of facilitating the mortal to immortal transition of one's transformed or spiritually perfected personness or identity.

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. (1Timothy 2:3-6)

Jesus was the Holy Spirit born in a fleshly body. His body was powered by the Holy Spirit, the tree of life, instead of by the natural life force of good and evil. This is how He was able to exercise the submitted character to live and die sinless. From the beginning God has set before humanity a choice: life or death. Every decision we make trends more in one direction or the other. At times it may seem unfair that we were born into a world already corrupt and not into the Garden of Eden. The big

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decisions may seem to have already been made.

To be fair, God has given a testimony of His purpose for people in writing and in the flesh. The Bible is the Holy Spirit in written format, and Jesus was the Holy Spirit in the flesh – now resurrected to immortal life as the Son of God with a metaphysical body empowered by the Holy Spirit. Through Jesus the Second Adam, every person has the opportunity to re-enact Adam and Eve's choice between the two trees:

1. a mortal life of our own unique combination of good and evil motives and deeds that ends in death, or
2. an eternal life uniquely conformed to the image of God.

The first option is the default at birth, which is our human heritage from Adam and Eve. The second one is up to us to choose in faith. I will discuss how transformation takes place in the next chapter. Meanwhile, read this startlingly plain revelation.

But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. **All flesh is not the same flesh**, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. There are also **heavenly bodies and earthly bodies**, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; **for star differs from star in glory**.

So also is the resurrection of the dead It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. **If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body**.

So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, **the spiritual is not first, but the natural**; then the spiritual. **The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven**. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly.

Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory.

"O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:38-57). [Emphasis mine.]

Just as flesh differs from flesh, so glory will differ from glory between metaphysical bodies. There are heavenly bodies analogous to earthly ones. Heavenly bodies need spiritual power just as earthly ones do. In heaven that power is the Holy Spirit, which is universally the same omnipotence in divinely defined expression of love, but it shines uniquely through each spiritual body. If we would live forever, we must first exchange the image of the earthly, the natural life force for the image of the heavenly, the Holy Spirit.

Our catalyst in this change is Jesus, who came from heaven. In other words, His Spirit from conception came from heaven instead of coming from earth like yours or mine, our spiritual heritage from Adam and Eve's fateful decision. This creates the potential and process for the transformation of a person's

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mortal identity to an immortal identity by linking us to a metaphysical body in heaven, which will reflect all of the good deeds of this life executed by the power of God through us. In the resurrection our mortal bodies are either transformed into the spiritual one, the ultimate reality, or our immortal bodies are activated by the power of the Holy Spirit being joined to them immutably forever. This changing event is what the Bible calls the first resurrection.

Throughout the history of humanity, individuals have sought for spiritual knowledge outside of the context of the biblical revelation for various reasons - lack of access being one of them. We have also sought to control the spiritual powers extant in our world in order to make them work on our behalf - according to our desires and purposes, but people have mostly failed in their search due to a lack of objectivity of perspective. Survival and self-interest have blind-sided our research and practice of spirituality.

Today, the preponderance of spiritual research is totally out of control. The advances in the physical sciences, in genetic biotechnologies, the explosive growth of population and advances in digital computing and communications technologies enable humanity to effect the total destruction of our planet. We are choosing to do so through the creation of global artificialities that are not sustainable in the long term. It matters not which social ideology is motivating which part of modern civilization. It could be called Globalism, Secular Materialism, Mystical Humanism or any one or a combination of the world's religions. Prophetically, the most successful latter days' delusion will look like Christianity but will instead worship a false god whose identity will not really be known. Once again, the Spirit of the Knowledge of Good and Evil will be presented as the "Holy" option to be worshipped due to its verifiable miracles, powers, signs and wonders. This last and greatest deception will come close to destroying all of humanity by violently pitting one nation and religion against another.

Yet, there is hope. There is a way to escape from this certain destruction and that is to exit the maze of the null spirit's ins and outs, twists and turns, lies and half-truths. Today, you may indeed enter into the realm of the true Spirit of Light by faith in Yeshua, Jesus, the One sent by the Creator God who revealed Himself through historical intervention and who promised Himself to Israel as given through the prophets and written in the Teaching Law and Covenants.

The God of Israel is the known God of the Jews. Your exit ticket has been paid for by Him on the tree of death, and it is executed through the forgiveness of all of the sin that binds and blinds you, me - all of us.

"Repent," He says, "and believe the good news that in Me you may have personal access into the Holy Spirit of 'Yes', of Eternal Life inseparable from Love, Joy, Peace, and every good imaginable and beyond. So be it unto you."

The Search is now simplified. Each one of us is born with a mortal soul and body empowered by a temporal spiritual life force, which cannot give us eternal life, and we need to become immortal souls with immortal bodies powered by the One Holy Spirit of eternal life. How does a person make this transition?