

Renouncing False Gods and Appropriating the Holy

By Leanne Payne

How can you say, "I am not defiled;
I have not run after the Baals" ?
See how you behaved in the valley;
consider what you have done.
You are a swift she-camel
running here and there,
a wild donkey accustomed to the desert,
sniffing the wind in her craving—
in her heat who can restrain her?
Any males that pursue her need not tire themselves;
at mating time they will find her.
Do not run until your feet are bare
and your throat is dry.
But you say, "It's no use!
I love foreign gods,
and I must go after them."

Jeremiah 2:23–25

Make sure there is no man or woman, clan or tribe among you today whose heart
turns away from the Lord our God to go and worship the gods of those nations;
make sure there is no root among you that produces such bitter poison.

Deuteronomy 29:18

I am the Lord who makes you holy.

Leviticus 20:8

Discerning the problem of evil and differentiating that from the Good, which is finally the Holy One Himself, is what makes the Christian psychologist and counselor different from other doctors of the soul. We have today, however, far too few within the Body of Christ who adequately discern in this matter, and this lack has given rise to the most crucial problem I've seen develop within the Church, that of a very real encroachment of alien gods.

In this chapter, I will address two specific manifestations of this: the rise both of a Baal consciousness and of a new Gnosticism in Christian circles.

Renouncing Baal, the God of Sexual Orgy¹

So Israel joined himself to [the god] Baal of Peor.

Numbers 25:3 ab

Particularly pertinent to those times when I'm asking the Lord to bring people out of sexual neurosis and/or perverted sexual lifestyles, and teaching others how to minister to them, is the matter of *renouncing Baal and Ashtoreth*, the male and female idol-gods of sexual orgy.

Baal, whose name means "lord, possessor," was the supreme deity among the Canaanites and various other pagan nations. He is mentioned at least sixty-three times in the Scriptures. His full title was Baal-Shemaim ("lord of heaven"). Each locality had its own Baal, and the form of worship varied from place to place. He had many other titles, as can be found in at least twenty combined names in Bible indices.

Baal, though originally Phoenician, was the male sun-god worshiped in western Asia among heathen nations as their chief deity. His altars and sanctuaries were located on high places, including the summits of high mountains in order to get the first view of the rising sun and the last of the setting sun. The sun was believed to be the source and emblem of all life and the generative power of Nature.

Ashtoreth was the female idol of Philistia, Zidon, and Phoenicia. She was supposed to be the wife of Baal and the queen of heaven (Jer. 7:18; 44:17). The feminine principle was supposed to be embodied in the moon, to which the name Ashtoreth was given. The idol was a female with a crescent moon on her brow. It was set up in the temples and worshiped with the most revolting forms of immorality and sexual perversion. She was worshiped also by Israel in times of apostasy (see Judges 2:13; 10:6; etc). Her priests were eunuchs in women's attire (1 Kings 14:24). Women devotees were prostitutes for males whose lustful orgies formed the main part of the worship, which was carried on in temples, gardens, and high places. The cult of the goddess came from Babylon, where Ishtar was worshiped with immoral rites by bands of men and women.

When there is worship of the sun and moon, of the created, sexual orgies always follow. We either worship the Creator or our own procreative faculties. Finally, a quite literal worship of man's own genitals ensues.² Demons, principalities, and powers of the air attend this worship. The dark inroads into human sexuality and personality from this activity are almost incomprehensible. This, of course, is what the Apostle Paul is referring to in Romans 1:23 and following.

In the ministry of prayer for healing, I sometimes have Pastoral Care Schools specifically for those who have come to Christ out of permissive and perverted sexual lifestyles. Once as I came home after such a conference where there were over two hundred afflicted with compulsive sexual behavior of one kind or another, I was acutely aware of the horror of the battle we are in, living as we all do in an age that has forgotten God and now worships the creature. Terribly exhausted, I fell in a heap before the Lord, only to hear Him speak, ever so clearly, these words:

Order your day. Organize the hours. They are precious. . . . There is no room, no place for the moping, disgruntled prophet. You are like all prophets in that it is after your greatest victories that you run and hide and ask to die. But My people are with you; they have not bent the knee before Baal.

It is Baal worship you are facing and battling—the very thing the prophets of old inveighed against.

I have given you favor; My favor is upon you. I continue to give you favor. Gird up your loins (prepare for battle, prepare to be used) and run the race. You will outrun the chariots of men; you will run in the power that I give.

I was amazed by such a word as that, and ran to the Scriptures to see what they had to say about Baal. I was even more amazed by the amount of material they contained, and that the import of the material had not struck me more forcibly before then. This latter was especially remarkable to me in light of the demonic oppression I had encountered at the outset of my adult Christian life, one that involved the phallic images. Do you have any idea how much there is about that idol in Scriptures? And

of the way the people of Yahweh were always either having to withstand a people who served this idol, or were themselves, when backslidden, under its aegis? He was the god Elijah had his great contest with, for Baal worship was the state religion of Israel under Ahab and Jezebel.

In the worship of Baal, an Asherah (a totem-pole type of god), a pillar or image of wood, was set up with the image of Baal, and was worshiped in libidinous and lascivious practices. Originally the idol was worshiped as a symbol of the tree of life, but later it was perverted to mean the origin of life and was pictured with the male organs of procreation (see Ezekiel 16:17).

The worship of Baal always ends in *phallicism*, meaning the worship of the phallus as a symbol primarily of male generative power, though in the worship of Ashtoreth the symbol sometimes changes to that of the female organ. Such symbols became the objects of worship carried on with all forms of impurity, perversion, and licentiousness by crowds of devotees involved in demonized and obscene orgies. This type of worship centered in the Canaanite nations and then spread. Relics of it are found among all heathen peoples. It led to the destruction of all Canaanite nations and, with other things, caused Israel to be dispersed among the nations.

In ministry to people who need to renounce Baal, we often have to deal with what I have come to call "phallic spirits" (that is how those who are demonically oppressed by them "see" them). Their psyches have openings to the dark world of spirits, and they see these beings in phallic forms. They are likely what the Scriptures refer to as "unclean spirits."

I have discovered, in working with people (1) who have (or have had) a sexual neurosis of one kind or another, or (2) with those who have been involved in perverted or illicit sexuality, or (3) with those whose parents or grandparents have had such difficulties, or 4) even with those who've suffered with pathological frigidity, or 5) even in some cases of those whose parents' chief occupation or problems center around sexuality (frigid or otherwise), that there comes a time when not all, but some of them *must renounce Baal (or Ashtoreth)* by name in order to become free. Before this renunciation, they must make a decision about sin and must repent. There is to be no idol, overt or in the imagination. Then, as those who need to renounce Baal do so, phallic demons leave them. This more often than not is amazingly quiet, for we have prayed to this end. But it can be quite dramatic and even at times noisy.

I have written very little about deliverance or exorcism in my books on the healing of sexual neuroses and gender imbalance (*The Broken Image, The Healing of the Homosexual, and Crisis in Masculinity*). That is because many people, well-meaning but misguided, have done such great damage to these sufferers by "casting out" demons that were not there. Besides that, as I well know, even when there is an infestation of phallic demons, *until* the emotional-psychological wound that has been the occasion for the demonic infestation is ministered to, the demons will hide. In deeply wounded persons, the *sense of being* itself can be very weak or even non-existent, and the demons seem to realize that the personality itself is too fractured to make an effective decision about sin and therefore a true renunciation of Baal. Such a person will then be much worse off after "deliverance" prayers, so-called, and the neurosis (symbolic confusion within the mind) along with the demonic oppression will be greatly stepped up.

Once the failure to come to a sense of being (or the fear of *non-being* itself) is ministered to by the Spirit of God, the essential personality of the person is made strong enough to make its decision and its renunciation. It is our experience that the phallic demons (who are very subtle and good at hiding) literally race to get away. If there are other types of demons, or an unusually large infestation of these, they may try to hang in there a little while, but not for long. A large reason for their hasty departure is that we use holy water, and these unclean, foul things cannot stand that which is holy, that which has been hallowed and set apart unto God.

Renouncing the Idol-god of One's Father

Many today are in the position of needing to renounce the idol their fathers have worshiped. Their need is like Gideon's of old. Gideon lived in a day when the Israelites were in terrible circumstances because they had not obeyed the Lord their God and had instead worshiped idol-gods. God sent a true prophet in response to their cries, and He also sent an angel with a message to Gideon. The message was: "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." Gideon was then told by the Lord: "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand." Gideon argued a bit, reminding the Lord of how small and insignificant he and his family were, but the Lord only reiterated that He was with him. Gideon first built an altar to the Lord and named it, "The Lord Is Peace." That same night the Lord said to him,

Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. Then build a proper kind of altar to the Lord your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering."

Judges 6:25–26

Gideon did precisely all that the Lord commanded, and after he tore down the altar to Baal, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he was mightily empowered to lead the Israelites out of their troubles.

One might say that Gideon, among other things, came into his true masculinity and then led the people of his nation in that same direction. It was in helping men come out of sexual sin and into their true masculinity that I first discovered the principle within Gideon's story, for there were some who had to do the spiritual equivalent of what Gideon did before they could come into freedom.

Joe's story is a good example. He had been seriously hurt by going, as a seventeen-year-old, to a well-publicized deliverance minister. Joe, whose home background was unwholesome in the extreme, had come to Christ in great need of emotional healing. He was thoroughly committed to Christ, and was called to the ministry even then, but was struggling with the worst kinds of symbolic confusion as well as sexual compulsions, shame, and fear. He finally got nerve enough to go to the meeting, and after the "deliverance" he was not only worse, but without hope and convinced he was demon-possessed.

Ten or twelve pain-filled years later, he came to a Pastoral Care Ministry School, and his healing began. As he grew in wholeness and maturity, there was finally a girl in the picture. Since his main sexual difficulty had been with homosexuality, this was for him a major experience, but it brought with it an ugly spiritual battle, one that he was at first ashamed to tell me about. Every time he would think of marriage, a collage of filthy phallic images would come before his face. When he told me of this, and of how it so horrified him that he could not think of marriage and the girl he loved for fear "it" would appear, I said, "Good! Now we know exactly what to do in order to get you on the road to your full heterosexual identity."

I then was led to remind him of his father and his father's behavior. It could hardly have been more sexually vile. By this time we were in prayer and I had invoked the mighty Presence of the Lord, and I said to him, "Now you must renounce Baal, the god your father has always served. You are the Lord's, and He has done so much healing in your life [by now Joe had quite a ministry, bringing people out of gender inferiority and sexual perversion], but the god your father has served is still claiming you. You must renounce him, by name. I'll command that collage to present itself [i.e., command the demon to manifest itself if it's there]. Then, as you say, 'I renounce the idol-god of my father, I renounce you Baal,' I want you to look and see with your heart what God does. Our holy God will strike that evil thing, and you will be delivered." And that is exactly what happened. Joe saw fire from God, as though it were a bolt of lightning, pierce through and annihilate the dreaded manifestation. God then set His holiness, His purity, His beauty where this obscene thing had held sway.

This is the chthonic spirit, the underground god not to be named, the numinous in both Freud and Jung.

We now see this happen in large groups where hundreds are set free. But it is not something a Christian leader would begin to do before God has fully prepared him to minister in such a way. It is

part of a prophetic ministry, one that has first of all called the people to a radical repentance, and is thereby enabled to minister deeply to the essential spirit and soul of the people. The prophets are indeed the healers, as William Barclay points out, and that is because their call to repentance is clarion-clear. There is no uncertain sound in their message.

I recommend William Barclay's, "On the Emergence of John the Baptizer" in this regard. As he points out,

John fearlessly denounced evil wherever he might find it. . . . He was like a light which lit up the dark places. . . .

The coming of Christ necessarily involves a separation. Men either accept him or reject him. When they are confronted with him, they are confronted with a choice which cannot be avoided. They are either for or against. And it is precisely this choice which settles destiny. Men are separated by their reaction to Jesus Christ.

In Christianity there is no escape from the eternal choice. On the village green in Bedford, John Bunyan heard the voice which drew him up all of a sudden and left him looking at eternity: "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or wilt thou have thy sins and go to hell?" In the last analysis that is the choice which no man can evade.³

In John the Baptist, therefore, as in all the prophets, there is the one demand: "Repent." The Baptist pointed unwaveringly to Christ, whose basic demand was the same: "Repent!"

If sin within the soul is not named and is seen merely as psychological and emotional imbalance and illness, then there is an understanding of man and of his predicament that reconciles good and evil at the core of man's being. The minister who has to any extent reconciled good and evil can never call others to repentance, for the trumpet he blows will give a very uncertain sound. A clarion call like that of the Baptist's or Christ's is required. Once a clear sound goes forth, we can minister to the repentant soul on both the spiritual and the psychological level.

A great many ordained clergy are unable to issue a clear call to repentance today and are therefore into some form of universalism. Barclay speaks to this issue as well. John had scathing words for the Pharisees and the Saducees who were teaching, "All Israelites have a portion in the world to come." This false teaching had led the Jews to believe that "a Jew simply because he was a Jew, and not on any merits of his own, was safe in the life to come."⁴

John the Baptist really demolished that idea (Matt. 3:7–12): Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. The Spirit of Power would be given—that Spirit who when He enters a man creates and brings the order of God where there has been disorder and chaos. He brings truth, divine certainty, knowledge of what to repent from, the power to repent.

The true teaching of the rabbis, of course, differed from the popular heresies of the day. They taught that "true repentance issues, not merely in a sentimental sorrow, but in a real change in life," and, as William Barclay continues, "so does the Christian." Repentance, completely essential, is always available. "So long as life remains, there is the possibility of repentance."⁵

C. S. Lewis, in *Till We Have Faces*, shows Orual, the aging Queen of Glome, as she goes to the river to throw herself in and die. Fainting with weariness, and sick of what she calls her Ungit self (Ungit is the idol-god of her people), she sees no solution but death. But when she gets to the river, she hears the true God's voice:

No one who hears a god's voice takes it for a mortal's. "Lord, who are you?" said I. "Do not do it," said the god. "You cannot escape Ungit by going to the deadlands, for she is there also. Die

before you die. There is no chance after.”⁶

Incredible illumination and healing come to Orual as she hears the one true and holy God speak, and distinguishes that voice from Ungit’s.

In the Judeo-Christian understanding of reality, there is no universalism. Rather, the soul finds in God the grace to make a radical decision concerning sin, and so he puts it away. He dies to sin and then is himself resurrected, even as Orual was.

Ministers today are having a particularly hard time calling people to repentance over sexual sin, and they are therefore left in the hands of Baal.

About Baal, Alfred Edersheim writes:

It deserves more than passing notice that the modern denial of God may be reduced to the same ultimate principle as the worship of Baal. For, if the great First Cause—God as the Creator—be denied, then the only mode of accounting for the origin of all things is to trace it to the operation of forces in matter. And what really is this but a deification of “Nature?”⁷

As already stated, Baal was the real deity of Asia, worshipped under different forms (hence the plural: baalim). Molech was only Baal under another aspect, that of destruction, comp. Jer. 19:5, 32:35.⁸

Edersheim points out that the idolatry of Baal quickly gets bored with sex, and will go on to demand more and more to satisfy its appetite for flesh until human sacrifice is the ultimate fare.

It happens only too often now that we minister to someone, under the aegis of Baal, who is almost to the point of beginning to murder his sex victims. It is a great wonder to see them not only set free, but to come into normalcy in Christ. But an even more horrendous and widespread problem, one that has gained legal status and protection by the law in many places, is the vile sin of abortion. We, like the Israelites of old, have our Molechs, our ways of feeding our infants to the fires of Hell.

Baal is the god of sexual orgy, and the soul in his service will later, if not sooner, fall under Molech, his other aspect, as well. This alone explains why in our culture today abortion, and other things too vile to think or write upon, have for many become the accepted order.

Jung and the Service of Baal⁹

Closely related to the reemergence of Baal consciousness within society and even within the Church is the rise of a new Gnosticism. Its main proponent is C. G. Jung, the famed Swiss psychologist and early associate of Freud.

Jung’s autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, reveals in a most candid and significant manner the way the pagan psyche, when open to occult revelation, is both informed and develops. It is horrifying in its contrasts, but also in its similarities to the way the Christian soul is informed and develops. The difference, of course, is in the voices that are heard and obeyed.

Jung was all his life oppressed by the demonic, by what some would call occult phenomena. He early in life accepted these revelations (what he himself called “an initiation into darkness”), and interpreted them to mean that God is both good and evil, that Yahweh and Satan are polar ends of one being, and that in similar fashion the psychic life has good and evil poles.

Jung’s mother had, according to him, an archaic, “natural mind,” the “seer’s” mind that Jung himself

also had. He believed the insight gained through such a mind was based on instinct, the “peculiar wisdom of nature.”¹⁰ But the Christian who is knowledgeable in demonic oppression has only to read the first chapter in his autobiography to realize that her involvement with this kind of “wisdom” easily explains why he had from earliest childhood not only been open to diabolical revelation, but had suffered with depression, social isolation, and severe identity problems.

His first and most influential revelation came very early in life, and was engineered by the phallic god. When Jung was between the ages of three and four, he had a terrifying dream in which he was taken underground and presented to the “Below” god, a horrible enthroned presence in the form of a ritual phallus.

On this platform stood a wonderfully rich golden throne. I am not certain, but perhaps a red cushion lay on the seat. It was a magnificent throne, a real king’s throne in a fairy tale. Something was standing on it which I thought at first was a tree trunk twelve to fifteen feet high and about one and a half to two feet thick. It was a huge thing, reaching almost to the ceiling. But it was of a curious composition: it was made of skin and naked flesh, and on top there was something like a rounded head with no face and no hair. On the very top of the head was a single eye, gazing motionlessly upward.

It was fairly light in the room, although there were no windows and no apparent source of light. Above the head, however, was an aura of brightness. The thing did not move, yet I had the feeling that it might at any moment crawl off the throne like a worm and creep toward me. I was paralyzed with terror. At that moment I heard from outside and above me my mother’s voice. She called out, “Yes, just look at him. That is the man-eater!”¹¹

This was the dream that haunted and preoccupied him the rest of his life. He was afraid to go to sleep after that, and he began to associate the enthroned phallus god with Jesus. This alone would show it to be demonic oppression, for always in such oppression there is the attempt to insinuate the obscene into the holy.

The following illustrates in the life of Jung the “collage” image (see Joe’s story earlier) that descends at moments when that which is pure and wholly good is being considered:

The phallus of this dream seems to be a subterranean God “not to be named,” and such it remained throughout my youth, reappearing whenever anyone spoke too emphatically about Lord Jesus.¹²

Here we see the tragic and even blasphemous association which was the purpose of the demonic oppression:

Lord Jesus never became quite real for me, never quite acceptable, never quite lovable, for again and again I would think of his underground counterpart, a frightful revelation which had been accorded me without my seeking it.¹³

This dream phallus was introduced to him as the “man-eater,” a horror that fed on human flesh. Haunted by this image for years, he later recognized it as a ritual phallus. This and several other such dark revelations shaped his thought and his life and led him to believe and teach that “the dark Lord Jesus,” or the dark side of God, and the phallus god are one and the same. His entire system is predicated on this false, demonic revelation.

Equating Jesus with this terrible idol, he asked:

Who brought the Above and Below together, and laid the foundation for everything that was to

fill the second half of my life with stormiest passion? Who but that alien guest who came both from above and from below?

Through this childhood dream I was initiated into the secrets of the earth. What happened then was a kind of burial in the earth, and many years were to pass before I came out again. Today I know that it happened in order to bring the greatest possible amount of light into the darkness. It was an initiation into the realm of darkness. My intellectual life had its unconscious beginning at that time.¹⁴

The light Jung received was a false light, indeed one that synthesizes good and evil. In the appendix of *Real Presence* ("The Great Divorce"), I dealt with this synthesis of Jung's from the standpoint of the orthodox view of good and evil, and though that is extremely important in view of what we are now discussing, I will not repeat that here. Rather, I will consider his synthesis from the standpoint of the Christian's need to renounce alien gods.

The "light" Jung received always leaves the activities of those who serve Baal unnamed and unchallenged. It is interesting to note that his dream revealed that light as it emanated from the enthroned phallus, a light that sadly was never extinguished in the heart of Carl Jung. It affected his personal life, showing up in his relationship to women, as well as in his psychology.

About sexuality, Jung says that it "is of the greatest importance as the expression of the chthonic spirit. That spirit is the 'other face of God,' 'the dark side of the God-image.'"¹⁵

From his study of ancient mythology and medieval alchemy, Jung, calling this god the "chthonic" or "underground" spirit, sees it as a *numinosum* (a god) in the life and works of Freud. According to Jung, Freud was "emotionally involved in his sexual theory to an extraordinary degree. When he spoke of it, his tone became urgent, almost anxious, and all signs of his normally critical and skeptical manner vanished. A strange, deeply moved expression came over his face. . . ." ¹⁶ Later Freud said to Jung, "Promise me never to abandon the sexual theory. That is the most essential thing of all. You see, we must make a dogma of it, an unshakable bulwark."¹⁷ Freud, considering himself completely irreligious, had given up Yahweh, but in Jung's interpretation he thereby only came into the grip of Yahweh's opposite, the underground god or chthonic spirit: "Freud never asked himself why he was compelled to talk continually of sex, why this idea had taken such possession of him. . . . I see him as a tragic figure; for he was a great man, and what is more, a man in the grip of his daimon."¹⁸

It is ironic in the extreme that Jung doesn't see that he too has bowed down to the phallic god. Under oppression from the same god Freud was under, and in accepting the false revelation it brought him, he too makes of it a numinosum. By attempting to insinuate it into the Godhead, Jung has in fact gone far beyond Freud in making the phallic god a numinosum. This god in his life then prompted him to synthesize all good and evil, a dualism that left him ripe for the Gnostic intellectual framework he later chose.

Gnosticism: Its Syncretism, Dualism, and Capacity for False Revelation

The theologian Harold O. J. Brown, in his book *Heresies*, points out, "The Gnostic movement as a whole and even church-related Gnosticism are really too big and too foreign to the New Testament to be called heresies; they really represent an . . . alternative religion."¹⁹ Gnosticism, then, is not properly termed a heresy except, it seems to me, as it disguises itself and makes its appearance in Christian thought and practice. Due to its chameleon character, its syncretistic nature, it is very good at doing this.

In considering Jung, we need to say a word about Gnosticism, its basic character, and its interpretive

methods. To do that in as brief and concise a manner as possible, I will draw from Kurt Rudolph's book *Gnosis*, considered the definitive work on the nature and history of Gnosticism:

The Church Fathers already were conscious of what was for them the frightening variety of the gnostic teachings; they compare them with the many headed hydra of Greek legend. . . . There was . . . no gnostic canon of scripture, unless it was the "holy scriptures" of other religions, like the Bible or Homer, which were employed and interpreted for the purpose of authorising the gnostics' own teachings. . . . *In this process the interpretive method of allegory and symbolism, widely diffused in the ancient world, was freely employed*²⁰ (italics mine).

A statement from a given text, for example, one from the Old or New Testaments, was in that way given another meaning, a Gnostic one, or several new meanings, in order to claim it for its own doctrine. This, of course, is both what Jung and those who follow him do, and the interpretive method of allegory and symbolism is the way in which they do it. Jung's reductionism, as we've pointed out earlier, consists in treating supernatural and spiritual realities as merely things within the mind, as only psychologically real. "Creeds and confessions are regarded as projections of the psyche. Christianity is then valued not for the truths it reveals about man and God, but for its usefulness in mapping and exploring the unconscious. Consequently, Scripture is interpreted subjectively. Christ loses his uniqueness as incarnate Word and mediator between God and man."²¹ It is in this way that Jung not only empties Christianity of its objective reality, but any other system with transcendent value as well, and then shapes it into his own perception of psychic reality. His handling of the Book of Job is as good an illustration of this as one might wish for.

The last statement of the above quote from *Gnosis* points up the deepest concern we need have regarding Christians, naive about their own symbolic system, getting into a study of Jung. Starved for knowledge of story, myth, and symbol, starved for acceptance of one's own soul with its full imaginative, feeling, intuitive capacities, the ordinary Christian will often have C. G. Jung for his only teacher in this respect and will adopt, to one extent or another, Jung's reductionistic, interpretive methods of allegory and symbolism. This will not be corrected until the Church recognizes its unaccountable and irrational aridity and paucity in this area, and not only catches up with Jung, but far surpasses him in the understanding of inner reality and its symbolic ways of knowing. Until the believing Church has done this, we must continue to warn about the Gnostic nature of Jung's spirituality and reductionism. Returning to Kurt Rudolph in *Gnosis*:

A further peculiarity of the gnostic tradition, connected with this, lies in the fact that it frequently draws its material from the most varied existing traditions, attaches itself to it, and at the same time sets it in a new frame by which this material takes on a new character and a completely new significance.²²

This peculiarity we see time and again in the Jungian Christian writings. Side by side with the kind of spiritual and psychological insight that modern man is starved for will be that which is utterly destructive. This is why, in writing on the Christian supernatural, one of their leading spokesmen can mention in a favorable light Edgar Cayce or a certain infamous medium; or when writing on the matter of homosexuality, he can say that in certain cases homosexual marriage is the answer. This is why he can be writing, ever so nicely, on the unique efficacy of Christ's Cross and Resurrection, and then only a few pages later say that for those who do not find this way appealing, there is yet another way, one that bypasses the Incarnation and the Cross. These things are casually put forward, but are in every book he writes for those who have eyes to see. There is always, if ever so subtly, the introduction of the obscene into the holy, but it is set into a psychological framework by which it takes on for many "a new character and a completely new significance."

Even as the early Gnostic traditions formed out of a synthesis of the Greek and Oriental traditions, so too does the Neo-Gnosticism of Jung.²³ Kurt Rudolph describes the early documents:

Seen from outside, the gnostic documents are often compositions and even compilations from the mythological or religious ideas of the most varied regions of religion and culture: from Greek, Jewish, Iranian, Christian (in Manicheism also Indian and from the Far East). To this extent Gnosis . . . is a product of hellenistic syncretism, that is the mingling of Greek and Oriental traditions and ideas subsequent to the conquests of Alexander the Great. The gnostic expositions gain their thread of continuity or their consistence just through the gnostic "myth."²⁴ The individual parts of the "myth" can be called the gnostic myths; they confront us throughout as parts of one or another gnostic system.²⁵

This syncretism can be described as parasitic, for Gnostic thought "prosperes on the soil of host religions."²⁶

To this extent Gnosticism strictly speaking has no tradition of its own but only a borrowed one. Its mythology is a tradition consciously created from alien material, which it has appropriated to match its own basic conception. Considered in its own light, however, it is for Gnosticism a further confirmation of its truth, which it often traces back to a primal revelation, i.e. derives from primitive times; the knowledge of it [they would say] was only temporarily extinguished or concealed.²⁷

The following precis on the Gnostic view of God (its dualism) and the origin of evil should shed light on the matter of Jung's doctrine of "a degraded element of divinity":

Dualism dominates the whole of gnostic cosmology, and particularly in relation to creation and its authors. The form it takes in the individual systems is however very varied, and sometimes even contradictory. This can be seen above all in the conception of the place of evil and of matter in the formation of the world. While in one branch of Gnosis—especially in Mandeism and in Manicheism—there are two basic principles existing from the very beginning, mythologically described as (1) the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, which are brought into contact with one another almost by accident and so set the baleful history of the world into motion, (2) in other systems a graduated decline from the highest deity (the "unknown God") is the cause of the origin of the evil and dark powers. Hans Jonas has described the first type as the "Iranian," since it stands formally very close to the Iranian-Zoroastrian dualism. . . . The other form Jonas called the "Syrian-Egyptian type" because of its geographical distribution. The majority of our [the gnostic] texts, including those from Nag Hammadi, belong to this type. Their common characteristic is the idea of a downward movement, the beginning of which is variously located in the godhead itself as an internal process of self-reproduction, and which finally at the end leads to a breach in the kingdom of light, as a result of which the earthly world and the powers who hold it in subjection come into being. Evil here is not a pre-existent principle, but (according to Jonas) a "darkened level of being," a "degraded element of divinity."²⁸

One of the Nag Hammadi texts (Iranian-Zoroastrian), as mentioned in the above, is named after Jung (Codex Jung), because of his interest in and work with the Gnostic texts.

As I wrote in an earlier book:

The Christian who *uncritically* introduces Jungian thought into Christian counseling and healing does a great disservice to the Body of Christ, for Gnosticism is and always has been the worst

enemy of Christianity. That is because, basically and finally, it is an interpretive system of subjective revelation, one that denies the Incarnation, and invariably ends in anthropocentricity and an erroneous view of God. Separated from the truth of the indwelling Christ by the Holy Spirit in man, it can end and often does in a psychic or “soulish” interpretation of unconscious revelation. By just such an interpretation of his own dreams, Jung deemed God to be both good and evil.²⁹

Jung and the Attempt to Reconcile Good and Evil

The attempt to combine good and evil is surely one of the greatest threats facing not only Christendom but all mankind today. Behind it are powers of darkness that would defy the capacities of most moderns to imagine. At stake in this issue is the freedom and the welfare of us all. The Christian view of God and of man are in our day severely jeopardized by a powerful intellectual thrust toward reconciling good and evil, and with Jung, a powerful imaginative one as well. Beyond this, however, we find in Jung a deliberate insinuation of the obscene into the holy. In true Gnostic fashion, he insists on blaspheming Yahweh.

An example of this we see in the following “scene” which, like his earlier vision, was key in fashioning his worldview and psychological doctrines. This experience started out as part of the demonic oppression to which he was subject, and was in fact a demonic attempt to give him false revelation. He received it; and even though it was obscene, he attributed it to God.

For three days he had a terrible fear. He was “afraid to think a thought to the end,” knowing that it was not going to be something good. Before receiving the vision, he reasoned that it was God’s intention that he should sin because he, like Adam and Eve before him, “couldn’t help it.”³⁰ Obviously in the throes of strong compulsion, he asks:

Is it possible that God wishes to see whether I am capable of obeying His will even though my faith and my reason raise before me the specters of death and hell? Obviously God also desires me to show courage. . . . If that is so and I go through with it, then He will give me His grace and illumination.³¹

When he opened himself to the “thought,” it came as a visual “revelation,” one of the sort that could be expected if one has earlier claimed a terrifying phallic image to be a part of God:

I saw before me the cathedral, the blue sky. God sits on His golden throne, high above the world—and from under the throne an enormous turd falls upon the sparkling new roof, shatters it, and breaks the walls of the cathedral asunder.³²

He then goes on to call this “Grace” even though depression followed, along with the feeling of being “infinitely depraved,” a condition that lasted for years.

There is nothing of the scientist here. When he later speaks objectively of a “chthonic spirit,” there should be the recognition of the subjective, compulsive material behind it. Otherwise, one will make the mistake of thinking that for Jung this is an impersonal kind of spirit.

The Insinuation of the Obscene into the Holy

Jung’s doctrines, then, from their very inception, are predicated on an actual insinuation of the obscene into the holy, a kind of black mass played out on the plane of his soul. He is not to be blamed for suffering these compulsions in the sense that they were indeed engineered by something other than himself. In this he needed and could have received healing. But he *is* responsible for the deliberate and untenable interpretation he made of the vision. Later, as a psychoanalyst, he surely did not lead his patients to take their compulsive disorders and the symbolic confusion that resulted from them as

revelatory of “divine” truth.

I have seen literally hundreds of people suffering a like oppression, and all without exception are able to come out from under it. They never would have, however, had they accepted and interpreted such an experience in the way Jung did.

In this deliberate insinuation of the obscene into the holy, Jung has struck as rebellious and destructive a blow as it is possible to make against the true nature of God and the Christian faith. This is because holiness is not so much an attribute of God as it is the very foundation of His being; it is that out of which all else that He proceeds. Totally good, and totally other than the world He created, He speaks and says, “I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst” (Hosea 11:9 rsv). He imparts His goodness and holiness to us. Holiness is at the heart of the Christian faith.

To bring sin home, and to bring grace home, we *need that something else should come home which alone gives meaning to both*—the holy. . . . If our gospel be obscure, it is obscure to them in whom the slack God of the period has blinded minds, or a genial God unbraced them, and hidden the Holy One who inhabits eternity. This holiness of God is . . . the ruling interest of the Christian religion. . . .

Neither love, grace, faith, nor sin has any but a passing meaning except as they rest on the holiness of God, except as they arise from it, and return to it, except as they satisfy it, show it forth, set it up, and secure it everywhere and forever. Love is but its outgoing; sin is but its defiance; grace is but its action on sin; the Cross is but its victory; faith is but its worship. . . . What we on earth call righteousness among men, the saints in heaven call holiness in Him.³³

Within the soul of the Christian who adopts the Jungian interpretative system, to any degree, there will inevitably be the insinuation of the obscene into the holy: an eventual black mass of sorts within the soul itself.

Jung has tapped into the demonic plane of the supernatural world, which is hostile not only to the Judeo-Christian worldview, but to all systems containing objective moral and spiritual value. Within this world the self becomes god. What the self wants is what is finally right or moral.³⁴ Alien gods are involved in and lend power to this position.

Jung’s view of God as a blind, inarticulate Force is what C. S. Lewis refers to as the “inbetween” or “third” view—one that is between naturalism (atheism) and supernaturalism (belief in a God outside of Nature). It is the “Life-Force” view, and in Lewis’s novel *Perelandra*, the scientist Weston illustrates this position.³⁵ Having come out of his atheistic materialism (as seen in *Out of the Silent Planet*) and having despaired of objective truth, Weston finds he is “guided by the Force.”

As Weston explains his new religious view of life and his new “Mission” to Ransom, likening them to Ransom’s “outmoded” Christian beliefs, Ransom cries out, “I don’t know much about what people call the religious view of life. . . . You see, I’m a Christian. And what we mean by the Holy Ghost is not a blind, inarticulate purposiveness.”

To this outburst Weston, in a very superior manner, responds that God is a spirit, and, equating this “Spirit” with mind, freedom, and spontaneity, cries out that we are moving toward “Pure Spirit.” When Ransom asks if this spirit is in any sense personal or alive, Weston’s face contorts and his voice undergoes a change: “Call it a Force. A great, inscrutable Force, pouring up into us from the dark bases of being. A Force that can choose its instruments.”

Knowing this “Force” experientially, Weston claims ecstatically, “I’m being guided. I know now that I am the greatest scientist the world has yet produced. I’ve been made so for a purpose. It is through me that Spirit itself is at this moment pushing on to its goal.” To this assertion Ransom replies, “One wants

to be careful about this sort of thing. There are spirits and spirits you know.” Finding Weston to equate the good with the spiritual, Ransom is quick to point out that to be spirit is not necessarily to be good; after all, “The Devil is a spirit,” and Christians worship God not because He is Spirit but because He is wise and good.

But Weston, rejecting the idea of a personal God or a Holy Spirit, thinks that spirit itself is the only good and is superior to conventional ideas of right and wrong. He cannot, or will not, differentiate between good and evil spirits. Inevitably he attempts to reconcile good and evil, and tells Ransom, “Your Devil and your God are both pictures of the same Force.” Soon Ransom realizes that Weston not only cannot discern between good and evil powers, but is actually possessed by an evil one. The rest of his (Weston’s) story is one of incarnational evil: a supernatural evil force speaking and acting through one who has lost the good of reason and of humanity. Weston has become “the Unman.”³⁶

Jung freely acknowledges his Gnosticism. His book *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, written at the end of his life, contains his religious testament. It is, according to his recorder and editor, Aniela Jaffe, “the only place in his extensive writings in which Jung speaks of God and his personal experience of God.”

This book, by Jung’s request, was not made part of his collected works. “I have guarded this material all my life, and have never wanted it exposed to the world; for if it is assailed, I shall be affected even more than in the case of my other books.”

As far as we Christians are concerned, this is the most important book Jung has written in terms of helping us understand him—his Gnosticism, spiritism, occultism, and dark revelations, some of which I would term demonic oppression, which provide the basis for his psychological doctrines.

Jung’s discovery of alchemy was, he said, “decisive”:

Grounded in the natural philosophy of the Middle Ages, alchemy formed the bridge on the one hand into the past, to Gnosticism, and on the other into the future, to the modern psychology of the unconscious.³⁷

The historical prefiguration for Jung’s inner experience, the contents of his unconscious, he found in the Gnostics.³⁸ In other words, Jung got into their literature, as well as into the myth and folklore of the world, and he studied the common symbols as they show up in all peoples and in all ages. Because of his hostility to Christ, he chose not Christianity, but Gnosticism as his intellectual and spiritual framework. Thus his interpretation of symbol, as it shows up universally in literature and in the psyche of man (dreams, visions, etc.), always reconciles good and evil. This is why Jungian psychology per se can never be divorced from Gnosticism, even as Christ’s teaching cannot be severed from the New Testament.

Many Christians today are at an *enormous* disadvantage with Jung. They’ve lost the wisdom of Daniel (the Judeo-Christian tradition of understanding the heart’s capacity to symbolize, and the head’s capacity to be informed by what is in the heart):

To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

Daniel 1:17

Daniel, in studying Babylonian and/or Chaldean literature, ran into all the occult lore of his time. But because he knew, obeyed, and bowed down three times a day before a holy God, he was given wisdom to understand and interpret the symbols aright. “In every matter of wisdom and understanding” about which King Nebuchadnezzar questioned Daniel and the three young men, he found them “ten

times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom” (1:20).

It's not that the Babylonians or Chaldeans did not have knowledge of symbols of dreams, for they did (and Jung does—this is his value). But it was imperfect. Their interpretation was based on their systems of belief, unassisted by God. When God was speaking a word, through a dream, vision, or handwriting on the wall, they could never divine it. Also, of course, they would not have the power to discern principalities and powers, the lying, ruling spirits which war against man.

Daniel, studying literature, had full knowledge of what the wise pagans knew. But he had the higher wisdom, the very mind of God on the same matters, as well as on matters they could not divine at all. He therefore interpreted the data of dreams and visions aright (i.e., the symbols of the unconscious).

No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.

Daniel 2:27–28

The wise men of the Church today are so far from understanding what Daniel did that they would be the first to call Daniel an occultist should he stand up and speak today. They would make the same mistake his captors made when they named him the chief magician, but would then lack the wisdom they had in placing him over the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, diviners, and so on. I cannot imagine having such a job assignment as he had, but such is the lot of the people of God when in captivity.

Jung's worldview then, intellectually, imaginatively, and symbolically, is basically Gnostic. That is the framework for all his thought, as his writings and his autobiography very clearly reveal. His autobiography, he says, “is my life. . . . The way I am and the way I write are a unity. All my ideas and all my endeavors are myself. Thus the ‘autobiography’ is merely the dot on the i.”³⁹

Though his framework was fully conscious, fully thought through, few there be of those influenced by him who can say the same thing. Today we have the spectacle of persons holding to an orthodox Christian creed while at the same time their symbolic and imaginative view of reality is altered. It is not at all unusual to pray with a Christian who, when he publishes his thought in print, is found to be reasonably orthodox in his theology, while at the same time his heart contains an emotional and symbolic view of God which is entirely alien in some way or another to the Scriptural view. What we hold to intellectually and what we believe emotionally can be two different things. We now have the phenomenon of Christians as “victims” of a Jungian resymbolization, a “re-mythologizing” of the heart that leaves them with a view of man—and of God—that widely misses the mark.

Christians Contaminated by Jungianism

Today the largest audience for Jungianism is found among Christians, with Jungian retreat and conference speakers, books and magazine articles being featured regularly and prominently in monasteries, convents, and even seminaries which only a few years ago were centers of prayer and renewal, but are now quite heavily infiltrated by Jungian spirituality.⁴⁰ Young Christians, yearning for true spiritual formation, and traveling to these places in hopes of finding healing, are instead treated to something that has the power to loosen, if ever so subtly, their Christian moral and spiritual framework. In failing to discern the underlying assumptions in what they are receiving, their worldview, along with that of their instructors, is seriously altered. Perhaps the sin they had hoped to overcome will gain a respectable psychological name and gain acceptance in their lives. It is in this way that the obscene insinuates itself into our lives and we lose the sense of the holy.

Among the many affected in this way today, surely some will stop to wonder why the joy has

departed, why the Healing Presence and gifts of the Holy Spirit have vanished, along with the cutting edge of their ministries. Some will surely wonder why there is so much depression among the leaders, and why sexual falls (due to the influence of phallic spirits in Jungian spirituality) occur where one would least expect them. They may also wonder why it is more and more difficult to love Christ, to speak the name of Jesus. (I have watched this for twenty years, and have seen one leader after another fall, one significant healing ministry after another fail.) The amazing thing is that the persons who come under the deception never seem to come out, never make the connection between first of all getting into Jungian thought and spirituality and then what occurs in their lives and in their ministries after that. I have spoken out on this for years, but few within the movement have ears to hear. One of the very large reasons for this “deafness,” I feel, besides the fact of the involvement of a principality and power that would keep the believer blinded, is the need so many Christians have for self-acceptance and healing. So few come out of puberty having been affirmed (a vital developmental step), and when the Church is weak and does not recognize the full soul of man and know how to help it into its full identity in Christ, then Jung’s self-actualization and promise of psychological wholeness is a strong drawing card. Many a man, failing to be affirmed by his father, has followed the Christian Jungian pied piper, because he is in need of a secure personal and sexual identity.

From being God-centered, then, these Christians can quickly become man-centered and self-centered, without even knowing it. This is why Dr. Paul Vitz can say of Jungian Christians that Jungian categories have powerfully overshadowed their Christianity.

What Is Right about Jung and Freud

In Karl Stern’s book *The Third Revolution: A Study of Psychiatry and Religion*,⁴¹ he is concerned to show how the psychoanalytical method, as founded by Freud and carried on by Jung, can be made philosophically neutral (that is, freed from the materialistic and Gnostic superimpositions of its founders). The great value in what these men did was to move a significant portion of the psychiatric world away from its more mechanistic models: those that viewed psychological illness as exclusively biologically determined, or were otherwise hostile to intuition and to the process of *understanding* as being “unscientific” (as in Pavlov’s reflexology or in Watson’s behaviorism). A true understanding of the soul, as anyone not entirely cut off from his own heart would know, be he Christian, Jew, or pagan, requires the empathic. And with the advent of psychoanalysis, human empathy with its deep consideration of and commonality with the things of the deep mind of man found its place in psychiatry. Not only that, with its understanding of the symbolic language of the unconscious, it “pushed back the frontiers of empathy.”⁴²

Jung’s discoveries in making meaningful the irrational free-floating thoughts, dreams, and so on in the mentally disturbed in effect “consolidated the foundations of psychoanalytic theory.”⁴³ He learned to read the “meaningless.” As Karl Stern says:

[The] vast dark universe of the “meaningless” which exists outside the world illuminated by logic becomes one meaningful structure once we have introduced certain tentative premises. Before we form concepts, before we think in words, and before we begin to think in logical abstractions we go through an infantile phase in which the universe of our mind consists of sensation and imagery. The connection between that preconceptual rock bottom and the upper layer of logical conceptual thinking is mysterious. But it is not unfathomable.⁴⁴

“This,” says Karl Stern, “is a tremendous step forward. . . . It is no exaggeration to compare this, in the history of psychology, with the Galilean revolution in the history of physics.”⁴⁵

The fact that psychoanalysis is still colored by the philosophies of its founders, and that it reduces the Christian concepts of man's intelligence and will to collections of compulsive acts, unconscious urges, and blind reactions, is what makes it so dangerous.

Freud and Jung, driven by their own need to understand the diseased matter in the unconscious, made valuable discoveries that Christian physicians such as Dr. Karl Stern have put to great and good use. But he did it with his own thoroughly Christian intellectual and symbolic system intact. That makes what he and others like him do with the valid discoveries and insights that come out of secular psychology differ enormously from what has in fact been done by lesser minds who have adopted the Jungian hermeneutic and placed it as a grid over the Scriptures and over the entirely superior Judeo-Christian symbolic understanding of reality. No matter how many valid Christian sermons and valid Christian insights they include, they have resymbolized or nullified them by having adopted, not the creative and valid insights of a Freud or a Jung, but their spirituality. They have reconciled good and evil and are teaching others to do the same. The syntheses of Jungian and Christian teachings that are flooding our Christian retreat houses are light-years away from what Karl Stern could have conceived to be the Christian use of the valid insights of psychoanalysis.

Notes

Chapter 14: *Renouncing False Gods and Appropriating the Holy*

1. The specific historical data on Baal and Ashtoreth is taken from *Dake's Annotated Reference Bible*, ed. Finis Jennings Dake (Lawrenceville, GA: Dakes Bible Sales, 1963) and accords well with other studies on the subject.
2. Many do not realize how far this "worship" can go as persons become literally fixated on their own genitalia. In homosexuality, for example, it can and often does culminate in bizarre forms of padding and binding, of sado-masochism, and so on.
3. William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, volume 1, revised edition, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), pp. 43–58.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. C. S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), p. 279.
7. *Old Testament History* (Eerdmans), from a footnote on section 6, p. 16.
8. Ibid., section 6, p. 17.
9. Jung's quotes in this section are taken from his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffe, translated from German by Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Vintage Books, 1961).
10. Ibid., pp. 49–50.
11. Ibid., p. 12.
12. Ibid., p. 13.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p. 15.
15. Ibid., p. 168.
16. Ibid., p. 150.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 152.
19. Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies* (New York: Doubleday, 1984), p. 52.
20. Ibid., pp. 53–54.
21. See "The Unconscious Confusions of Christian Jungianism (part 2)", by Kevin Perotta and Leanne Payne, *Pastoral Renewal*, May 1988, volume 12, number 10.
22. Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 54.
23. For a scholarly consideration of this, see James Olney, *The Rhizome and the Flower*.

24. See Rudolph, *Gnosis*, for a full exposition of this myth.
25. Ibid., p. 54.
26. Ibid., p. 55.
27. Ibid.
28. See *ibid.*, pp. 65–66.
29. Payne, *The Broken Image*, p. 179.
30. Jung, *Memories*, p. 38.
31. Ibid., p. 39.
32. Ibid.
33. P. T. Forsythe, *The Creative Theology of P. T. Forsythe*, ed. Samuel J. Mikolaski (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), pp. 55–56.
34. This, the Luciferian stance, was demonstrated in Jung's life when, for example, he forced his wife to accept his mistress at the same table with herself and their children, and even in the final treatment of that mistress. See Paul J. Stern, *C. G. Jung, The Haunted Prophet* (New York: George Braziller, 1976), chapter 9.
35. See *Real Presence*, "The Whole Intellect," especially pp. 119–126, for the worldview Jung has opted for. It can be seen in the character of Weston as developed in C. S. Lewis's adult trilogy, beginning with *Out of the Silent Planet*, then *Perelandra*, and finally *That Hideous Strength*.
36. The above four paragraphs are adapted from *Real Presence*, pp. 121–122.
37. Jung, *Memories*, p. 201.
38. Ibid., p. 200.
39. Ibid., p. xii.
40. For more on this, see "The Unconscious Confusions of Christian Jungianism," parts 1 and 2, by Kevin Perotta and Leanne Payne, *Pastoral Renewal*, April and May 1988.
41. Karl Stern, *The Third Revolution: A Study of Psychiatry and Religion*, (Garden City, NY: Image Books, division of Doubleday, 1961). This book, like his *The Flight from Woman*, is classic. Dr. Stern, noted as a Catholic psychiatrist, was by birth Jewish. Scholarly and erudite, intuitive and empathic as psychiatrist, fervent and strong in Christian faith, he is the ideal one to write on what is right as well as what is wrong in the field of psychoanalysis.
42. Ibid., p. 30.
43. Ibid., p. 69.
44. Ibid., pp 70–71.
45. Ibid., p. 71.